

MORPHETT VALE EAST NEWSLETTER



Morphett Vale East School



Government of South Australia

Department for Education

Welcome Back to 2026!

It has been a wonderful (and very warm!) start to the 2026 school year, and I would like to extend a warm welcome to all our families—especially those who are new to our school community. It has been fantastic to see our students return with such enthusiasm, energy and big smiles, ready for another exciting year of learning and growth.

I was incredibly fortunate over the Christmas holidays to be awarded a scholarship to attend the Harvard Principals' Program, which was held in Sydney. This was a wonderful professional learning opportunity that allowed me to further develop my leadership skills, reflect on best practice in education, and engage in rich discussions with school leaders from across Australia and internationally. A key bonus of this experience was gaining fresh ideas around instructional leadership, school culture, and student wellbeing—insights that I am excited to bring back and embed into our school to continue strengthening teaching, learning and whole-school improvement.

This year, I am delighted to welcome several new members to our teaching staff. In particular, I would like to introduce and celebrate our new Deputy Principal, Ellen Barr. Ellen has already made a very positive start with both students and staff, and it is clear she brings a wealth of experience, passion and dedication to her role. She has wasted no time in getting to know our learners and has already commenced working hard alongside our team on our literacy improvement journey, which will be a key focus for our school in 2026. We are incredibly fortunate to have her join our leadership team.

A huge thank you to all families who attended our Acquaintance Afternoon on Wednesday, 11th February. It was wonderful to see so many families at school, connecting with teachers, meeting new friends and strengthening the sense of community that makes our school such a special place. Later that evening, we also held our Governing Council AGM, which was another great opportunity to come together and begin important conversations about how we can continue to make our school even better for all students.

I encourage all families to keep an eye out for our ongoing Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) updates in our newsletters and on 'Class Dojo'. These updates will highlight the specific behaviours we are targeting and celebrating across the school. Your support at home—by reinforcing these expectations and having conversations with your children—plays a vital role in ensuring our PBL approach is successful and that we continue to build a positive, respectful and safe learning environment for all students.

As we begin this new year, I look forward to working in partnership with you to support every child to feel safe, valued and successful. 2026 is shaping up to be a fantastic year, and I am excited about what we will all achieve together.

Kind Regards,
Anthony McIver
Principal - Morphett Vale East School

WEEK 3, TERM 1 - 2026

ISSUE: 1



LEADERSHIP TEAM

Anthony McIver
Principal

Ellen Barr
Deputy Principal

Rick Whitbread
Student Wellbeing Leader

DIARY DATES

February

- Fri 20th - Student Free Day

March

- Mon 2nd - School Dental Visits
- Wed 4th - Early Finish 2.10pm
- Mon 9th - Public Holiday



DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

My name is Ellen Barr and I began my teaching career in 2014, working in a range of roles from Reception to Year 6. Over time, I developed a strong passion for junior primary, particularly supporting students in Reception, where I spent several years teaching.



I have also worked across two schools as a Literacy Coach, collaborating closely with staff to strengthen literacy teaching and learning. Most recently, I have been working as an Assistant Principal, and I'm now excited to take on the Deputy Principal role at Morphett Vale East School.

I have a keen interest in collaboration and building a strong sense of community, as I believe these are key foundations for school improvement. I'm really looking forward to getting to know you and your child as we work together throughout the year.

Warm regards,
Ellen Barr

WELLBEING LEADER

I am pleased to share that, beginning this year, my role at Morphett Vale East School is growing to include some new responsibilities. While I will no longer be teaching PE to the junior primary classes, this role will now be undertaken by Ms Alexander Schnaars, who I am confident will do a fantastic job supporting our youngest students.

Alongside my ongoing work with Wellbeing, I am now stepping into two new positions: Autism Inclusion Teacher (AIT) and Aboriginal Education Teacher (AET). Both of these roles are new to me, and I am looking forward to learning, growing, and supporting all students and families as best I can during this time of transition.

I am committed to being accessible and supportive as I undertake these roles, and I welcome any questions or conversations as we work together for our students' success.

I look forward to working with families throughout the year ahead.

Mr Whitbread

SCHOOL FEES 2026

School fees for 2026 are \$106 per student (with government rebate applied).

School Card applications and payment plans are now open. Final payment is due by Friday, 3 July 2026 (end of Term 2).

Payment options:

- Bank transfer: Morphett Vale East School, BSB 105-136, Account 510 364 040, Reference: student name/family code
- Payment plan/Centrepay: Weekly, fortnightly, or monthly—contact the Business Manager
- School Card Application

If you have questions, please contact the finance office.

SCHOOL CARD APPLICATIONS

If you think you may be eligible, please apply as soon as possible. A new application is required each year.

👉 Apply online:

🔗 www.sa.gov.au/education/schoolcard

Need help or don't have internet access? Visit the Finance Office and our staff will assist you.

READING AT MORPHETT VALE EAST SCHOOL

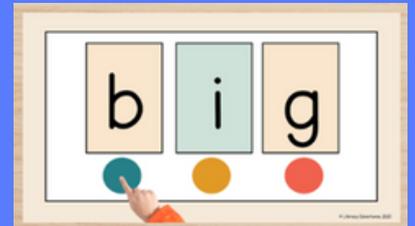
We want to inform you about an exciting change in our approach to teaching reading that reflects current research and best practice and will ensure we maximise your child's literacy development. We are transitioning from using 'levelled readers' that you may be used to (texts levelled on 1 to 30 rating) to books called "decodables."

Levelled predictable readers, which have traditionally been used in many schools, often rely on repetition and picture cues. While these can be enjoyable for students, they do not provide the same consistent opportunities for children to practise blending sounds into words—a crucial skill in learning to read. Decodable books are specially designed for students to become confident and independent in their reading skills.

What Are Decodable Texts?

Decodable texts are books created so that students can read them using only the letter-sounds and words they have already learned. This allows all children, especially those just beginning their reading journey, to experience early reading success and build their confidence as readers.

Instead of relying on guessing, children use their phonics knowledge to decode words accurately, building a strong reading foundation and developing reading confidence and independence. This approach supports the development of automatic, fluent reading skills—essential for becoming skilled readers.



Instead of relying on guessing, children use their phonics knowledge to decode words

What Will This Mean for Your Child?

- **More Independent Reading:** As your child brings home decodable texts, they will be better able to read the words themselves, using the skills developed in class.
- **Consistent Practice:** The texts will match the specific sounds and spelling patterns being taught, offering consistent and targeted practice.
- **Improved Reading Skills:** This approach supports stronger growth in word recognition and reading fluency.

Supporting Your Child at Home

You may notice that books your child brings home look a little different this year. We encourage you to celebrate their efforts as they sound out and blend words. Praise their persistence and progress. If you would like more information on how to support your child with decodable books, please feel free to reach out to your child's teacher or come and speak to me directly.

We're excited about this change and look forward to seeing the progress your child will make.

Warm regards,
Ellen Barr

☀️ Aiming for 100% Attendance

We know that no child can be at school every single day. Illness, family events and other unavoidable circumstances do happen. However, aiming for 100% attendance helps students and families focus on getting to school as often as possible, which gives children the best chance to succeed.

Why Attendance Matters

Coming to school every day helps children build good learning habits. Each day offers new opportunities to learn, ask questions and take part in discussions. Being present regularly helps students understand classwork more easily and feel confident in their learning.



Building Responsibility and Confidence

Regular attendance teaches children the importance of showing up and trying their best. It helps them develop responsibility, resilience and a positive attitude toward challenges. These skills are important not just at school, but also in everyday life and future careers.

Stronger Connections at School

Students who attend regularly often feel more connected to their teachers and classmates. This sense of belonging supports learning and helps children feel safe, supported and ready to engage in class activities.

Looking Ahead

Striving for high attendance shows commitment and reliability—qualities that are valued throughout life. When children learn the importance of attending school regularly, they are building foundations that support future success.

Our Message to Families

We understand that sometimes children can't attend school. When this happens, it's important they stay home and recover. However, on days when your child is well and able, coming to school really does make a difference.

Thank you for supporting your child's learning by encouraging regular attendance.

Student Absences – What Families Need to Know

To help us maintain accurate attendance records and support student wellbeing, please note the following:

Notification of Absences:

If your child is away from school, please let us know as soon as possible.

- You can report absences by:
 - Phoning the school's dedicated absence line.
 - Sending an SMS to 0427 110 916.
 - Replying directly to any school-generated SMS about absences.

Thank you for your cooperation in supporting a safe and healthy learning environment for all.

Wellbeing at Morphett Vale East School

Last year, as part of our ongoing commitment to Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL), we reflected on the core values that guide us at Morphett Vale East School. After thoughtful consultation with families, students, and staff, we agreed on three clear values to help shape our school community moving forward: **Be Safe, Be Kind, Be Responsible.**

Adopting new values is just the beginning—we know that real change happens over time. These values will now be a consistent focus in our classrooms, in the yard, and throughout all aspects of school life. Together, we will learn, practise and celebrate these values each day.

What Does “Be Safe” Mean at Our School?

“Be Safe” is more than a rule—it’s a shared responsibility for everyone at Morphett Vale East School. Being safe means making thoughtful choices for yourself and those around you, ensuring our school remains a positive and welcoming place.

Here are a few ways we show “Be Safe” every day:

Using equipment correctly: Whether in the classroom, playground, gym or drama space, we use all equipment as intended, keeping everyone safe.

Respecting personal space: We show care by keeping our hands and feet to ourselves, and respecting everyone’s boundaries.

Looking out for each other: If you notice something unsafe or someone is hurt, always tell a trusted adult or help if it’s safe to do so.

Moving safely around the school: Walk calmly indoors and follow school expectations, even when no one is watching.

Making safe choices helps everyone at school feel included, supported and ready to learn. By working together and reminding each other of our values, we can all help keep Morphett Vale East School a safe and happy place for everyone.

Thank you for supporting our school values—it’s how we grow and thrive together!



Tree of Values

THIS TERM, THE GLA FOYER HAS BECOME HOME TO A VERY SPECIAL PROJECT - OUR TREE OF VALUES. STAFF, STUDENTS, AND FAMILIES MAY HAVE NOTICED ITS WONDERFUL COLOURFUL LEAVES GROWING EACH WEEK, EACH ONE A SYMBOL OF THE POSITIVE CHOICES WE MAKE AT SCHOOL.



THE TREE OF VALUES WAS CREATED TO REPRESENT OUR CORE SCHOOL VALUES: BEING SAFE, BEING KIND, AND BEING RESPONSIBLE. EVERY STUDENT HAS HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONTRIBUTE, REFLECTING ON WHAT OUR VALUES MEAN TO THEM AND SHARING REAL EXAMPLES OF HOW THEY PUT THEM INTO PRACTICE DAILY.

THE TREE IS MORE THAN JUST AN ARTWORK - IT'S A DAILY VISUAL REMINDER OF OUR SHARED COMMITMENTS. IT ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO TAKE PRIDE IN LIVING OUR VALUES AND MOTIVATES EVERYONE TO CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TO OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY.

REMEMBER

- SUPPORT CLASSMATES IN THE QUAD OR CLASSROOM
- FOLLOW SCHOOL RULES TO BE SAFE
- TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR LEARNING

