



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 P12.

Please keep it as a reference throughout your child's years in Prep, One and Two.

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 for their future.

Multi-ageing

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.

LITERACY

Helping your child to Read, Write, Speak and Listen

Early literacy is developed through rhymes, storytelling and following along with favourite books.

Learning to write begins with scribble and drawings.

Below are some activities that will help develop these skills...

- Dressing up and imaginative play
- Creating with cardboard and recycled items
- Sharing rhymes and songs and encourage your child to join in
- Pointing out words and letters all around you e.g.: number plates, cereal boxes
- Providing a range of drawing and writing materials i.e.: textas, pens, pencils, card, paper
- Engaging in storytelling about favourite books, toys
- Using different voices when reading or playing with puppets
- Re-reading favourite stories
- Looking for rhyme and repetition e.g.: "I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house down"
- Talking about the author and illustrator
- Listening to recorded stories on CD, tape or iPod



READING

Encourage children to USE the following as a guide to assist them in the reading of material. The HAND provides the prompts that GOOD readers use.



Make listening/reading, a special time

* BE PATIENT *

Give your child time to work out the words.

5 seconds or more is reasonable.

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

- What do you think the word is?
- Read the sentence again to see if you can work it out
- Have a go
- Look at the picture
- What does it start with?

SOME THINGS TO TRY

Encourage your child to guess 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.

READING

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 could 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 ****

AFTER READING DISCUSSION and QUESTIONS

When finished reading, ask your child plenty of questions. E.g.

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 EVERY night for 20 – 30 minutes will give your child the best chance they can have

Reading every night is a way of ensuring that your child progresses at an acceptable rate through the levels. This also instills a love of reading, confidence, routine 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.

Reading can be all sorts of texts...

Comics
Magazines
Diaries
Newspapers
Atlases
Maps and
Street directories
Recipes
Instructions
Picture books
Letters
Emails
Poetry

The ‘home reading pouch’ MUST come back and forth to school EVERY DAY

Teachers and parent helpers will require access to this pouch on any day.

Inside will be up to 10 books and a diary. Parents are requested to fill in the title of the book and a comment about the child’s reading in the designated sections. Preps may bring home 1 or 2 books in the beginning. Children usually select their own books from their level/coloured box.

Year 1 and 2 students will select books during class time once a week. Preps will change their books every day until they are ready. They will eventually transition to selecting all of their books at the beginning of the week as well.

You may also find sound and word cards in the pouch.

Refer to the Word Study/Spelling section for more information about this.



Notices and other forms will be sent home in your child’s pouch so please ensure you check this regularly.

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 may not be reading with expression or they do not demonstrate 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 thereof.

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.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30

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 & awound = 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.

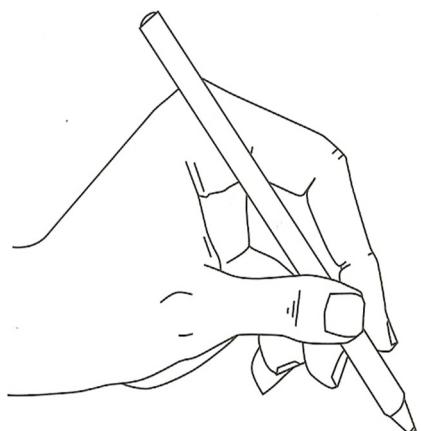


WRITING

Handwriting

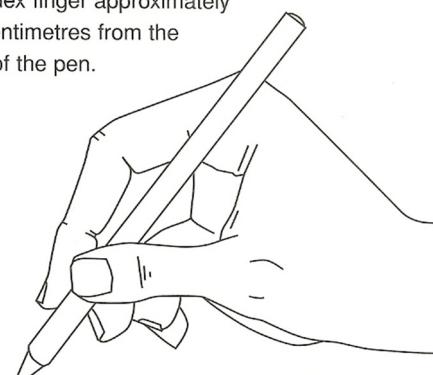
Handwriting is an important skill. The goal is for children to develop neat, legible handwriting, that is achieved quickly and comfortably, and is easy to read. Children's writing should be produced using natural movement of the arm, hand and fingers.

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



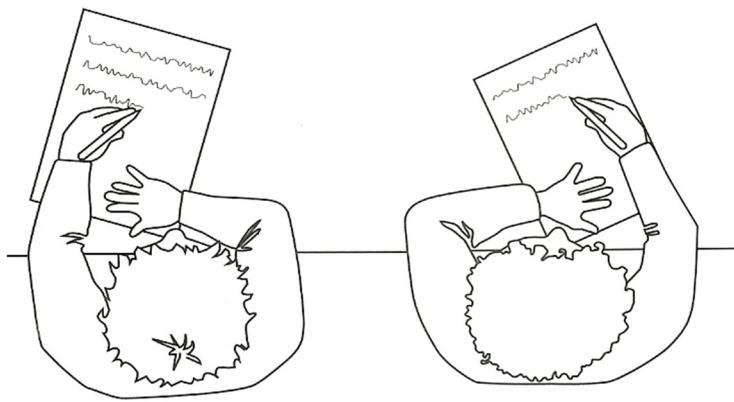
Precision pen grip, left hand

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

- 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, g, 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 it 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 too.



- The chart below outlines correct starting points and letter formation. Please refer to this chart when helping your child with writing at home.

a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m
Around, up, down, around.	Down, up, around.	Around..	Around, up, down, around.	Around, around.	Around, down, around, lift, cross.	Around, up, down, around.	Down, up, around, down, around.	Down, around, lift, dot.	Down, around, lift, dot.	Down, up, around, down, around.	Down, around.	Down, up, around, down, up, around, down, around.
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Down, lift, down, lift, cross.	Down, lift, around, around.	Around.	Down, lift, around.	Down, lift, cross, lift, cross, lift, cross.	Down, lift, cross, lift, cross.	Around, up, lift, cross.	Down, lift, down, lift, cross.	Down, lift, cross, lift, cross.	Down, around, lift, cross.	Down, around, lift, down,	Down, cross.	Down, lift, down, up, down.
n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z
Down, up, around, down, around.	Around.	Down, up, around.	Around, up, down, up.	Around, up, around.	Down, around, lift, cross.	Down, around, up, down, around.	Down, up.	Down, up.	Down, up, down, up.	Down, up,	Down, lift, down.	Cross, down, cross.
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Down, lift, down, up.	Around.	Down, lift, around.	Around, lift, cross.	Down, lift, around, down.	Around, around.	Down, lift, cross.	Down, around, up.	Down, up.	Down, up, down, up.	Down, up, down.	Down, lift, down.	Cross, down, cross.

- Proof reading, self-editing, correcting and conferencing skills are taught and supported. Learning Centers 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 end. The beginning introduces the characters and setting, the middle working with all the information that builds the story up, including the problem and 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

- Students will receive words from a spelling focus each week (see SMART Spelling information below) as well as individual words from their writing. Spelling tests usually begin in Term 2.
- For students to be able to correctly spell words they must also be able to read and recognise them by sight. Your child may be given different colour cards to put in their home reading pouch. Please ensure that you practise reading these words regularly. They should be instantly recognised and clearly articulated.
- Please ensure that you discuss and analyse the spelling words while practising them. In class we call this 'Word Study'. There are many words that are easily confused on the spelling lists. It is important to read and discuss the meaning and appropriate use of words. This is particularly vital with homophones e.g.: there & their, know & no, to, too & two etc. and words that are easily confused: were & where etc. Putting words into sentences whilst practicing is beneficial for this reason. Discuss the patterns, what the words look like, words you can see inside words and how many sounds you can hear e.g. chat (You can hear 3 sounds and there are 4 letters).
- Repetition and consistency are the keys to improvement in spelling as there are so many words that cannot be sounded out and must be learnt by sight or memory e.g.: know, was, who etc.
- We have seen that the students who make the greatest improvements in spelling are those that do extra, regular practise at home.

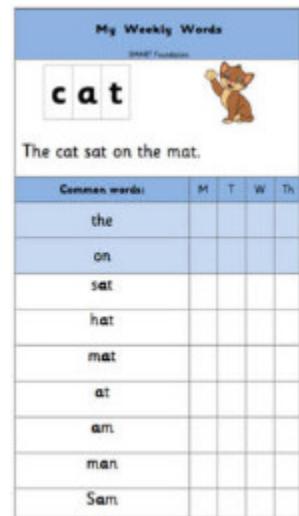
SMART Spelling

A meaningful way to teach sounds, letters and common words.

SMART Foundation uses a meaningful sequence to teach sounds and letters from a 'Word of the Week' and explicitly teaches common words from 'The Sentence of the Week'!

The 'Word of the Week' inspires curiosity, excitement, hands-on shared experiences, rich oral language and most importantly...fun...and that makes learning stick! Phonics is taught explicitly and systematically in a carefully structured sequence from the Words of the Week.

'The Sentence of the Week' places the most commonly seen words into meaningful sentences. These common words are explicitly taught by the classroom teacher and there is also home learning to support this called...'My Weekly Words'



Enjoy a meaningful way to teach sounds, letters and common words in a related way that makes the most of meaning! You and your kids will have so much fun!

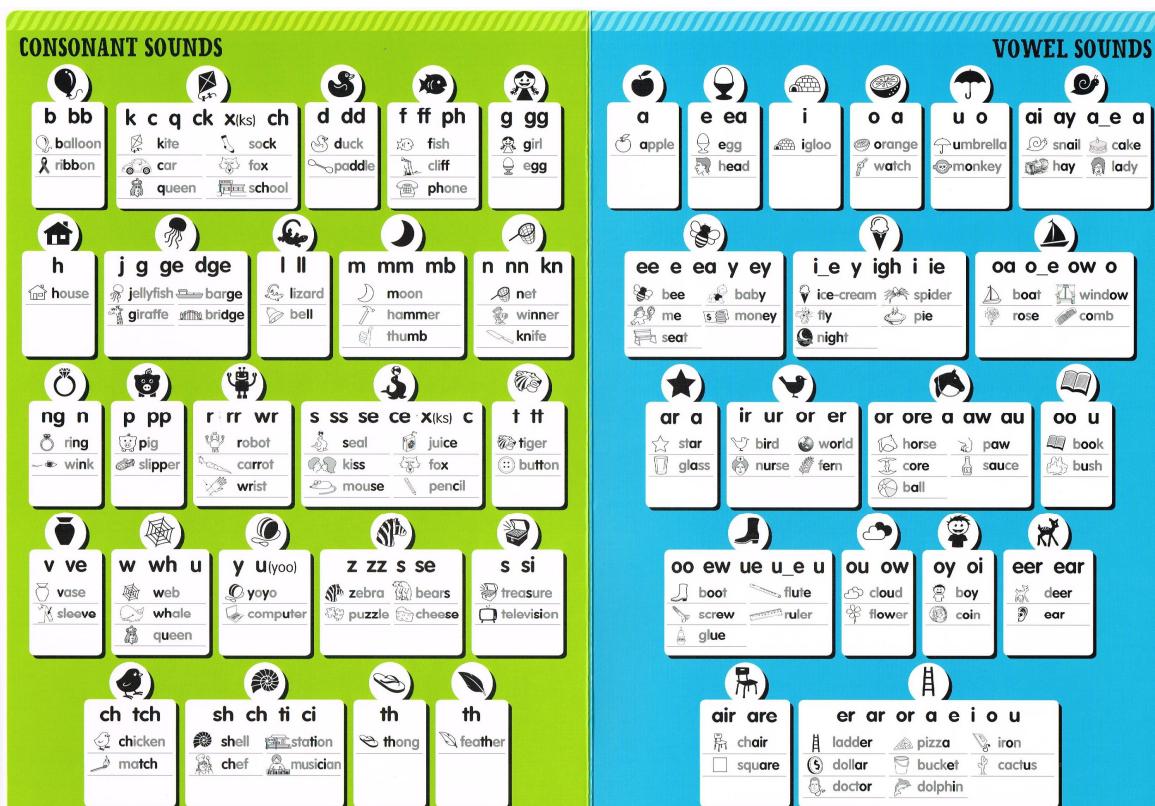
<https://www.michellehutchison.com.au/p/smart-foundation>

Sound Waves

What on Earth is Sound Waves?

Sound Waves is a systematic whole school word study program designed to develop spelling and reading skills using the phonemic approach.

Knowledge of the Sound Waves picture chart is like knowing the times tables chart for literacy



The Sound Waves chart is made up of 43 sounds or phonemes. Sound Waves aims to help students understand the link between these 43 phonemes of the spoken English language and the 26 letters of our alphabet. As we only have 26 letters to represent these 43 sounds, Sound Waves teaches that there is a range of letters and letter combinations used to represent each sound.

The icons on the chart give a visual cue to students so that they can quickly find spelling choices and correctly articulate speech sounds. Students must be able to find and understand why words and icons are on the chart.



For example: **chef** is on the chart representing the sound usually associated with the letters **sh**; like at the beginning of **shark**. The icon to support this is a shell.



There are several words that use this spelling choice: **chute**, **charade**, **chandelier**, **machine**. Students must understand all of the spelling choices available to them if they are to become good spellers.

Have you ever seen your child write **WOZ** instead of **WAS**? This is a common error – they are hearing the sounds correctly, they are just not making the correct spelling choices when writing.

The link below this photo will take you to video footage of students demonstrating the Sound Waves Chants and Actions.



Sound Waves Chants and Actions

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QR17p7w6kvw>

MATHS

- P12 students participate in 5 x one hour Maths lessons per week.
- Students may work in year level 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.
- 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 you buy, How many tyres on a truck
- ✓ Cooking and weighing ingredients
- ✓ Reading a thermometer or rain gauge
- ✓ 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
- ✓ Drawing patterns for borders on cards
- ✓ Playing games involving dice e.g. snakes and ladders
- ✓ Playing number games online e.g. www.abc.net.au/countusin/
- ✓ Measuring the height of members of the family
- ✓ 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



- Prep and Year 1 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.

Afternoon Sessions – General Studies

What happens after lunch?

- In the afternoon, students participate in two 48 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: Cultural Studies, Art, Sport, Library, Music 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.

Classroom Helpers

Are you interested in supporting our fantastic classroom programs?

- Classroom helpers can assist the P12 team both in and out of the classroom.
- Help may involve supporting individuals, small groups or the teacher to complete tasks outside of the classroom.
- You could assist by listening to students reading, working with small groups in literacy or maths, helping with spelling, typing, covering books, sorting books, coming on excursions, filling in for other helpers if they are away. There is always something to be done in P12!
- Any free time you have to offer is warmly welcomed.
- You will be able to sign up at P12 Information night in Term 1 or speak to your home group teacher.
- We have jobs already waiting and ready to go ☺

ORGANISATION

Prep specific

- We advise parents to make drop off to school fuss free 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 to make this time a happy and 'normal' time.
- Preps have one day off per week for the duration of Term 1. This is to help them get used to their new school routine. 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.

Attendance

- Children are expected to come to school on time, but not before formal yard supervision that starts at 8:38am. Children in P12 do not line up; they go inside when the music is playing and get ready for their first lesson.
- PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOUR CHILD ARRIVES AT SCHOOL BEFORE THE START OF THE DAY AT 8:50am.** 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 on a given day, please contact the Office or log the absence on Compass. 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 and shopping trips on weekends and school holidays when possible.

If your child misses	that equals	or	From Kindy-Yr12 that adds up to	Which is the equivalent of attending until:
1 day per fortnight	20 days per year	1 month per year	nearly 1 ½ years	part-way through year 11
1 day per week	40 days per year	2 months per year	over 2 ½ years	part-way through year 10
2 days per week	80 days per year	4 months per year	over 5 years	the end of year 7
3 days per week	120 days per year	6 months per year	nearly 8 years	the end of year 4

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 effects concentration time and if spilt causes a sticky mess. Pop-top lids are also strongly encouraged to avoid spills.
- Each day, children require a morning tea snack and packed lunch. Please pack what your child will eat - staff encourage children to eat most of the food in their lunch boxes, so too much will cause unhappy children. We strongly encourage lunches to be nutritious: low in added sugar, salt and food colouring. We encourage minimal wrappings or 'nude food', to reduce landfill.
- Each Tuesday, we have a canteen service available to the children. Menus are sent out in the News Sheet. 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 **Monday**. Orders are delivered to the classroom before lunch each Tuesday. Extra bags can be ordered from the canteen.

- 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.

Uniform

- The Uniform Policy is clearly stated in the student diary.
- Terms 1 and 4 are our 'HAT terms'. Children MUST wear a 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 now 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.
- 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.

Special Requirements

- Library days may vary from term to term and class to class. Children must have a library bag in order to borrow.
- For Art, children must have an art smock in order to protect their uniform.

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! If you wish to receive the News Sheet on-line, please provide the office with your email details.
- If you wish to speak to your child's teacher, please make an appointment to do so through the office. Popping in to see the teacher before school will disrupt their preparation time.
- Formal parent-teacher interviews are usually held in Term 2 and 3. Appointments are made through the office for a time suitable to you.



Transition

- Since coming to school, our new Preps have had 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 shoe laces, put their belongings away and pack and carry their own school bag.
- 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 with activities suitable to them and their interests. Ribbons are given for participation rather than places. 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.
- Year 2 students participate in their first school camp/sleepover in Term 1. This is a wonderful camp and sleeping at school is very exciting!
- Head lice are a common predicament at school. Particular staff in the school are trained to detect and support the treatment. Contact the office immediately if you suspect your child of having 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, hairclips 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.

