



# P12 Information Handbook

## INTRODUCTION

### Welcome to Early Years education at Apollo Bay P-12 College

This handbook is designed to provide a brief insight into the workings of Years Prep, One and Two (P12). All of us; parents, teachers and children, working as a team, will result in the best outcome for your child, and a lifelong set of skills that will prepare them well for their future.



### Multi-aging

We have four P12 Home Groups working in two open spaces. Classes are divided into combinations of Prep, Year 1 and Year 2. This approach is based on an educational philosophy that is child centred and developmentally based. It allows students to progress at their own speed. There are also many social and emotional benefits. Class sizes are smaller than required in P12 to ensure maximum learning opportunities for students.

### Red Room

- ✦ Alessandra Free (Monday - Friday): [alessandra.free@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:alessandra.free@education.vic.gov.au)
- ✦ Michelle Carney (Tuesday - Friday) & Cara Hudson (Monday): [michelle.carney@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:michelle.carney@education.vic.gov.au) ; [cara.hudson@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:cara.hudson@education.vic.gov.au)

### Orange Room

- ✦ Cam Smith (Monday - Friday): [cameron.smith@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:cameron.smith@education.vic.gov.au)
- ✦ Jade Kent (Monday - Thursday) & Cara Hudson (Friday): [jade.kent@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:jade.kent@education.vic.gov.au)

## ORGANISATION

### Attendance

- Children are expected to come to school on time, but not before formal yard supervision that starts at **8:40am**. Children in P12 do not line up; they go inside when the music is playing and get ready for their first lesson. Classroom doors open at **8.50am** for children to put their bags inside.
- **PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOUR CHILD ARRIVES AT SCHOOL BEFORE THE BELL RINGS TO START THE DAY AT 8:55am.** Lateness causes your child to miss important information about the day and also the initial focus of our lesson. It also causes a disruption to the teacher and other members of the classroom.
- If your child is absent or late on a given day, please make note of it on Compass or contact the Office. This is also the case for extended holidays.
- Frequent absences from school can cause significant disruption to your child's learning and social interactions. Please try to plan appointments, haircuts, shopping trips and birthday outings on weekends and school holidays when possible.

### Every Day Counts

If you want your child to be successful at school then,  
**YES, attendance does matter!**

**1 or 2 days a week doesn't seem much but.....**

If your child misses.....	That equals.....	Which is.....	And over 13 years of schooling that's.....
1 day per fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1.5 years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2.5 years
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

**How about 10 minutes late a day? Surely that won't affect my child?**

He/ She is only missing just.....	That equals.....	Which is.....	& over 13 years of schooling that's.....
10 mins per day	50 minutes p/week	Nearly 1.5 weeks p/yr	Nearly half a year
20 mins per day	1hr 40 mins p/ week	Over 2.5 weeks p/year	Nearly one year
30 mins per day	Half a day p/ week	4 weeks p/ year	Nearly 1.5 years
1 hour per day	One day p/ week	8 weeks p/ year	Over 2.5 years

## Uniform

- The Uniform Policy is clearly stated in the student diary and is also available from the office.
- Terms 1 and 4 are our '**HAT terms**'. Children **MUST** wear a school logo hat when outdoors.
- Our uniform policy requires children to wear **BLACK** closed toe shoes with **NO LOGOS** and good support for playground activity. Socks should be navy blue.
- **Please ensure that students can tie laces if you intend on sending them to school with lace-up shoes.** Your child's teacher is very busy and it is time consuming to repeatedly tie several pairs of shoe laces.
- All items of clothing **MUST** be clearly labelled. Finding an owner is much easier if items are labelled. It can be difficult to label navy blue items, so we suggest sewing labels on or using light coloured permanent markers, puff paint or silver sharpies.
- There are '**Lost Property**' tubs in your child's classroom and a 'Lost Property' box on the BER deck (opposite the General Office entrance). Please check both places for lost items. Other good places to check for missing items are: the Library, Music Room and Leisure Centre.

## Food and Drinks

- We encourage children to own a school bag large enough to carry their lunch box, water bottle, home book pouch, library bag and bathers or other necessary sports gear. The school office sells bags that will do this job and see them through to the middle years.
- We encourage children to carry their own water bottle to school for use during class and at lunchtime. We strongly discourage a drink containing sugar or food colouring as this affects concentration time and if spilt causes a sticky mess. Pop-top water bottle lids are also strongly encouraged to avoid spills.
- **Each day, children require a substantial morning snack (Break 1, 10.50-11.20am) and packed lunch (Break 2, 1.10pm-2.00pm).** Please pack what your child will eat. Staff encourage children to eat most of the food in their lunch boxes. We strongly encourage lunches to be nutritious; low in added sugar, salt and food colouring. Also, including a small piece of fruit and/or cut up veggies each day is advised as we often have mid-morning **fruit breaks**. We encourage minimal wrappings or 'nude food', to reduce landfill.
- **Each Friday, we have a canteen service available to the children.** Menus will be sent home in the first few weeks of school and can be found on Compass. Orders should be clearly written on a paper bag, with correct money enclosed. Please have your child place their order in the correct home group tub outside the classroom on a **Thursday**. Orders are delivered to the classroom before Break 2 each Friday. Extra bags can be ordered from the canteen for a small cost.
- It is important that you do not over order for your child. Milkshakes are very filling and don't leave a lot of room for multiple sausage rolls or party pies.

## Special Requirements

- A **class timetable** will be sent home, once the whole-school timetable is finalised.
- **Library** days may vary from term to term and class to class. Children must have a library bag in order to borrow.

## Prep specific

- We advise parents to make drop off to school run smoothly by creating a routine that you have discussed and agreed upon together.
- The classroom teacher will be in the classroom most mornings during Term 1.
- **Preps have one day off per week (Wednesdays) until March 13th.** For the remainder of Term 1, it is optional for Preps to attend on Wednesdays. Often Preps get quite tired when they first start school, so by having Wednesday off, the week is broken with a rest day in between. Assessment interviews will take place on these days early in the year.
- Sound Cards will be sent home with Prep students. You will receive specific information about any resources like this that are sent home.

## Communication

- If your child is a **bus traveller**, please notify the school if they will not be using the service in the afternoon or following morning. This can be done by note, phone call or email.
- If you wish to collect your child from school during school hours, please come via the office. Office staff will collect your child from class. This procedure causes minimal disruption to the class if followed.
- If you wish to deliver your child's lunch, drop off a hat or home books or simply pass on a message, please go via the office and not directly to your child.
- Every second Friday, a **news sheet** is distributed to the youngest or only child attending school. Please check your child's bag! The paper news sheet that you receive is only the first 2-4 pages of the news sheet. The rest of the news sheet will be delivered online via Compass. Be sure to check the online version for lots of extra information, photos and student work.
- If you wish to speak to your child's teacher, please make an appointment to do so through the office.
- Formal **parent-teacher interviews** will be held early in Term 2 and possibly later in the year as well. Appointments are made through the office or online for a time suitable to you.

## Transition

- Our new Preps have class buddies assigned. New Preps are monitored in the playground and in the classroom. Regular discussions between P12 teachers take place regarding their welfare. Prep students also have a Year 6 Buddy.

## General

- **Please encourage independence and organisation at home.** Your child should be able to open lunch boxes, do up buttons and zips, tie their own shoelaces, put their belongings away and pack and carry their own school bag to school.
- **Children learn best when they are well rested, well fed, comfortable and happy.** We encourage children to go to bed at a reasonable hour so that yawning and sluggish performances do not occur throughout the day.
- Children in P12 participate in a **whole school athletics carnival** in Term 1 with activities suitable to them and their interests. We love to see parents and grandparents there to cheer on their children/grandchildren.
- Throughout the year, your child may be invited on a **school excursion**. The excursion will be chosen to suit the theme being studied. A note with details will go home with your child when the occasion arises. The note will include all the details of the day, departure and arrival times, transport, costs and food and clothing requirements. You will also receive a reminder on COMPASS.
- **Year 2 students participate in their first school camp/sleepover this year.** This is a wonderful opportunity to build resilience, independence, nurture friendships and sleeping at school is very exciting too! Staff will notify you of sleepover dates, once they have been finalised. This usually takes place in Term 4.
- **Head lice** are a common predicament at school. Contact the office immediately if you suspect your child has head lice. You will be given simple directions to follow. If hair is long enough to be tied back, please do so. If hair is still a little short for tying back, hair clips and headbands are recommended. This will help lessen the spreading of head lice and will allow your child to work and focus without hair in their eyes.

# LITERACY: - Helping your child to Read, Write, Speak and Listen

Here are some fun activities that may help to develop early literacy skills: Dressing up and imaginative play, sharing rhymes, singing songs (and encouraging your child to join in), pointing out words and letters all around you e.g. number plates, cereal boxes and street signs. We encourage you to provide a range of drawing and writing materials - for example, textas, pens, pencils, card, paper. Engage your child in storytelling about favourite books and toys. Have some fun by using different voices when reading or playing with puppets. Other suggestions are re-reading favourite stories, looking for rhyme and repetition and listening to recorded/audio stories.



## READING

Your child will use a 'reading pouch' to keep their reading resources organised.

The reading pouch is one of the most used resources in P12. It consists of one large pouch that is used to store notes, student diary and home reading books. A smaller pouch is stored inside the larger pouch and usually contains coloured word cards and/or sound cards. Please ensure the two pouches stay together and check the pouch each day for any notes/information or student work that is being sent home.

Reading pouches will be sent home at the end of each day, so that they can be used for reading, sound and spelling practise. Please ensure that all books, diaries and other resources are packed up and put back in schoolbags to be returned to school each day, as students will use the books and diaries frequently.

Prep students will change books on an almost daily basis at the beginning of the year. Year 1 and Year 2 students will have a book changing day as set by their homegroup teacher. Diaries will be checked on this day. We encourage you to ask your child to hand their diary to their teacher if you have a communication you would like checked, as staff do not always have time to check diaries on a daily basis. We don't want to miss any important information from you!

### We encourage daily reading in P12

**Reading every night/day for 20-30 minutes** is a way of ensuring that your child makes progress with reading. Reading will be important in all subject areas and students that are confident readers usually carry this confidence with them into other subjects and situations. Daily reading also instils a love of reading, confidence, routines and extra rehearsal of what they have already learnt. They also relish the opportunity to show you what they know. **The holidays and weekends are the perfect time to reinforce reading strategies and show that reading is not 'homework', but rather a pleasurable activity valued by all the family. Make listening/reading, a special time every day.**

### Reading can be all kinds of texts...

Comics, Magazines, Cards, Diaries, Newspapers, Atlases, Maps and Street Directories, Recipes, Instructions  
Picture Books, Letters, Emails, Poetry, Signs

# READING...continued

## HELPING YOUR CHILD TO READ

### \* BE PATIENT \*

Give your child time to work out the words.

**After 5-10 seconds, encourage your child to use the following strategies:**

- *Say the sounds*
- *Put them together*
- *Read the word*

## SOME THINGS TO TRY

- **Encourage** your child to guess/predict what the story is about before and during reading, by looking at the pictures, cover and title.
- **Praise** when an idea or word is used that makes sense in the context of the story.
- **Ask questions** like “Why did the wolf do that?”
- **Talk about the pictures** so your child gets an idea of what they may be going to read about.
- **Don't just tell them the word!** Suggest a strategy so that they can learn to read the words independently.

## CORRECTING MISTAKES

If the mistake makes sense, such as ‘house’ for ‘home’, let your child continue until the end of the sentence or page and then ask “What word was that?” “You said ‘house’ and it doesn't have an ‘s’ in it.”

If the mistake does not make sense, lead your child to correct the mistake by allowing time to self-correct. If they do not self-correct, at the end of the sentence, re-read what they have said and ask “Does that make sense?”.

Finally, if the meaning is still not clear, look at the word and find familiar sounds such as ‘s’ at the beginning or ‘ing’ at the end.

## AFTER READING DISCUSSION and QUESTIONS

When finished reading, ask your child plenty of questions. For example:

- Did you enjoy the book?
- Which character did you like best?
- Why did that character do or say that?
- Why did that happen at the end?
- Which illustration do you like best?
- Would you like us to read that one again tomorrow night?
- Why did the character...?
- How did you feel when...?
- What might happen next?

# READING...continued



## MORE TIPS

Beginning readers may want **you** to **read first**. **Take turns** to read parts or pages of the story. Try leaving out the last word in an occasional sentence, so your child can anticipate what the word be. Talk about the book after reading.

Make it **FUN!**

*\* If your child sees you reading every day, this will help develop lifelong positive attitudes to reading \**

## READING LEVELS

Beginning readers start with books at Level 1 that are repetitive, with short sentences and familiar topics. This is to develop confidence and to get them used to the practicalities of reading such as:

- left to right sweep across the page
- common words such as I, he, she, is, to
- turning pages correctly – **from the corner of the page**
- using the pictures as clues
- pointing to individual words to reinforce what a word is
- reading like we talk, smoothly and with expression
- familiarity of text

When assessed by the teacher as ready, the child progresses to Level 2 and beyond. This progression takes into account a number of reading strategies that are evaluated during Guided Reading sessions and individual student reading assessments.

If your child is still on one level or colour for an extended amount of time, there will be a reason for this e.g. they do not demonstrate a strong understanding of texts after reading.

The books your child brings home will be assessed by the teacher as '**easy**'. That is, they should be able to read 100 words of text and make less than 5 mistakes. The books we read in Guided Reading with the teacher will be '**instructional**' i.e. up to 10 mistakes per 100 words or a percentage there of.

Children may bring home 'favourite' books many times. Encourage re-reading of books in their pouch or ones they have had before. Show enthusiasm for these familiar texts, even though you may have heard them numerous times!

We are focused on how the reading sounds and that it is easily understood. It is best to focus on these things, rather than the level that your child is reading. ***Don't compare your child's performance with that of other children, they all develop at their own pace.***

## SPEAKING AND LISTENING

When children begin school, much of their language is about familiar topics of things they can see and are happening now. This 'home' talk is often short with immediate responses and to a familiar audience i.e. mum, dad or siblings.

As they progress through the Early Years, language becomes more often about things outside the immediate time and place. 'School' talk becomes increasingly lengthy, is more challenging for the listener and involves a less familiar audience.

A broad vocabulary and experience with language, through **books, experiences and conversation** will assist in developing a child's speaking and listening skills and ultimately reading and writing. For example; A child who has heard and used the words **exciting** or **amazing**, will have a better chance at reading them, than the child who has only experienced words such as **good**.

Mispronounced words (hostile = hospital & around = around), incorrectly formed sentences (she go to the park), incorrect grammar (I done a drawing), may sound cute, but in fact are often responsible for creating some reading and writing difficulties, both now and in the future.

Children who may have a speech difficulty, can be referred to the Visiting Speech Therapist for extra tuition, however, due to our location this service is limited.

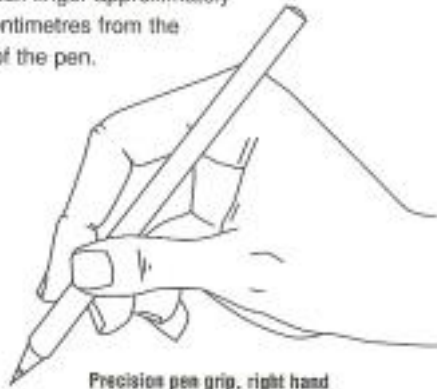
# WRITING

## Handwriting

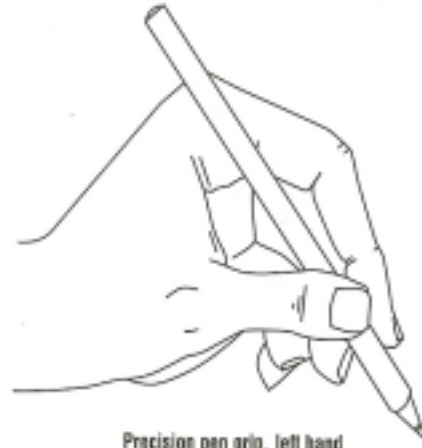
Handwriting is an important skill. The goal is for children to develop neat, legible handwriting that is achieved quickly and comfortably, and is easy to read. Children's writing should be produced using natural movement of the arm, hand and fingers.

A wide variety of writing tools should be used, maintaining the **correct grip**.

The hand should form a question mark shape with the index finger approximately two centimetres from the point of the pen.



Precision pen grip, right hand



Precision pen grip, left hand

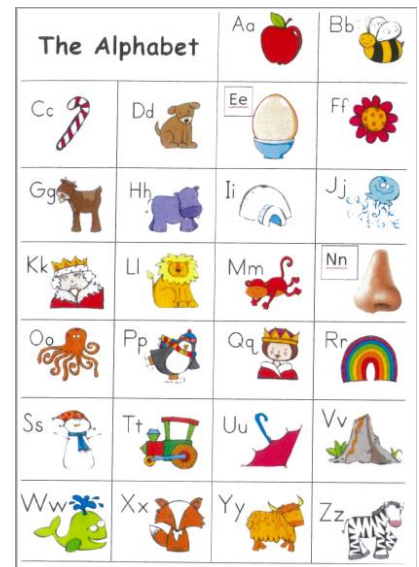
15

- Children should use standard, adult implements. Large barreled crayons, textas and chalk can make it very difficult to develop a precision pen grip. Letters should be spaced evenly with larger spaces occurring between words (a pinkie finger space between words is recommended).
- Writing implements should be held comfortably in the hand, with **normal pressure** being applied to paper in order to make an impression. If a child presses too hard, this should be discouraged immediately, as muscles and tendons can tighten and cause injury in the long term.
- A range of paper, card, lined and unlined paper is used in the classroom. **Dotted thirds (18mm)** guide the child to form letters in the correct size – first third for lower case letters, second third for capital letters and the top third is used for letters on the previous bold line that have a tail; ie: p, y, f, j.
- When writing, the **paper should be sloped** according to the angle of the arm. Placing the paper correctly helps the writer to see clearly what is being written and enables more freedom of movement when writing.
- Children should sit with their bottoms tucked back in the chair, both feet on or pointing towards the floor and back in a relaxed, yet straight position. The right or left hand should hold the paper lightly, below the actual line of writing. Holding up the head, using a hand or slouching/bad **posture** in the chair will cause early fatigue. Correct posture should be practised at home, at the dinner table or kitchen bench, as this will continue to develop the required posture.
- When **writing or reading at home**, children should have access to a table or desk suitable to their size. A table that is too high causes strain; a table that is too low causes slumping. From the beginning, children should be encouraged to adopt a good posture at all times. At school we notice that many children like to tuck their feet under their bottoms – we strongly **discourage** this and ask that you support us in this at home as well.



## WRITING...continued

The chart below outlines correct starting points and letter formation. Please refer to this chart when helping your child with writing at home. Your classroom teacher may have also sent home one of these charts for you to practise with.



- Proof reading, self-editing, correcting and conferencing skills are taught and supported. Learning Centres in reading time, teach and extend these skills also.
- In P12, we teach children correct language terminology for example: noun, proper noun, pronoun, verb, adverb, and adjective. We teach correct sentence structure and encourage children to speak and write in the correct tense.
- If your child is keen to write at home, try getting them to help write a shopping list, keep a white board in a family area where they can leave messages, plan and write a weekly menu together, write letters to friends and family members.
- A creative writing piece always has a beginning, middle and an end. The beginning introduces the characters and setting, the middle works with all the information which builds the story up, including the problem. Finally, the end includes the solution to the problem. This simple formula will guide your child to writing a successful story at home.
- During writing focus, teachers teach a specific skill for the children to practise. Each child is taught to sit in 'Listening Position' – legs crossed, hands in laps and eyes on the speaker. This can be practised at home too!

## SPELLING - Sounds Write

- P12 students participate in 5 x 30 minute spelling lessons per week in flexible groups or mixed-age groups, depending on their needs and abilities.
- Sounds-Write is an expertly structured synthetic phonics programme based on the science of reading. This multisensory, code-oriented, comprehensive approach to literacy, has been designed by teachers, for teachers.
- Students learn the concepts necessary for proficient reading and writing. They master most common spellings of the 44 sounds in English through reading and writing polysyllabic (more than one syllable) words, as well as following our two code programs; the Initial Code (Prep) the Extended Code (Year 1 and Year 2).



# MATHS/NUMERACY

- P12 students participate in 5 x 55 minute Maths lessons per week.
- Students will work in flexible groups or mixed-age groups, depending on their needs and abilities.
- Our curriculum is divided into areas of study. These cover topics such as Number, Measurement and Statistics and Probability.
- Practising number writing and counting are the first encounters with Number. Children need lots of counting, making, drawing and talking about Maths.
- Students are taught to touch each object as they count, known as 1:1 correspondence.
- Prep, Year 1 and Year 2 students who are experiencing specific difficulties e.g. reversal of numbers, may be given extra work to complete at home with parental assistance.
- Other homework activities may be given, as required, to revise topics.
- You can encourage a love of number and other mathematical concepts at home by creating situations where your child can:

- ✓ Listen and participate in nursery rhymes e.g. Five Little Ducks, Ten Green Bottles
- ✓ Playing “shop” and labelling packets with prices
- ✓ Helping to pay for items at the shops with cash
- ✓ Making and using play money
- ✓ Card games
- ✓ Counting everyday objects e.g. how many apples in the bag? How many tyres on a truck?
- ✓ Cooking and weighing ingredients
- ✓ Awareness and recognition of numbers in the environment e.g. road signs, street numbers
- ✓ Looking for patterns in the environment i.e. stripes on footy jumpers, window designs
- ✓ Making patterns from blocks, cutlery, beads
- ✓ Playing games involving dice e.g. snakes and ladders
- ✓ Building and measuring towers of blocks
- ✓ Counting forwards and backwards
- ✓ Using a calculator
- ✓ Looking at and using a calendar or diary
- ✓ Talking about shapes in their environment e.g. that table is a rectangle shape
- ✓ Cutting fruit into parts e.g. halves, quarters

# GENERAL STUDIES AND SPECIALIST SESSIONS

- During periods 4 and 5 students participate in 55 minute periods involving a range of specialist and General Studies lessons. This involves them moving to different parts of the school with a range of different teachers.
- Specialist Classes include: French, Art, Physical Education, Library, Music, ICT and STEM.
- All other General Studies sessions follow an Integrated Studies approach. Integrated Studies topics are the focus of afternoon sessions but also form the basis of planning for Literacy and some Maths sessions as well.
- Integrated Studies topics are taught as part of a three-year cycle, so that during their three years in P12, students will learn about a wide range of topics.
- Afternoon sessions also cover personal and social awareness and wellbeing.
- At the end of the day we have a short Home Group. In this time the class comes back together with their Home Group teacher, packs up, discusses important upcoming or events of the day and receives notes.