

Boolarra Primary School

Parent Information Handbook



Respect ~ Engagement ~ Responsibility ~ Aspiration

At Boolarra Primary School we value creativity, curiosity and innovation. We recognise the fundamental importance of reflective and adaptable thinking. Our students are empowered to generate their own course for lifelong learning and make purposeful contributions to their community.

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Welcome to Boolarra Primary School

***Dedicated to Learning
Connected to the Community***

Dear Parents,

We welcome you and your child to Boolarra Primary School. At Boolarra Primary School, we value creativity, curiosity and innovation in our learners. We aim for our students to be confident as learners and to express their individuality through collaborative and respectful relationships. We aim to prepare students to face challenges with a positive and reflective mindset. We believe in our school values of respect, engagement, responsibility and aspiration and use these to guide our actions and beliefs. We believe that all children are individuals and needed to be treated as such. Teachers need to have the ability to teach at the individual's point of need, which is why we are committed to small class sizes.

Boolarra Primary School has a strong community feel to it. We are small enough that all students are known by staff and all staff are known to the children. This enables us to be responsive to and engaged with each other. We have a wonderful group of students who are considerate, kind and interact with each other across grade and age levels. We are also very fortunate to have a dedicated and hardworking staff, who aim to ensure that the children in our care receive the best possible learning opportunities. We believe that we are all learners. Through collaboration, staff work together to develop and expand their own professional knowledge and skills in education. We work as a community of educators to plan, deliver and review lessons, as we aspire to be the best teachers we can be.

We value parent input and provide a range of opportunities for families to be involved in our school community. We encourage parents to assist in classrooms and in extra curricula activities such as sporting competitions and excursions. School Council and the Facilities Sub-Committee provide opportunities for parents who may not be available during school hours.

We believe that your child's educational journey is a collaborative effort between home and school. We look forward to working with you. Please take the time to discuss any concerns with your child's teacher. Our teachers are dedicated to your child's educational journey and bring with them a vast range of experience and knowledge.

Thank you

Susan Duncan
Principal

CONTACTS

Principal

Mrs Susan Duncan

Business / Office Manager

Mrs Sharon Moule
(Wednesday, Thursday & Friday)

School Council President

Malcolm Grant

School Address

51 Tarwin Street
P O Box 249
Boolarra, 3870

School Telephone

5169 6471

School Fax Number

5169 6658

E-mail Address

boolarra.ps@education.vic.gov.au

School Website

www.boolarra.vic.edu.au

School Facebook Page

Boolarra PS





We're BIG on FUN!

WE ARE YOUR NEW OSHC PROVIDER!

We are so excited to be partnering with Boolarra Primary School from the start of Term 1, 2022 and cannot wait to meet you all!

We will be available onsite to care for your children after school. The safety and wellbeing of every single child is our number one priority, whilst making sure they have all the fun too!

Centre Mobile	0484 115 200
Centre Email	boolarra@bigchildcare.com
Operating Hours	Session Cost
After School Care	3:15am to 6:00am \$30.00

\$2 casual booking fee applies for non-permanent bookings

Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

Your cost of care may be reduced by up to 85% with CCS.

To find out if you are eligible, scan the QR code or call Services Australia on 13 61 50 between 9am and 5pm (local time) weekdays.



FOLLOW US!



ABOUT US

OUR AGREED VISION

At Boolarra Primary School, we value creativity, curiosity and innovation. We recognise the fundamental importance of reflective and adaptable thinking. Our students are empowered to generate their own course for lifelong learning and make purposeful contributions to their community.

OUR CORE VALUES

At Boolarra Primary School, we believe in our school values of respect, engagement, responsibility and aspiration and use these to guide our actions and beliefs. We have a strong commitment to our school motto, which states “Dedicated to Learning Connected to the Community”. Our core values encourage our learners to be inclusive and collaborate with others.

RESPECT	For ourselves, others and the environment. Caring for, understanding, accepting and appreciating ourselves, others and the environment.
ENGAGEMENT	To be open and interested in learning.
RESPONSIBILITY	Demonstrating ownership of our actions and words. Being accountable for our actions.
ASPIRATION	Demonstrating a willingness to set high goals for ourselves, always do our best, show resilience and persist when faced with challenges.

SCHOOL CONTEXT

As a small rural school, students, staff and students have the capacity to build positive relationships with all. We run the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Program (RRR&R) across all year levels. The main aim of the program is to promote and model respect and positive attitudes and behaviours. This is further enhanced by Zones of Regulation and The Berry Street Model. We value and teach our children the skills to build healthy relationships, resilience and confidence. We develop student leaders through School Captain and House Captain opportunities. Students are given opportunities to improve their leadership capacity through their involvement in fundraising activities of selling Zooper Doopers, milo and raisin toast. Our student leaders also organise and assist in the running of whole school activities and assemblies.

We value parent input and provide a range of opportunities for families to be involved in our school community. We encourage parents to assist in classrooms and in extra curricula activities such as sporting competitions and excursions. School Council and the Facilities Sub-Committee provide opportunities for parents who may not be available during school hours. We believe that the educational journey is a collaborative effort between home and school.

Our Year Six students are eligible to Attend Mirboo North Secondary College or Kurnai College in Churchill.

BOOLARRA PRIMARY SCHOOL STAFF TEAM

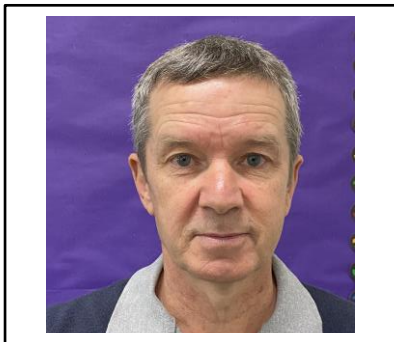


Mrs Duncan
Principal

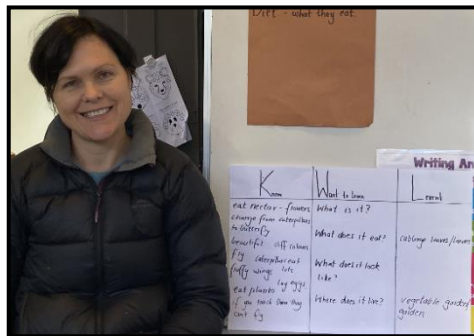


Mrs Moule
Business Manager

Teaching Team



Mr Chambers
Senior Teacher



Ms Smith
Junior Teacher



Ms Larrad
Junior Teacher

Education Support Staff Team



Jo Cardillo
Educational Support



Ellie CuiCui
Educational Support

FACILITIES

At Boolarra Primary School, we are spoilt for space and our children are fortunate to be able to play and learn in such a picturesque setting.

Buildings & Playgrounds

We have spacious classrooms and excellent facilities. Our outside areas include:

- Oval
- Basketball court
- Cricket nets
- Expansive grassed area
- A variety undercover spaces for quiet activities.
- Playground facilities.
- Many shaded areas.



Life Skills Kitchen

The Life Skills Kitchen is a fully equipped kitchen with ovens, stove-tops, fridges, sinks, island benches and plentiful storage. We use this space to store and supply the breakfast and snack provisions provided by Foodbank Victoria as part of the Schools Breakfast Club program and for whole class cooking/science activities.



Library

Our library is well resourced, with a range of fiction, non-fiction and picture storybooks. Classroom teachers run library session with students on a weekly basis to promote borrow for home reading and enjoyment.

Art/STEAM Room

Our Art/STEAM room is a dedicated, well-resourced space for Art and STEAM lessons. These are each conducted on a weekly basis.

Multi-purpose Room

We have a large Multi-purpose Room that is used for whole school gatherings, such as assemblies and visiting speakers. This space is also used for our indoor sports and wet weather activities.

Computers

Boolarra Primary has shared sets of Notebook computers and iPads. Computers are located in the breakout space of the LTC for our middle and senior students.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

	2022	2023	2024
Term 1	31 st Jan – 8 th April	30 th Jan – 6 th April	30 th Jan – 28 th March
Term 2	26 th April – 24 th June	24 th April – 23 th June	15 th April - 28 th June
Term 3	11 th July – 16 th Sept	10 th July – 15 th Sept	15 th July – 20 th Sept.
Term	4 th Oct – 17 th Dec	2 nd Oct – 20 th Dec	7 th Oct – 20 th Dec

❖ **Foundation students (Preps) do not attend school on Wednesdays throughout February.**

BELL TIMES:

Students are permitted to enter the school building from 8:30am to hang up their bags etc. to get ready for the school day. From 8:30am until classes commence each day, and during all outside breaks, a teacher is on yard supervision. Music is played before each 'come in' bell to provide students with time to get to their designated line up spot.

8:35 – 8:45	Bag bell so students can enter classrooms put bags in and get ready for learning.
8:45 – 10:30	1 st Learning Block
10:30 – 10:40	Supervised eating of snacks in classrooms
10:40 – 11:00	Morning Recess 'Play' Break
11:00 – 1:00	2 nd Learning Block
1:00 – 1:10	Supervised eating of lunch in classrooms
1:10 – 2:00	Lunch 'Play' Break
2:00 – 2:15	Whole School Silent reading
2:15 – 3:15	3 rd Learning Block
3:15	Home Time

Please ensure that students are at school before 8:45 am. It is important that students have the opportunity to be involved in morning routines and socialise with their classmates.

SCHOOL CLOSURE / PUPIL FREE DAYS:

Schools are allocated four pupil-free days a year, during which teachers can undertake special training and development programs. These will be advertised in advance through the school newsletter and website.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

STRATEGIC PLAN:

In 2019, we developed our Strategic Plan. The plan outlines our overarching direction over the next four years and maps out how we are going to provide the best learning and development experience for our students. A copy is available at the front office and on our school website.

Our 2020 – 2024 goals are:

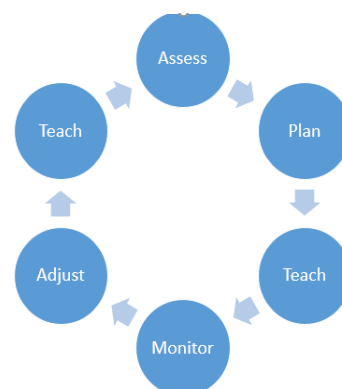
- ❖ Improve student learning, growth in literacy and numeracy including an emphasis on extending students capable of high achievement.
- ❖ Promote high expectations for student work tasks, achievement and positive behaviour.
- ❖ Empower students to be independent, motivated and responsible citizens.

LEARNING PROGRAMS:

A broad and balanced educational program is provided and is based on the Victorian Curriculum. We use a teaching cycle to ensure our instruction is at the point of need of our students.

Our Teaching and Learning Cycle

Each lesson should be part of a sequence of learning, and these sequences should follow the teaching and learning cycle.



Language

Our language program provides students with opportunities to develop their reading, writing and speaking and is underpinned by specific skills.

- ***Phonetic awareness***

An ability to hear, identify and manipulate single sounds. Teachers have undertaken Sounds Write Training to enable them to deliver a high quality, evidence-based literacy program that explicitly teaches the skills needed to be effective readers and writers.

- ***Phonics***

The ability to decode words using letter-sound relationships.
The ability to write words using letter-sound relationships.

- ***Fluency***

Reading with speed, phrasing and accuracy.
Having a store of known words for reading and writing.

- ***Vocabulary***

Understanding the meaning of a wide variety of words.
Using a variety of words to enhance our message.

- ***Comprehension***

Understanding the meaning of what is read.

- ***Grammar and Punctuation***

Understanding that punctuation and grammar enhances meaning.

- ***Text Structure***

Understanding that to communicate effectively we use different organisational features.



Numeracy

Our numeracy program aims to help students develop increasingly sophisticated and refined mathematical understanding, fluency, reasoning, and problem-solving skills. These proficiencies enable students to respond to familiar and unfamiliar situations by employing mathematical strategies to make informed decisions and solve problems efficiently.

- **Understanding**

Students describe their thinking and comprehend the information. They can represent their thoughts and make connections. They make comparisons.

- **Fluency**

Students develop skills to readily recall factual knowledge and choose appropriate procedures. Students use strategies that are flexible, efficient and accurate.

- **Problem Solving**

Students make choices, interpret, formulate, model and investigate problem situations. They select and use technological functions and communicate solutions effectively.

- **Reasoning**

Students explain their thinking and justify their strategies. They make comparisons and transfer their knowledge from one context to another.



SPECIALIST PROGRAMS

Specialist Programs in 2022 have operated as follows:

- Physical Education
- Visual Arts
- Performing Arts, Dance & Music
- LOTE – (undecided for 2023 possibly Indonesian)

Supporting Programs:

- Literacy and Numeracy Support
- Social Skills Program
- Bike Education

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Emphasis is placed on providing a positive learning experience for our students by:

- Maintaining an environment that is safe, friendly and supportive
- Encouraging children to be resilient and to embrace and work through challenges
- Extending students through providing opportunities to enhance their individual talents
- Aiming to develop students who are socially responsible, independent and self-disciplined
- A strong commitment to addressing the individual needs of students.



Personalised Teaching

We believe our classroom environment needs to reflect our belief and values in education. Notice the green table in this picture. There is one in every classroom. We use these to teach small groups of children, enabling us to personalize the learning and teach to the needs of the individual child.

Collaboration

At Boolarra Primary School, we believe students learn best by working together and discussing their thoughts and ideas with their peers. All classrooms are set up so students can collaborate. By working together, students develop their social skills as well as self-management.



Interactive Technology

Every classroom has an interactive whiteboard. Through the use of online games and videos we can teach students in different ways. We believe that no two students are the same so learning needs to be individually tailored.

Numeracy and Literacy Intervention

This space is a breakout room for our GRIN [Getting Reading in Numeracy] program. Small group sessions are conducted by our trained GRIN teachers and tutors. Study was undertaken at Monash University. The room is also used for Literacy intervention by our Teacher/Tutor.



STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Boolarra Primary School values student voice and provides opportunities for our students to fully participate in school life. We aim to develop the attitudes and behaviours in our students that promote student voice, agency and leadership.

Our student leadership team meets regularly to discuss ideas and make plans to improve our school. During Term One, the team decided to improve our outdoor spaces. Through selling Zooper Doopers they raised enough money to purchase blackboard paint and paint our “Stairs to Nowhere” creating a play and learning space.

Notice some of our young students use this space to practise writing the letter ‘g’.

Thanks Student Leaders for creating and paying for this alternative learning/play space.



SCHOOL CAPTAINS:

School Captains are chosen at the end of the year. Students write an application and go through an interview process that is run by students and teachers. School Captains are given opportunities over the year to develop their leadership and organisational skills. Our School Captains run our assembly each Friday afternoon.



Did you know our students are actively involved in the decision making processes? Our senior students choose the colour of our new table tops and furniture aiming to make our school bright and cheery. The colours also reflect our school houses and our green learning table is our colour to represent “Ready for Learning”.

HOUSE CAPTAINS:

House Captains are chosen at the end of the year. Students write an application and go through an interview process run by students and teachers. House Captains are given opportunities over the year to develop their leadership and organisational skills by running House Competitions.

JUNIOR SCHOOL COUNCIL:

The Junior School Council (JSC) comprises students elected from grades 3-6 (with grade 5 & 6 students chosen to represent the Prep / Ones). This group meets regularly and organises fundraising efforts for worthy causes. They also discuss issues raised by the student body and make recommendations, which are passed on to the School Council.

REPORTING

- Foundation (Prep) parents will have an individual meeting with their child's classroom teacher early in the school year to ensure we all have the information required to ensure a smooth start to school life.
- Term 1 - Student Led reporting
- Term 2 - Written Academic Reports
- Term 3 - Student Led Reporting
- Term 4 - Written Academic Reports.

Parents are welcome to make appointments to meet with teachers to discuss their child's progress at any time that is mutually convenient. We believe that a child's educational journey should be a shared responsibility between home and school.

UNIFORM

All students are required to wear our school colours of red and navy blue. There are many combinations possible but, we recommend a blue windcheater and matching track pants for winter and a red or blue polo top with blue shorts for summer. The red and white, or blue and white checked school dresses that can be purchased from places like Target and Big W are also acceptable.

- Navy Blue or red polo shirt (with logo optional) – short or long sleeve
- Navy Blue shorts/tracksuit pants
- Navy Blue or red polo fleece windcheater / hoody / cardigan.
- Red/White or Navy Blue/White checked dresses.
- Navy Blue Skorts
- Navy Tunic
- School shoes, runners or flat boots.
- Broad brimmed hat/legionnaire style

Red and blue sports tops and school jackets with our logo on them are available for our students to borrow and wear when they represent us at various endeavours. The polo tops cost \$25 each and the jackets cost \$45. Both wash and wear well allowing them to be passed on to younger siblings as they still look bright and fresh after many years of wear. We source these locally (from Logo Express in Traralgon) and keep a small quantity in stock at the office that are available for purchase. See Sharon in the office or the principal to have your child try on tops to establish the correct size and order what is required.

All clothing should be clearly labelled with the owner's name. The children should be dressed appropriately for the weather conditions. Thongs, dresses with thin shoulder straps, singlets and tank tops should not be worn at school. As we are a Sun Smart school, children must wear broad brimmed hats when they are outside during term 1 and 4. If they do not have a suitable hat, they must remain in a shaded area. Students are to wear school uniform at all times, except on designated 'out of uniform days' which are staged once a term by our Junior School Council to raise money for worthy causes.

Please refer to our:

- Uniform Policy
- Sunsmart Policy



Polo Tops and Jackets can be purchased from the office.



Polo Shirts
\$25.00

Jackets
\$45.00



*We also have free
second-hand
uniforms available.*

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Our School Council are the elected representatives that approve the policy and programs implemented at our school and ensure that the funds provided by the parents and the Education Department are correctly utilised. This group comprises of elected parents and staff. We try to make our meetings as efficient and friendly as possible. Information for parent school councillors is sent home via e-mail on the Friday before the meeting. Our School Council meets on the last Wednesday of each month. Meetings begin at 7.00pm. We encourage parents to stand for election, as being a school councillor is a very positive way to be involved in our school. Elections to fill vacant positions are held during February / March. School Councillors are elected for a 2-year period. School Council information is included in our weekly newsletter and displayed on a noticeboard near the office.

PARENT CONTRIBUTIONS

The Government provides the school with funding to enable each child to obtain an education. The funds provided by the Department do not cover the cost of enrichment programs and other educational materials that, under Education Department rules, schools can ask parents to pay for. Each year we request a contribution from parents to cover the cost of books, stationery, classroom consumables, Athletics subscription and the student insurance policy that covers all of our students against accident and injury.

Our Parent Payment Contribution for 2022

\$150.00

This amount to be paid each year is reviewed annually by School Council. School Council aims to keep contributions as low as possible.

Parents can pay by direct deposit. You can do this through the Commonwealth Bank BSB 06 3522 Account No. 10068539; use your child/ren's surname as reference. If you would like to set up a progressive payment scheme, please see Sue or Sharon to put this in place.

COMMUNICATION

It is vital that we maintain good communication between the school and the home to ensure that we are achieving the best possible outcomes for our children.

We communicate through the following:

- Weekly newsletter published on Thursdays.
- Boolarra Primary School Website
- Boolarra Primary School Facebook (for families of children at Boolarra Primary School).
- Notes are given to students and are available on the School Website.
- Changeable sign at the front of the school
- Skool Bag App

EXTRA CURRICULA ACTIVITIES

We actively seek and utilise additional experiences to enrich our learning program. We seek extra curricula activities that build on the learning experiences offered at school. These may include excursions such as a visit to Healesville Zoo or Scienceworks or incursions such as visiting shows and webinars.

EXCURSIONS:

Excursions are designed to broaden the children's experience, as well as building on the class themes. Transport costs are high, and for this reason as much advance notice as possible is given or parent assistance with transport is utilised.

CAMPS:

Our current Outdoor Education / Camping Program requires children in P/1/2 to have a dinner at school in term 4, with the grade 2 students then remaining for a sleepover.

- ❖ Odd Years – Year 3-6 Sovereign Hill Camp
- ❖ Even Years – Year 3-6 Outdoor Activity Camp (in 2022 this was to Licola Wilderness Village)

Parents are welcome to take advantage of a progressive payment scheme to cover the camp costs if this assists with budgeting. This can easily be set up with our Business Manager, Mrs. Sharon Moule.

SCHOOL SPORTS:

We hold our own athletic school sports in term 1. All children participate and represent their House; the emphasis is on skill building and enjoyment. Children are assigned a House group when they enrol. Our Houses are Red – Morrow, Blue – Irving, Green – Penaluna, and Yellow – Strzelecki. Senior students are elected as House Captains. In 2022 these Houses were combined into MorrowLuna [Red and Green] and StrezIrving [Yellow and Blue].

We also participate in the district sports in Yinnar, usually towards the end of term 1, competing against prep to grade 6 students from Yinnar, Yinnar South, Hazelwood North, Churchill, Lumen Christi and Thorpdale Primary Schools. This is usually an action packed and very exciting day. It is also a day when we can use all the help we can and appreciate parent help to ensure events run smoothly. We always value the help and support we receive from our parents, and other family members, at both our own school sports and at the district sports in Yinnar.

Keyboard

Private keyboard lessons are available on request. They are provided by the highly accomplished pianist Ms Rosemary Abetz-Rouse. More information in appendix at the end of this booklet.

RECESS AND LUNCH ACTIVITIES:

- Children may borrow sports equipment from the Sports Shed at both recess and lunch
- Library regularly open at recess for quiet activities
- A variety of activities such as chess, draughts, building, badmington.
- Junior School Council and House Captains run activities throughout the year.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT & STUDENT WELLBEING

We actively work to assist our students to develop good social skills. Explicit teaching and coaching of our students is provided in areas such as positive self-talk, effective communication to resolve problems, welcoming and including others in play, not being a bystander when conflict arises and so forth. These skills are taught through our Respectful Relationships and Zones of Regulation Programs. As a smaller school, we all get to know each other well and therefore strongly support one another. We follow and implement the Berry Steet Educational Model.

Students undertake specific learning of Personal Development Curriculum for at least 1 hour per week. Classes are given frequent short brain break activities so students can recentre and be ready to learn. We believe that predictable routines lead to positive behaviour. To achieve this every class begins with Morning Circle. Timetables and changes to the day are discussed, children greet each other warmly and time is given to creating a positive start to the day. By building strategies into everyday structures our school environment is a calm and positive place to learn.



Classroom teachers place a strong emphasis on positive recognition for appropriate behaviour. This is celebrated through our Student of the Week announced at assembly every Friday afternoon. Students can also win points for their House. These accumulate over the month and, at the end of the month, the House with the most points receives a reward [such as hot chips for lunch]. We also present raffle tickets to students who show positive behaviours outside in the yard during recess and lunch play. Raffle winners are drawn at Friday assemblies and can choose a prize from the prize basket.

A friendship seat has been set up in the central play area near the basketball court. The purpose of this seat is to provide a place where students can sit if they are lonely or sad, in doing so alerting teachers and other pupils that there might be a problem.

Students have the option of regularly participating in organised activities at lunch and recess run by staff or students. Activities include:

- Chess or Indoor Games
- Quiet indoor activities such as colouring or board games
- Use of our swing.



We involve our students in the organisation of activities, so these change over the course of the year.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are an important part of the school community. There are numerous opportunities for parents to support school staff and students whether through volunteering in the classroom or helping to with sports days, in the library and or with other programs such as the Bike Ed. Program.

We value parent input and aim to provide opportunities for students to connect with our community. Our SLICE [Clubs] program (put on hold during the pandemic), enables parents and grandparents to share their specific skills and run workshops for small groups of students who express an interest in learning more about a particular skill or hobby.

When parents are actively involved in school life, they are clearly demonstrating that they value their child's education; this is also a great way to find out firsthand what is happening at school.



PARENTAL CONTACT:

We firmly believe that schools need to work in partnership with parents to achieve the best outcomes for our students. Teachers have a responsibility to communicate any concerns, as do parents. If you ever have any concerns or issues about any aspect of school life, please do not hesitate to raise the matter with your child's classroom teacher, relevant specialist teacher or myself.

In instances where the student's parents are separated or divorced the school will provide equal access and information to both parents unless Family Law Court Orders stipulate otherwise. The school should be provided with a copy of any relevant Family Law Court orders upon enrolment. In the event of custodial disputes, the principal will be guided by the Education Department's Legal Department to ensure the students' safety, wellbeing and needs are met.

If you are volunteering, please sign the Volunteers & Visitors Sign In and Out Book located at the front of the office. Please take a Visitor or Volunteer Lanyard so staff are aware that you are volunteering/visiting. These measures help to keep our student community safe.

FURTHER INFORMATION

SCHOOL LUNCHES:

The Boolarra General Store provides a range of lunch options that students can purchase on Fridays. Under Department of Education guidelines, we are not permitted to support the routine supply of soft drink, confectionery or fatty, fried foods.

Lunch orders are collected from the office at about 9:30a.m. Lunch money should be placed in an envelope with the child's name, grade and order clearly marked on the front. School payment envelopes are available to use for lunch orders and any other payments. These are located at the front of the office window. Lunches can also be ordered directly at the shop.

The lunch-order pricelist is provided on our website and displayed on the Parent Noticeboard.

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds to purchase their lunch from the shop unless they are accompanied by an adult who signs them in and out of the school.

WET/HOT (over 35°C) DAY TIMETABLE:

On wet/hot days children remain inside or under cover during our recess and lunch breaks with teacher supervision. Students may play quiet games, draw, read or talk with friends.

ASSEMBLY:

General Assemblies are held each Friday afternoon. The School Captains conduct assembly which is staged in the Multi-Purpose Room or outdoors if the weather is nice. The acknowledgment is recited, national anthem sung, the week's special events shared, birthdays acknowledged, announcements made and awards presented. Parents are most welcome and encouraged to stay for assembly.

HOMEWORK:

We have the expectation that all children will read for a short time every night. Students in all classes are provided with books from the classroom or school library. Students are also encouraged to practise their maths as we take out Mathematics Membership for all our students. This online Maths program is a great way to build maths skills at home. Passwords are sent home with students.

BLANKET PERMISSION:

Blanket permission is sought from parents at the start of the school year to cover outings in the immediate vicinity of the school.

On the Blanket Permission Form, we also seek parent permission to publish children's photos in the newsletter and in the local papers. This same Blanket Permission Form should be used to advise us of any medical conditions your child may suffer from or any medication requirements. It is especially crucial that we have an up-to-date Asthma and/or Anaphylaxis Plan for any asthmatic or anaphylactic students. **It is very important** that the Blanket Permission Forms are filled in and returned to school at the start of the school year.

LOUIS SCHERER BOOKS:

Louis Scherer was a former student who died of leukaemia in 1998, just after he graduated from our school. Our Library houses some books donated by Louis' family to the school. From time to time your child might borrow one of Louis' books – you will know if this occurs as they have a special sticker attached on the inside cover.

PRODUCTION/CONCERT:

On alternate years, we have either a major musical production or a school concert. In 2021, our school produced Kids in Space. Due to the Pandemic we elected to video the performance. We normally hold two concerts, a matinee and evening performance. In 2022, we will hold an end of year school concert.

LIBRARY LOANS/BORROWING:

All children are able to borrow books from our Library and are asked to return them after 2 weeks. Sometimes library books do not make it home so if your child is reporting that they have a book out in their name that you have not seen, check with the classroom teacher as it might be in their locker or somewhere in their classroom.

PERMISSION TO LEAVE SCHOOL:

Children will not be permitted to leave the school ground unless they have parental permission and are picked up by an adult. If children are collected from school during school time, this must be registered in the sign out book at the office. This book is used along with the classroom rolls in the event of an emergency evacuation to check all children's whereabouts.

BUS TRAVEL:

Mirboo North Secondary College coordinate the school buses that service our school (Budgerie, Grand Ridge and Boolarra South). In order to qualify to travel at no cost, students must live a prescribed distance from the school and must be attending the nearest government school. In some instances, students may be granted a place on the bus if they live closer to the school, but this will only be if seats are available and Mirboo North Secondary College approves this. Forms to apply for regular bus travel are available from our office.

Bus Supervisor, Dianne Sharman oversees the bus travellers as they arrive in the morning. One of our teachers takes responsibility for supervising the bus travellers after school. If students are not travelling on the bus, parents need to either advise us of this in person or write a note outlining whom they are authorised to go home with. This is particularly important as often students tell us they are going to someone's house, but we do not know if this is what their parents have agreed to. Occasional travellers are permitted to travel on the buses to visit a friend if a written note is submitted to our school so the principal can provide the necessary authorisation to the relevant bus driver.

AFTER SCHOOL ARRANGEMENTS

Upon dismissal, our students are in the care of their parents, or the person authorised by their parent to collect them. Students who are instructed by their parents to walk home are required to do so as soon as possible. If parents wish to remain within the school grounds so their children can play on the school equipment, parents need to ensure they still adhere to the school rules and take full responsibility for their child's behaviour and safety.

The school staff keep a watch on who is collecting students at the end of the day, particularly the younger ones. Please let us know if someone we are not accustomed to seeing, is authorised to collect your children to avoid potentially awkward situations.

If parents or carers are ever delayed, please contact the school so we can arrange for the impacted children to be supervised by the Bus Duty teacher.

CAR PARK – PARKING:

The Education Department has provided the car park **for staff and disabled parking only**. The turning loop is for the buses to use but may be used by parents as a drop-off and pick up point. **Please do not use the drop-off/pick up zone to park. Children are not permitted in the car park at any other time unless they are in close physical contact (holding hands preferably) with an adult.** Parking for parents outside the school is limited and during peak period times (home time) it can get very congested and dangerous. Please take great care. School Council recommend that large vehicles (such as 4-wheel drives) park on the opposite side of the road as these can obscure vision. **Please note that the 40km speed limit applies outside our school during morning drop off and afternoon pick up times and this is enforced by the police.**

BICYCLE POLICY:

School Council is not responsible for children riding to and from school, but wish to encourage children who do ride, to do so in a safe manner. If parents allow their child to ride to and from school they, and the child, are accepting responsibility for their behaviour. As identified by the Road Traffic Authority, children in Years Foundation to 3 are too young and inexperienced to ride bicycles to school without adult supervision. In line with sound safety practices, children in this age group should not ride their bicycles to school unless accompanied by an adult.

It is a requirement by law, that children wear helmets when riding their bikes. The school provides a storage area for bikes, but it should be noted that it takes no financial responsibility for theft or damage to bikes brought to school.

Students must walk with their bikes inside the school grounds. No scooting on bikes or riding bikes, scooters or skateboards within the school grounds is permitted until after the buses have departed (usually 3:45 pm). We undertake an intensive Bike Education program at the school for students in grades 3 –6; parent assistance is required for this program to run effectively. We also have been successfully involved in the Bike Ed Challenge having been the Latrobe Valley champions on many occasions.

STUDENT ABSENCES

School attendance is a legal requirement. The Education Department has an **“Every Day Counts”** policy; this promotes the importance of regular attendance to ensure strong learning. If students are absent from school parents need to inform the school. This can be done by:

- Filling out a pink absence note available at the school office
- Sending a note
- Ringing the school. If the phone is unanswered, please leave a message.
- Submitting an absence notification on SkoolBag

If home has not contacted the school, school will ring on the first day of absence. If families know that they will be away for an extended period, please see the classroom teachers so learning tasks can be set in an attempt to minimise the disruption to our students’ learning and provide a written note to the office.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

We are a designated school to be closed on days identified as Code Red due to high fire danger. When possible, advance notice will be provided if this is the case. **On these days no one is to be on the school site – this includes staff, students or any other workers.**

The school has a detailed plan for dealing with a range of potential disaster situations. Parents are welcome to obtain a copy from the office. We practise our procedures on a regular basis.

In the event of a hazard within the school, our evacuation point is the oval. It is vital that all visitors to the school are signed in as we use the Visitors' Register and the Attendance Rolls to check that everyone is safely evacuated. If parents are required to collect children from the oval following evacuation, we will notify them of this by telephone. If offsite evacuation is required, we will walk along the Rail Trail to the Memorial Park.

TRANSITION PROGRAM:

We work closely with the Boolarra Pre-School throughout the year to ensure that our incoming preps are well supported to move smoothly into our school. Our Junior Grades and Year 5's spend time with the kindergarten students. We also participate in 'transition' activities throughout the school year with the other primary schools that 'feed' students to Mirboo North Secondary College and Kurnai Secondary College in Churchill. Incoming Kinder students are allocated a buddy from amongst the senior students. Their buddy will assist them with snack and lunch routines as well as help them to socialise in the playground during break times.

SCHOOL COUNCIL POLICIES:

Our School Council has put a great deal of work into establishing a broad range of policies that inform our school operation, many of which are required by the Education Department. Some of our policies include Anaphylaxis Management, Sun Smart, Equal Opportunity, Countering Bullying, and Procedure for Managing Parental Complaints, Outdoor Education, Student Code of Conduct, Homework, Head Lice, Teaching & Learning, Bicycle Education, Attendance and Mobile Phone Use, amongst others. If you would like to read any of our policies (or suggest another area that we should develop a policy for) ask at the school office. Copies of policies are available can be found on our website by following the link.

[Policies \(boolarra.vic.edu.au\)](http://boolarra.vic.edu.au)

FOUNDATION INFORMATION

ENROLMENT PROCEDURES

Enrolments can be made at any time from the middle of May each school year.

Any child of school age – (must be five before 30th April of their first school year) will be accepted into our Foundation Program via the submission of:

- Enrolment Form
- Birth Certificate
- Immunisation Record (Australian Childhood Immunisation Register)

Parents can legally defer enrolment for their child until the child is six years old. Your child needs to have turned 5 on or before the 30th of April before he/she can legally start school. **Please** consider your child's overall development – physical, emotional, social as well as intellectual when deciding if he/she is ready for school. You can also talk with your child's preschool teacher regarding your child's readiness for school.

Towards the end of the preschool year, your child will be invited to attend orientation sessions with other preschool children who will be starting the following year.

FEBRUARY FLEXIBLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE FOR FOUNDATION

Foundation children will attend school for four full days being Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Students will attend school on a full-time basis after this transition period, at the beginning of March.

THINGS YOUR CHILD WILL NEED

Your child will be supplied with all their day to day needs such as books, scissors, sharpeners, textas and pencils. You will need to supply:

- School uniform including a wide brim sunhat
- A school bag
- Pencil case
- A lunch box.

THE FIRST DAY

The first day of school can bring to the forefront a range of emotions ranging from tears to smiles and laughter. If it should happen that your child is tearful, it is best to leave them with their classroom teacher so he/she can care for them. Linger often prolongs the anxiety for both child and you. Children usually settle within a very short amount of time.

HOW TO ASSIST IN A SMOOTH TRANSITION

The transition to school requires your child to cope in a new environment. Below is a list of ideas that may assist in your child adjusting more quickly to school.

- Talk to your child about school.
- Ask your child what they enjoyed at school.
- Encourage them by making positive comments about their learning.
- Read to your child.
- Teach them to remember and be able to recite their name, address, phone number, etc.
- Make sure they know where you will wait for them after school.
- Practice eating school lunches, making sure they know what foods are for snack and lunch.
- Practice safety around cars.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO CONSIDER

The Education Department webpage includes some useful resources for parents. For example, this link will take you to some tips on building learning skills at home:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/parents/primary/2011literacymathstips2011.pdf>

Your five-year-old should be able to do most of these things before beginning school.

➤ Feel confident in a small group.	➤ Basic mathematics, such as knowing the difference between moving under and over.
➤ Tie their shoelaces (or wear shoes with velcro tabs)	➤ Separate from their parents.
➤ Listen and carry out instructions.	➤ Persist with a task.
➤ Unpack their own lunch.	➤ Play with other children.
➤ Concentrate.	➤ Ask for help.
➤ Go to the toilet on their own.	➤ Work on their own and in a group.
➤ Sit still.	➤ Develop friendships.
➤ Know their address.	➤ Blow their nose

Some Information Provided by the Network Speech Pathologists

WHAT CAN YOU DO AT HOME TO ENCOURAGE *SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SKILLS*?

Phonological Awareness before school and early school years

- Play “I spy” a lot, making sure you emphasise the *sound* at the start of the word not the letter name.
- Talk about ‘sounds’ in words. Comment on the sound at the start of some words, e.g. shoe starts with ‘sh’, chip starts with ‘ch’, spot starts with ‘s’.
- Lots of children want to learn how to spell their name. When teaching them, break their name into sounds first, and then add the letter names.
- ‘Clap out’ the syllables in words sometimes. Words to use: children’s or family’s names, names of book characters, things you put on the shopping list, titles of stories you read with your children, any list of words such as colours, numbers, animals, places you visit.
- Sing nursery rhymes with your children. Wiggles videos and Playschool also sing great songs, but nothing beats doing it yourself. You are able to point out the important features in the songs or words and you can also make sure your children are moving in time with the music or attending to the important features of the song or rhyme.
- Read books to your children every day. Still an unbeatable learning tie, but often forgotten in our busy days.
- Write in front of your children. Write the shopping list, write notes, fill in raffle tickets, write your child’s name on their pictures, etc. When you do that, talk about the *sounds* you are writing not just the letters. Use lower case letters unless you are writing the initial letter of a proper noun (e.g. your child’s name).

Language development

- Model the correct use of complex sentences using the child’s own language. Listen to what your child has to say, and then rephrase their story or sentence into a more complex type of sentence. For example:

Child: The naughty cat runned away. But....because he was scared. The dog chaseded him.

Adult: Oh, I see. The dog chased the cat, so he ran away, **because** he was scared. Oh, the poor cat. What happened then?

- Model the use of lots of different verbs, or 'doing words'. Verbs are the most important words in a sentence. Use lots of different verbs when you talk, and emphasise a new or unfamiliar verb when you use it. Point out interesting verbs in stories. Verbs could be, for example: mix, consider, decide, squash, jump, play, do, make, go, see, visit, travel, choose.
- Talk about a story after you finish reading it. Ask your child to retell parts of it in his or her own words. While reading a story, sometimes stop and ask, 'What do you think will happen next?', or 'What do you think is going to happen at the end?' Talk about how the characters might be feeling or what they might be thinking.
- Play a version of "I spy" using describing words, for example you could play "I spy with my little eye, something that is round and long", or "I spy with my little eye, something that is bigger than me/higher than the windows/rough/noisy/something that has wheels/something that is hiding under something else, etc."

Speech sound errors

- Make sure your child's hearing has been tested properly. Follow up if there were any concerns at all. Remember, many children have had recurrent hearing problems or recurrent ear infections but have shown no symptoms and never complained of sore ears.
- Ask for advice from a speech pathologist.
- Talk about sounds, especially any sounds that your child does not yet produce correctly. Do not tell them they are doing it wrongly, just talk about the sound in the word. For example: "Oh, you would like some cake. That's a tricky word. It's got two 'k' sounds in it. We make those sounds at the back of our throats, back here. Cake".

Budd:e – This website is good for introducing children to cyber safety and keeping their netbooks protected. Children get to ‘build’ a buddy as they complete tasks.

Cyber [Smart:] - from Australian Government ACMA. Lots of information and games to reinforce safe online behaviour.

Young Kids Think Cyber Smart – also from Australian Government ACMA. Good for lower end of school. Lots of videos and games included.

Bullying. No Way! – general site on bullying. This website has sections appropriate for different age levels.

Digizen – has lots of information, videos and activities for teachers, parents and students. Great for upper primary.

BullyStoppers - from the Victorian DET for Students, Parents and School Personnel. This website has sections appropriate for different age levels.

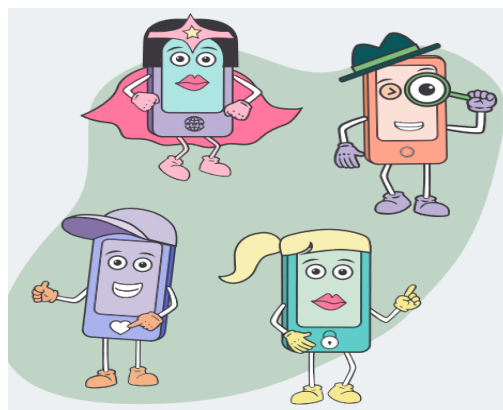
For information on **App ratings** and how to ensure your child is only downloading age appropriate apps:

<http://www.bewebmart.com/ipod-ipad-iphone/how-to-restrict-apps-by-rating/>

For information on **ratings for movies and video games** go to <http://www.classification.gov.au/Pages/Home.aspx>

Some More Helpful Hints on Managing Digital Technology at Home:

1. Create an ‘Acceptable Use Agreement’ for your families. Ensure that children are involved with this process.
2. Set up safe search and security controls with a platform such as ‘OpenDNS’.
3. Insist on all computers, laptops and mobile devices remaining OUTSIDE the bedroom. Recharge mobile devices outside bedrooms at night.
4. Lights out = wifi off.
5. Agree on screen time use; decide on ‘screen free’ times during the day and night.
6. Get involved – show an interest in what your child is doing online.
7. Talk to child’s teacher/s and school.
8. If your child reports an issue to you, do not threaten to take away their device – this may force them to become secretive.
9. Learn how various social network/game services work. Use websites such as the ‘Games, Apps & Social Networking’ from eSafety Office.
10. Tell children not to respond to any cyberbullying threats or comments online. However, (encourage screen shots as evidence) do not delete any of the messages – keep records to verify and prove there is cyberbullying.



PRIVATE PIANO/KEYBOARD LESSONS AT SCHOOL

Students are able to access private piano/keyboard lessons at school on a user pays basis.

Books:

I encourage students to bring along any music books they may have at home. I suggest that complete beginners work from Alfred's Basic Piano Library series which usually costs about \$5 - \$10 per book. Complete beginners can expect to work through the first two books in about a year, depending on how much practice they do and how many other pieces they work on outside the books. Books for more advanced students will be negotiated based on the student's preferred music style/s (pop, classical, jazz etc). Please provide your child with a "display folder" which is a spiral-bound folder with clear plastic pockets, to store loose music sheets.

Practice:

Rather than waiting until they can set aside half an hour to practise, ideally students should be practising just for a few minutes **every** day whenever possible.

Performing:

It can be a good idea to encourage students to play a piece in front of family or friends to get them used to performing. Students will perform at a school concert or assembly at least once a year.

Minimum age:

While students can achieve results at any age, I would not recommend starting lessons before the child has developed an ability to recognise the English alphabet and read some words. Please do not hesitate to call or email me if you would like to discuss anything - my contact details are below.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Rosemary I Abetz-Rouse

455 Whitelaws Trk
Yinnar South VIC 3869
rosemary@abetz-rouse.com.au
(03) 5169 1621

Rosemary Abetz-Rouse

B.Mus(Hons), A.Mus.A