

Westgrove Primary School

5365



Parent/Carer Information Handbook 2021

BE SAFE

BE RESPECTFUL

BE A LEARNER

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Contents

Principal's Welcome

School Profile 4

School Procedures 5

Term Dates – 2021
School Hours and Bell Times
Office Hours
Out of School Hours Care Program
Punctuality
Student Supervision
Absences from School
Voluntary Contributions
Essential Educational Expenses
School Canteen
School Uniform
Lost Property

Student Health, Safety and Wellbeing 10

Student Health
Medical Details and Emergency Contact Information
Medication
Asthma
Allergies and Anaphylaxis
Infectious Conditions and Exclusion Periods
Head Lice
Sun Safety
General Safety
Parking / Staff Car Park Restrictions / Active Transport
Student Wellbeing and Code of Behaviour

Parent and Community Involvement 15

School Council
School Council Sub Committees
Parent Class Representatives
Parent Involvement
Communication with Parents
Reporting to Parents

Curriculum and Programs 18

Prep Information 24

The First Day
Lining up Arrangements
Collecting Students
Attendance Arrangements during February
Preparing Your Child for School
Helping Your Child at School

Student Permission Forms 27

Welcome to Westgrove Primary School

2020 has been a challenging year for everyone. We have faced circumstances which we just could not have imagined previously. Our school has worked very hard to provide a robust and interactive online learning program to all our students and for those not comfortable with technology or unable to access an online program, we have supplied hard copy work which supports the online program. Our teachers have worked exceptionally hard to stay connected with families through phone calls, emails and live meetings.

The students have been supported throughout the process to either be onsite or work from home. We have stayed in close contact with families, either assisting with the learning, providing some mental health support, assistance with accessing services and food packages.

The school has continued to have a specific focus on developing the students' ability to manage their emotions effectively, to implement calming strategies when needed and to develop the necessary skills for effective learning. This learning has been implemented using the Berry Street Education Model (BSEM). In conjunction with our Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) processes, we are aiming to ensure that our students have the skills and dispositions to manage effectively in the real world. The Resilience Project worked with our community to build an understanding of the importance of persevering and persisting with challenging situations and to build their problem solving skills. This is an area which we continue to develop with our staff and foster with our students. Transitioning between remote learning and on site learning has been carefully planned and scaffolded to ensure that our students re-connect with each other and the learning environment in a positive way.

Our focus this year has been to further develop student's reading and writing skills. There has been targeted professional learning for teachers around the teaching of reading, specific intervention programs and a narrow focus on the comprehension skills taught and practiced with the students. The school continues to work with a consultant to encourage a love of writing and an understanding of its purpose. We have seen such an improvement in the students' perception of writing and their ability to express themselves with specific intent.

Many of our senior students have developed their leadership skills through various programs including Better Buddies, Breakfast Club, helping in the canteen, fundraising for a local charity, House Team Captains and School and Class Captains. We thank all of the students who have actively supported other students, helpers, visitors and our community. Through these activities, our students are learning specific skills in running an event, raising funds and communication. Most importantly, they are learning to consider the needs of others. Our Class Captains (Years 2-6) meet regularly to provide feedback to the Leadership team on issues such as remote learning, playground considerations, classroom programs and student issues. This helps the students to understand that they can impact decision making within the school and that their opinions are valued and considered.

Westgrove PS community is a diverse one and, I believe, is one of its strengths. Students make friends and work alongside children from various races, cultures, countries and with different disabilities, family structures and beliefs. The values of respect, inclusivity, honesty, perseverance, empathy, resilience and collaboration that our students model everyday are powerful.

We welcome you into the Westgrove PS community and we look forward to working with you to achieve wonderful outcomes for your child.

Tami-Jo Richter
Principal

School Profile

Westgrove Primary School is a safe, inclusive and supportive community that empowers students with the tools to reach their individual potential.

Westgrove Primary School's guiding values are: Respect, Honesty, Empathy, Perseverance, Inclusivity, Resilience and Collaboration. These values define our behaviour and underpin all decision making. We are committed to ensuring that we treat one another and the environment with respect, are honest in our endeavours and interactions, persevere to achieve our goals, demonstrate empathy for all members of our community and at all times embrace inclusive practices. We are striving to develop a toolbox of strategies to help us become more resilient and we are collaborative in both our learning and decision making.

Currently we operate 32 classes, comprising of four Foundation classes, five Year 1, Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 classes, and eight Year 5/6 classes. Each year level has an allocated leading teacher as their Instructional Leader. Specialist programs include PE, Visual Art, Performing Arts, Intervention, Spanish and STEM.

In 2020, the number of students of an English as an Additional Language and Indigenous backgrounds continues to remain steady. The Student Family Occupation Index (SFO) is 0.6374 and the Student Family Occupation and Education Index (SFOE) is 0.5191. There continues to be a decrease in the number of families identified as disadvantaged, however, the social and emotional supports needed for our students has not lessened. The school works tremendously hard to support all students to have access to the education they deserve.

In 2020 the school continued to focus on improving academic achievement in dramatically different circumstances with remote learning and we have been proud of our ability to continually improve our results. We have some significant intervention programs in place to support Literacy outcomes and overall have been encouraged by our ability and commitment to continue to improve student learning. We have robust academic programs scaffolded by appropriate technology with many extra-curricular opportunities.

Our grounds have three designated play equipment areas, a synthetic sports area which encompasses an oval, soccer pitch, softball diamond and running track. We have an indigenous garden, which includes a meeting place and a culturally significant sculpture. The school has a gymnasium, well resourced library, daily canteen and well furnished classroom buildings with a designated professional learning and planning building for staff.

Our Intervention programs focused on stretching those students who were working above level as well as supporting those students who were working below. We had 3 staff members working to support Years 1-6 and 4 teaching assistants in Years Foundation. The school has made a commitment to improving students' ability to and engagement with writing across the school working regularly with a consultant to improve classroom practice and teacher knowledge. Professional Learning Communities within the school have also been focusing on improving teacher knowledge and trying new practices to improve student learning whilst building teacher capacity. 2020 saw Westgrove PS continue to work with a consultant on improving school culture, resiliency and staff welfare.

We are in a joint use agreement with Paul Sadler for the pool on school grounds. Our students regularly access swimming programs as do several local schools who hire the facility.

Students in the senior school participate in a leadership program aimed at developing their leadership skills as well as developing student voice and giving the community an opportunity to have a voice about different aspects of the school. In Year 4 we have the Better Buddies program with the Preps, Year 5 participate in the Community Service Program and a Leadership Summit and in Year 6 there are a variety of school leadership roles

and the school leaders attend the GRIP Leadership program. We have class captains for Terms 2-4 in Years 2-6 and those captains attend student forums twice a term to represent their class with ideas and opinions.

Westgrove PS is committed to improving student attendance rates and has sound strategies in place for tracking and the follow up of student absence. Class Dojo points are awarded to encourage positive learning behaviours, they are recorded and celebrated. School attendance is monitored each month with awards being given at Assembly. Westgroover Awards are presented weekly for those students showing our values in the playground and Principal Awards given regularly for those students who are working/behaving beyond expectation in some way. The school motto "Together We Grow" underpins the core aim of working together to build a purposeful learning community. This is supported heavily by three positive behaviour pillars: Be Safe, Be Respectful and Be a Learner as well as our work with Berry St implementing their trauma informed education model and DET's Respectful Relationships program.

Victorian Term Dates – 2021

Term 1: 28 January to 27 March

Term 2: 14 April to 26 June

Term 3: 13 July to 18 September

Term 4: 5 October to 18 December

School Hours

The school yard is supervised from 8:45am. At 9.00am the bell rings and children make their way inside to their classroom to get organized for the start of lessons. Children are expected to be punctual and to be ready to start the day at 9.00am. Music is played over the PA system a few minutes prior to the bell ringing before school and at each recess break.

NEW BELL TIMES

9:00 – 9:50

Session 1

9:50 -10:40

Session 2

10:40 -11:30

Session 3

11:30 -11:35

EATING TIME IN CLASSROOMS

11:35 – 12:05

RECESS PLAY

12:05 - 12:55

Session 4

12:55 – 1:45

Session 5

1:45 -1:55

EATING TIME IN CLASSROOMS

1:55 – 2:25

LUNCH PLAY

2:25 – 3:15

Session 6

Early dismissal times on the last day of each term are published in the school newsfeeds.

Office Hours

All general inquiries should be directed through the school office. The school office hours are:

- Monday - Friday : 8:00am – 4:00pm

Out of School Hours Care Program

The Out of School Hours Care Program is run by Quantin Binnah, which is the Community Centre situated next door to the school. It operates each school day from 6:00 am – 8:45am and from 3:30 – 6:00pm. A Holiday Program operates during each term vacation. All enquiries about these programs should be directed to Quantin Binnah, 9742 5040.

Punctuality

Classroom sessions begin at 9:00am each day. Students who arrive late for school interrupt the classroom program. It is also unsettling for your child too and can impact on their confidence and vital learning.

Students arriving after 9:00am must report to the Office, sign the Late Register and receive a Late Pass to hand to their class teacher. The school will contact parents/carers of students who are consistently late. For the safety of all students, parents are asked not to take students to the classroom when arriving late.

Student Supervision

For fifteen minutes before and after school, and during all recess breaks, there are teachers in the yard to supervise and assist students while they are playing. **Students are not to be in the school grounds before 8.45am when teacher supervision begins or after 3.30pm when supervision ends.** Students who have not been picked up will be required to wait in the school office. The school gates are open at 8:40am.

Teachers on yard duty wear fluorescent vests so they can be quickly identified by students.

In the event of extreme weather conditions such as high winds or rain, yard duty teachers share the supervision of the students in the classrooms. Students are not permitted to be in the classrooms when the teacher is not in attendance.

Parents/carers are asked to make full use of the Out of School Hours Care Program if they are not able to pick students up promptly. Students can be booked into Before or After School Care and can enjoy fully supervised activities.

Attendance at School - "It's Not OK To Be Away"

Regular school attendance is essential for the overall development of children. Once enrolled in primary school, your child is expected to attend school every day of each term. It is important that children develop regular attendance habits at an early age. Children who are regularly absent from school are at risk of missing out on learning the basic building blocks in subjects, and may experience long-term learning difficulties. Where possible, parents are asked to schedule medical and dental appointments for their child out of school hours.

If your child needs to be absent from school, the Department of Education requires you to supply an explanation of that absence to the class teacher. This can be done by an adult speaking directly to the teachers, writing a note or telephoning the office. On occasions, absence confirmation notes may be sent home from the class teacher requesting a reason for a student's absence and parental signature. Early indication of absences is appreciated as often special programs for the class or group may be planned.

Parents/carers will receive an SMS notification at 10:30am on the day of an absence if the absence has not been explained prior to this time.

If your child has an infectious disease (refer to page 11,12 of this document) they will be excluded for the period outlined and will require a medical certificate indicating that they can return to school.

Student attendance is monitored closely and reported regularly to the Department of Education. Parents can provide an explanation for student absences via the COMPASS portal.

Students Leaving Early

Sometimes it may be necessary for parents to take students from school during the day. On such occasions advance notice is appreciated and arrangements must be made for the collection of the student from school. Under no circumstances may a child be collected from school during school hours without notification at the office. The Early Leavers must be signed out by the parent/carer collecting the student at the office.

Students will not be released to leave with any adult other than those listed on your child's enrolment form.

In the interest of overall safety, it is school policy not to allow students to leave the school grounds alone, other than at the end of the day.

Voluntary Contributions

In order to operate, Westgrove Primary School relies upon finance from various sources. The two major sources are Government grants and locally raised funds, including Voluntary Contributions. All Voluntary Contributions are placed in the Ground Maintenance Fund to be used to maintain and improve our grounds and a Building Fund to be used to fund future plans. Your financial support is essential in order to provide excellent educational opportunities and programs for all students.

Parents/ Carers are able to nominate the amount they would like to contribute in Voluntary contributions when ordering Essential Education Items. School Council reviews this at the end of each year and recommendations are made for the following year. Payments may be made by one annual payment at the beginning of the school year or through instalments.

Essential Educational Items

Westgrove Primary School makes every effort to keep the cost and number of items that need to be purchased to a minimum. We also try to ensure that the costs are affordable for all parents. School Council encourages all parents to support their children and the school by paying all Essential Education Items charges each year.

ESSENTIAL EDUCATION ITEMS CHARGES

Item	Specifications	Cost
Essential Education Items	Student Essentials Pack <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All stationary that your child requires for the school year • Annual subscriptions to relevant software programs • Whole school values and social skills incursion School supplied essentials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom consumables, art materials, cooking etc to support instruction Additional Technology Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iPods, iPads, desktop computers and laptops to support instruction on the standard curriculum 	\$ 170.00
Optional Extras	These include extra curricula, activities such as camps, excursions, incursions, swimming program, sports activities and instrumental lessons. Parent/carers will be notified in advance of these costs and schedule for payment. The BYOD iPad Program for students in Years 3-6 is an essential component of the curriculum at Westgrove and Parents/carers are urged to provide an iPad device to support their student's learning	Various throughout the year
Voluntary Contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grounds maintenance • building fund 	\$10 / \$20 or other

Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund (CSEF)

School **camps** provide children with inspiring experiences in the great outdoors, **excursions** encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works and **sports** teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are part of a healthy curriculum.

CSEF will be provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible for CSEF. The allowance will be paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions, or sporting activities for the benefit of your child.

The annual CSEF amount per student will be:

\$125 for primary school students

\$225 for secondary school students.

How to Apply

Contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from www.education.vic.gov.au/csef

Lunches

Parents/carers may choose to send students to school with a cut lunch or use the canteen ordering system.

When preparing cut lunches and snacks, it is important to ensure that you include a healthy balance of food items such as sandwiches and fruit with limited pre-packaged snack items.

Westgrove Primary School promotes litter reduction (Nude Food) and hence students are encouraged to bring their lunches to school in re-usable plastic containers.

Students have eating time in classrooms before going out to play. In this way, teachers can monitor students eating, keep litter in the classroom and ensure children are not playing with food in their mouths. Students who have not finished eating when it is time to go out to play, are directed to the courtyard.

School Canteen

The school canteen currently operates every school day from Monday to Friday. Healthy hot and cold food options are available. Children can order lunches via reusable insulated lunch bags available for purchase at the Office. The canteen provides daily lunch orders and snacks over the counter at recess and lunchtime. The canteen menu is located on the school website. The canteen does not give credit.

The canteen only operates daily with the assistance of parent/carer helpers. We encourage you to help either on a regular or occasional basis in order to ensure we can offer this service.

School Uniform

Westgrove Primary School has a compulsory school uniform which is on display outside the office area. The uniform colours are navy blue and green.

The school uniform can be purchased at Rushfords, 1/13 Barnes Place, Werribee 3030.

The Uniform Price list and Uniform Policy is available from the School Office or on the Westgrove Primary School website.

Children need to wear sensible footwear at all times. Runners are required for physical education lessons. Thongs, open toed sandals, Crocs and high heel shoes are not acceptable footwear for school.

Headwear: Navy blue soft bucket hats. Please note that any headwear worn for religious or culture purposes should also be navy/green or white in colour.

Each year the Year 6 students design a special bomber jacket which identifies them as the school leaders.

Lost Property

Most articles deposited in Lost Property are not named. Please ensure that all items brought to school, especially windcheaters, rugby tops and bomber jackets are named. Throughout each term unnamed items are displayed for collection or sorted. Any unclaimed lost property items are washed and available for purchase as pre worn clothing or given to charitable organisations.

A Lost Property tub is located outside the gym, so please check in there for any lost items.

Student Health, Safety and Wellbeing

Student Health

Students should not be sent to school if they are unwell. A student who is ill is unable to fully participate in school activities and may pass on infection to other children.

A First Aid Room is available for students who become unwell during the day, but this is a very limited facility. The school will contact parents to collect unwell students.

Medical Details and Emergency Contact Information

It is essential for the school to have accurate information on each student's medical details and telephone contact numbers. Please assist in keeping these records up to date.

Essential information:

- any medical condition your child has which the school needs to be informed about
- home address and telephone number for the student
- workplace telephone number for each parent / carer / mobile telephone numbers
- doctor's name, address and telephone number
- name and telephone number of other people who can be contacted to assist in an emergency, if parents cannot be reached

Medication

Teachers are not authorised to administer medication. In certain circumstances it may be necessary for your child to have medication at school. In this case parents/carers need to:

- make prior arrangements with the Principal
- complete the Medication Consent Form available from the School Office,
- clearly label the medication with your child's name and hand both the form and medication to Office staff.

Medication will otherwise not be administered. Under no circumstances should students personally keep medication at school. Students should not administer medication themselves except for asthmatics who would normally control their own ventilators.

If a student is injured at school, or during a school organised activity, then parents/guardians are responsible for the cost of:

- medical treatment
- transport to a medical facility or home

Asthma

If your child suffers from asthma, parents are required to have a ***School Asthma Action Plan completed by a medical practitioner***, which clearly states the steps to be followed should your child have an asthma attack at school. ***An Asthma spray and spacer, clearly labelled with your child's name, needs to be supplied and left at the Office if your child needs assistance to manage their asthma action plan.***

If your child is under specialist's care for asthma management then a copy of your child's specific *Medical Asthma Plan* needs to be given to the school. Members of staff have received asthma training.

Asthma management plans are required to be reviewed annually.

Allergies and Anaphylaxis

If a child has a known food allergy which is likely to cause an anaphylactic reaction parents are required to complete and update an ***Anaphylaxis Management Plan*** each year. The *Anaphylaxis Management Plan* must be discussed with the Principal or Assistant Principal and all medication including an epipen must be supplied by the parents. Parents are also required to provide the school with an *Anaphylaxis Action Plan* developed by the student's doctor. The *Anaphylaxis Action Plan* must also be updated annually or sooner as required.

Anaphylaxis is a severe, rapidly progressive allergic reaction that is potentially life threatening. The most common allergens in school aged children are nuts, eggs, cow's milk, fish and shellfish, wheat, soy, sesame, latex, certain insect stings and medications.

The school has a policy and procedures in place to minimize the risk of a child having an anaphylactic reaction at school. Parents/guardians need to be aware, however, that it is not possible to achieve a completely allergen-free environment in any service that is open to the general community. Parents should not have a false sense of security that an allergen has been eliminated from the environment. Instead the school will work with parents and students to put in place a range of strategies to minimise the risk of a child coming into contact with the allergens at school.

Because of the life threatening nature of the condition, food containing the potential triggers for an anaphylactic reaction must be kept away from the students while at school. **We ask that no foods containing sesame or nuts as an active ingredient be brought to school by students.** Parents are asked to support this risk minimization strategy.

It is also important that you discuss with your child that **food brought from home should not be shared with other children at school.**

More information can be found in the ASICA Guidelines for Prevention of Food Anaphylactic Reactions in Schools which can be downloaded from ASCIA website: www.allergy.org.au or Education Department website: www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/parents/health/Pages/anaphylaxis.aspx

Members of staff have received training in Anaphylaxis and in the use of an epi-pen.

Infectious Conditions

It is a legal requirement that students must be excluded from school if they have particular infectious conditions. <http://ideas.health.vic.gov.au/guidelines/school-exclusion-table.asp> Minimum Period of Exclusion from Primary Schools and Children's Services Centres for Infectious Diseases Cases and Contacts (*Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations 2009*). In this Schedule, medical certificate means a certificate from a registered medical practitioner.

Head Lice

Head lice can be managed with the cooperation of parents and the school. They are not a threat to health and they do not spread other infections. As there is no guaranteed method of prevention, early detection is the best way to avoid an outbreak. It is recommended that parents check their children's hair regularly.

Head lice are found on hair itself and move to the scalp to feed. They have six legs which end in a claw and they rarely fall from the head. Louse eggs (also called nits) are laid within 1.5cm of the scalp and are firmly attached to the hair. They resemble dandruff but can't be brushed off.

If lice or eggs are found	Treat hair immediately with a commercial head lice product or by using a hair conditioner (outlined below). Head Lice treatments are available from your pharmacy. Dead eggs must be removed from hair after treatment Treatment must be repeated 7 days later
The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development states: Children must not return to school until treatment has commenced	
Step by Step Headlice Check	
Step 1	Comb any type of hair conditioner on dry, brushed (detangled) hair. This stuns the lice and makes it difficult for them to grip the hair or run around.
Step 2	Now comb sections of the hair with a fine tooth head lice comb.
Step 3	Wipe the conditioner from the comb onto a paper towel or tissue.
Step 4	Look on the tissue and on the comb for lice and eggs
Step 5	Repeat the combing for every part of the head

For further information visit www2.health.vic.gov.au or refer to the Westgrove Headlice Policy which can be found on the school website.

Sun Smart

The school has a Sun Smart Policy, which encourages responsible attitudes towards protection from the sun's harmful UV rays. In accordance with this, all students are expected to wear Sunsmart hats (soft bucket, **not caps**) from September - April. Those students without hats will be required to remain in the designated shade areas at all times when outside for lessons and/or recesses.

Sunsmart hats are part of our school uniform and can be purchased at Rushford's or through the Office.

The school encourages the use of Sunscreen but it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to provide it and for the parent/carer or child to apply it.

General Safety

It is important that children are trained from an early age in all aspects of safety. Please ensure that your child knows:

- their own name, address and telephone number
- to avoid an interaction with people they do not know
- to go straight home from school via a route previously agreed to by you. (Please Note: Prep Children must be collected daily from their classroom by their parent /carer.)
- to use the school crossing correctly
- not to leave school without permission
- not to bring items to school which are valuable or may cause accidents
- when you expect them to go the After School Care Program.

Any child left in the school grounds after 3.30pm is automatically directed to the school office.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

SCHOOL CROSSING: Before and after school, manned school crossings are provided outside the school on Thames Boulevard, Danube Drive, Tarneit Road and Heaths Road. Children must cross the road at these points. It is important that parents also support the school by using these crossings and teaching the children good road sense.

BICYCLES/SCOOTER: Only students in Years 4-6 are allowed to ride their bicycle or scooter to and from school without adult supervision. This policy is supported by the Vic Roads Guidelines which states that children below this age do not have the peripheral vision to be able to see vehicles coming from the sides. Parents wishing their children in Foundation (Prep) (Prep) – Year 3 to ride bicycles or scooters to school, must accompany them and make prior arrangements with the Principal otherwise their bicycles/scooters will not be stored in the bike compound.

Students should not be riding bikes or scooters in the school grounds.

Active Transport

Westgrove Primary School encourages students and their families to be active by walking or riding bicycles and scooters to school. As well as the obvious health benefits, this reduces the traffic congestion outside the school at the beginning and the end of the school day.

Students who ride bicycles or scooters to school can lock their vehicles in the designated bike area. Students are not permitted to ride their bike or scooter in the playground on school days. They must walk their bike or scooter from the school gate to the lock up area. Helmets must be worn at all times when riding bikes and scooters to and from school.

Rollerblades and skateboards cannot be brought to school.

The school Traffic Safety Policy is available on the school website.

Car Parking

The staff car park is not to be used as an area for parents to drop off or collect their children. It is extremely dangerous to have cars entering or leaving this area as children are exiting the school grounds and walking along the footpath. Only authorised cars are to use the staff carparks. Disabled parking is available for parents/carers with disabled children at the school.

Parents are not permitted to park in the Quantin Binnah carpark. A drop off zone is available in Thames Boulevard. Parents/carers should be aware that this is only a drop off zone and if they park there, they are liable to be fined by council officers.

Parents should observe extreme caution when picking up and dropping off children at the school. Observe all traffic signs and ensure that your children use the crossing when coming over to your car.

Parking for the pool is permitted in the staff carpark after 4.30pm

Student Wellbeing

The Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy and programs aim to foster respect and understanding and to develop a safe and happy environment for all members of the school community. It reflects student, staff and parent rights and responsibilities. The Engagement and Inclusion Policy is available on the school website.

Westgrove Code of Conduct

We have a matrix of behavioural expectations for all students. This document sets out very clearly the expected behaviour in the various school settings around the three Positive Behaviour pillars – *Be Safe, Be Respectful & Be a Learner*. See attachment

Parent & Community Involvement

The Principal, staff and School Council are most appreciative of assistance given by parents, carers, friends and community members to ensure that Westgrove Primary School provides excellent educational programs. If you have special talents or skills, you may be willing to share these in classrooms during special weeks or classroom activities. Any offers of time or help will be greatly accepted, whether it is on a one-off or regular basis in informal ways or through formal meeting structures.

School Council

The School Council is made up of elected parents, the Principal, teachers and community members where relevant. It has responsibility for determining the general educational policy of the school within the guidelines issued by the Minister. It makes decisions on curriculum, finance, facilities and community relations. School Councillors are elected for a two-year period and elections are completed by the end of March. All parents or carers of students enrolled at the school are eligible to vote. The School Council generally meets on a monthly basis and school councillors also attend or convene one of the following school council sub committees:

Finance Committee Sub-committee

The Finance Sub-committee assists the School Council by:

- Managing the school's global budget. This includes ensuring all incoming money is properly accounted for and expended and that an annual budget of income and expenditure is prepared and audited.

Education Sub-committee

The Education Sub-committee assists the School Council by:

- Determining the general education policy of the school and ensuring that the interests of all students are taken into account. This includes providing a forum for parents, teachers and the wider community to participate in educational decision making. The committee also provides information about current educational developments and actively encourages parent participation through the organization of information sessions.

WCA Helping Hands Sub- committee

The WCA Sub-committee assists the School Council by:

- Raising funds through the development and implementation of an annual fundraising plan
- Promoting the school and its programs in the wider school community

Sustainability and Facilities Sub-committee

The Sustainability Sub-committee assists the School Council by:

- Developing plans to maintain and enhance the outdoor areas and facilities of the school
- Developing plans to maintain and enhance the infrastructure, furniture and buildings of the school

- Organizing and implementing procedures and projects to ensure our school is working towards providing a sustainable environment for our students.
- Continuing to improve and enhance the connectivity of our community
- Ensuring all facilities and equipment is OHS compliant, adequately maintained and developed.

Parent Involvement

Parents are encouraged to participate in a wide range of school activities. This may be working in your child's classroom, assisting your child with school activities at home or becoming involved in a range of special events and activities. **Parents working with children need to have a *Working with Children Check*. WWC Applications are available on the following website, <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>.**

Activities that parents can assist with may include:

- helping in classroom activities
- hearing reading or assisting with literature groups
- assisting with maths and science activities
- assisting on excursions
- helping out in the Edible Garden / cleaning or gardening around the school grounds
- attending community events such as picnics and organised functions
- joining WCA Helping Hands Committee or assisting them with specific fund raising projects
- helping in the school canteen

Communication

Whole School Assemblies

Formal Assemblies are held every Monday morning at 9.00am around the flagpole, outside the canteen. This is a short assembly involving the Acknowledgement of Country, our National Anthem and School Pledge and some short messages for the week.

Celebratory Assemblies are held on Friday afternoons from 2.30pm-3.00pm in the gym. These are conducted for the junior school, senior school and whole school on a rotational basis. Timetables are published on the school website at the start of each year.

Parents are encouraged to participate and are usually notified ahead of time if your child is to receive an award.

Newsfeeds

Information relating to school events and matters of interest are continuously published via our school newsfeed through COMPASS.

FACEBOOK

Updates can also be gathered through our Facebook page.

Reporting to Parents

There will be a “Getting to know you” interview at the beginning of term 1 and a Student Led Conference in Term 3.

From 2017, paper reports have not been sent home. They are accessed through the parent portal on COMPASS.

Throughout the year parents are alerted of learning tasks being uploaded on COMPASS. These tasks are assessment tasks completed regularly and shared with families so that there is the opportunity to have informed, meaningful dialogue about your child’s progress during the year rather than twice a year when formal reports are related.

If, at any other time, you wish to discuss concerns about your child’s progress with the teacher, an appointment time can be arranged. If you have any other concerns or enquiries please contact the Office to make an appointment with the Principal or Assistant Principals.

Curriculum

The curriculum implemented at Westgrove Primary School is based on the sequential stages outlined in the Victorian Curriculum. The curriculum outlines what is important for all Victorian students to learn and develop during their time at school from Prep to Year 10. The documents provide a set of common Victorian standards which schools use to plan student learning, assess student progress and report to parents.

Information about the Victorian Curriculum can be found at:

<http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au>

Learning areas	General capabilities
<p>The Arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dance • Drama • Media • Music • Visual Arts • Visual Communication Design <p>English</p> <p>Health & Physical Education</p> <p>The Humanities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civics & Citizenship • Economics & Business • Geography • History <p>Languages</p> <p>Mathematics</p> <p>Science</p> <p>Technologies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design & Technologies • Digital Technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical & creative thinking • Ethical • Intercultural • Personal & social

Teaching sessions draw on elements from each of the two strands so that learning is meaningful for students. The integrated focus on knowledge, skills and behaviours in the process of physical, personal and social growth, in the learning areas and general capabilities helps students to develop deep understanding which can be transferred to new and different circumstances.

Curriculum planning across all levels of the school is a focus for staff. Teachers meet weekly to plan and coordinate learning experiences and to evaluate and moderate student progress. Each term inquiry units are developed with consultation and input from the specialist teachers. At the beginning of each term the Curriculum Overview, which outlines the curriculum being implemented and some of the special events being organized for the term, is made available on the school website.

The whole school has regular access to specialist services such as Speech Therapy Counselling and an Educational Psychologist. A school nurse conducts vision and hearing screening assessments for Prep students. Students with disabilities or special learning needs are assisted to access the curriculum through the Program for Students with Disabilities. Education Support staff assist these students under the direction of the class teacher.

English

The English learning area aims to develop the students' skills and competence to interpret and use language effectively in a variety of settings for a wide range of purposes. The curriculum focuses on the development of skills in reading & viewing, writing, speaking and listening. Classroom programs provide numerous real life and meaningful opportunities for students to develop effective literacy skills.

A coordinated approach to teaching literacy is implemented across the school. The essential elements of the program are:

- Two hours of literacy daily
- Explicit teaching of literacy skills through whole class, group and individual conferencing
- Students matched to appropriate texts
- Allocated independent reading time each day
- Classroom libraries stocked with a variety of fictional and factual texts
- Ongoing and consistent monitoring and assessment

Home Reading

Students are expected to read at home each night. Reading should be an enjoyable and relaxing activity. For beginning readers this will involve sharing take home books with their family. Books may include a book they have already read with the teacher; a book they have chosen themselves from the classroom library or school library or a book they are reading as part of a literature group study. With beginning readers or depending on the difficulty of the book parents may need to read the book to their child. As student's reading confidence and competence develops parents are asked to listen to their child read and discuss the text to assist the development of reading for meaning.

English as an Additional Language (EAL) & Literacy Support Program

At Westgrove Primary School the classroom teacher and the EAL teachers assist students from backgrounds other than English to develop the skills to read, write and speak English. The needs of the EAL student are considered before deciding on the most appropriate program for that student. The EAL student may be withdrawn from the classroom to work individually or in a small group with the EAL teacher. Alternatively, the EAL student may work within the mainstream classroom where both the classroom teacher and EAL teacher work in parallel to support the student's acquisition of language skills. Education Support staff, working under the direction of the classroom teacher, also provide support for EAL students. The level and frequency of support available to EAL students is prioritized and varies according to the student's needs and the number of students requiring EAL support across the school.

Mathematics

Mathematics is taught at all levels across the school for a minimum of one hour each day or five hours across the week. There are three domains in the teaching of mathematics: Number & Algebra, Measurement & Geometry and Statistics & Probability. A variety of 'hands on', concrete materials are used in all classrooms across the school to assist students to develop mathematical understandings and knowledge. Classroom programs are designed to cater for individual differences. Classroom sessions are planned to ensure that students see mathematical connections and are able to apply mathematical concepts, skills and processes to posing and solving mathematical problems in a variety of real-life and meaningful situations. Children are encouraged to take risks and develop individual strategies for solving problems.

Units of Inquiry

Science, Humanities, Technology, Civics and Citizenship, Information & Communication Technology are taught in an integrated way through inquiry-based units of work. The Inquiry units are based on a two- year scope and sequence planner designed in accordance with the Victorian Curriculum.

Library

The school has a well-stocked library and students are encouraged to use and borrow books on a regular basis. All classes have at least one library session each week, taken by their class teacher.

Every classroom also has their own classroom library which has been set up using the school library books. This enables the children to have daily access to quality reading material.

Information & Communication Technology

Digital Devices such as laptops, digital cameras, video cameras, ipads, mini ipads, internet and electronic whiteboards are used routinely in our teaching and learning programs. All classrooms have access to laptops and ipads which students access routinely throughout the day. Students in Years 3-6 participate in the BYOD iPad Program.

Specialist Programs

The following curriculum areas, Physical Education, Performing Arts and Visual Arts are implemented by specialist teachers for all year levels. We currently have STEM as a specialist subject for some year levels, Library for Year 1 and Spanish for Year Prep.

Health and Physical Education

The Physical Education program aims for every student to fully participate in an active life. Each student is encouraged to 'have a go' at an array of physical activities and they are given advice on how they can improve their individual performances.

The Physical Education program takes the individual to a higher level, in that students are encouraged to work co-operatively and harmoniously in small groups, leading onto the experience of playing in a team.

The program is delivered and assessed according to the Victorian curriculum. Emphasis is placed on the Physical Education and Health including a strong focus on the development of Interpersonal Skills. Participation in physical activity is encouraged amongst all our students and opportunities for individuals to participate Regional and State competitions is celebrated and supported where this is achieved.

Intensive Swimming Program

A comprehensive 8-week swimming program is implemented each year for all students in F-6. This is conducted on a weekly basis during the course of the program in Paul Sadler Swimland Pool which is situated on the school site.

The students are grouped according to swimming experience and ability and are taught by qualified swimming instructors. As Swimming and Water Safety are important components of the Physical Education Program at Westgrove Primary School it is expected that all students will participate.

Interschool Sport

Throughout the year students participate in a range of interschool sport competitions against other schools in the Wyndham School Sports Association.

- Term 1 Swimming Carnival – students compete against schools in the Wyndham District
 Cross Country - students compete against schools in the Wyndham District
- Term 2 Interschool Sport weekly (Yr 6)
 Hooptime competition for Yr 3/4 & 5/6 students
- Term 3 Athletics Carnival – Students compete against schools in the Wyndham District
 Interschool Sport weekly (Yr6)
 Hooptime competition for Yr 3/4 & 5/6 students
- Term 4 Interschool Sport weekly (Yr 6)
 Lightning Premiership, Regional Finals

Performing Arts

Every class will have a weekly 50 minutes session of performing arts in 2020. The Performing Arts Program follows the Victorian Curriculum Guide which has the Performing Arts delivered in an integrated way for the first few years. Later on, the sections of the Arts are teased apart and taught separately. The Victorian Curriculum emphasises “creating and making”. Over the course of a year, students learn skills in music, dance and drama. They use these skills to develop their own compositions, choreograph their own movement sequences, and create their own dramatic pieces.

The Victorian Curriculum also emphasises “exploring and responding” to the arts which includes reflections about their own and others works and studies of art works from other cultures or periods of history.

Some units of work complement the classroom studies. In these cases the performing arts enrich the children’s learning as well as the students bringing their classroom experiences and learning to the performing arts.

The cornerstones of the program are creativity, reflective thinking, risk taking, building personal and interpersonal skills and confidence. These are the skills of life.

Visual Arts

Every class will attend the art room for a 50 minute art lesson each week in 2020. The Visual Arts Program is based on the Victorian Curriculum guide and is a component of “The Arts” as a whole. The Victorian Curriculum includes two sections; Creating and Making, and Exploring and Responding which are included in the program throughout the year.

When students are involved in the creating and making part of the curriculum they are exploring experiences, ideas, feelings and understandings as they experiment with arts elements, principles, skills, techniques, processes and media. Throughout the year they do this using material in 2D and 3D forms. As students are involved in the exploring and responding part of the curriculum they develop understandings of their own and others works (both other students’ and established artists’ works). Studies of Visual Arts artists can be from various periods in history or a range of cultures.

Throughout the year some units of work complement the program in the classrooms so students can use the opportunity to enrich and extend their skills and knowledge. In the Visual Arts program students are encouraged to express their ideas and creative flair in a supportive environment.

Extra Curricular and Enrichment Programs

Student Leadership Group

The Student Leadership Group is made up of student representatives from the senior classes who have been elected by their peers. Student Leaders will meet regularly and have input into many decisions that are made in the school. They also run activities to raise funds for charity or to purchase equipment/games for the school.

Choir

Students have the opportunity to audition for the school choir. The choir rehearses during lunch weekly and members lead the National Anthem at assembly and participate in performances throughout the year.

Instrumental Music

Primary Music Institute (PMI) operates a Keyboard tuition program at the school.

Darley Music School operates a musical instrument & singing program at the school. Instrumental tuition offered includes guitar, drums and violin.

Both organisations utilise experienced instrumental /singing teachers. Students are taught in groups of 2-5 students or individually. Lessons are 30 minutes and are held throughout the school day. Brochures regarding costs and instruments is available at the Office.

Buddy Program

A Buddy Program operates between our Foundation (Prep) and Year 4 students. This program has been developed by the Alannah & Madeleine Foundation (Prep). Students in Years 4 take on the role as a buddy to our prep students. Each prep student will be allocated a special buddy who will assist them during our Prep Transition mornings and during their first weeks and months at school.

Edible Garden

The school has a very impressive edible garden which is managed by one of our dedicated volunteers.

We are always looking for keen gardeners to assist with this.

Produce from the garden is used for individual class cooking sessions and in our school canteen.

Indoor Lunchtime Activities

These are held in the school library each lunchtime. A variety of activities are offered throughout the year such as movies, Ipad club, reading club, construction and board games.

Excursions and Incursions

Throughout the year, students will be involved in excursions out of the school or attend special performances or activities provided by groups visiting the school. These direct experiences will be related to their classroom programs and are an integral part of your child's education and as such, we encourage your child to participate. Your written permission is required for any excursion involving transport. At times the school will be able to access excursions or incursion free of charge, in which case there will be no cost to parents/carers. Where there is a cost associated with travel and/or admission fees, parents/carers will need to pay the cost. Eligible parents/carers can utilise their CSEF through the school office to assist with this. Parents/carers are welcomed and encouraged to attend most excursions.

Parents/carers who are having difficulty meeting the cost of excursions should speak to the Principal and a payment plan will be devised.

Outdoor Education Program

An Outdoor Education Program operates for students in Years 4 and 6. Camps are a wonderful opportunity for students as they foster the development of positive relationships and further develop the students' independence in a different educational setting. Students in Years 4 attend a three-day, two-night camp. Students in Years 6 attend a four day, three-night surf camp.

Students are expected to pay the cost of attending the Outdoor Education Program. Eligible parents/carers may be able to access CSEF to assist with this.

Prep Information

The First Day

All prep children will commence school on **to be confirmed**. Parents are welcome to accompany their child to the classroom. **Once your child is settled, parents are invited for a cup of tea or coffee in the hall and to meet other new parents.**

For Foundation (Prep) students, school initially finishes at 12.30pm and Foundation (Prep) children need to be collected by their parents/carers from their child's classroom.

Your child will only need to bring nutritious food for morning snack whilst they have a 12.30pm finish. All food is eaten in the classroom prior to the students going outside to play. Morning snack is eaten in class before the children go out to play.

We encourage all students to bring their own water bottle to school each day.

Please ensure that all clothing and equipment including bags, lunch boxes and water bottles are clearly labelled with your child's name.

Going in to class

After the first day your child will make their way to their classroom each morning at 9:00am when the bell rings. Music will play for a few minutes before the bell rings when the school programs commence.

Collecting Students

Foundation (Prep) children must be collected from their classrooms by a parent, carer or designated friend in the first few weeks. It is important that your child knows who will be picking them up each day and that the teacher is informed if there are changes to the usual arrangements on a particular day.

Special attendance arrangements for Foundation (Prep) children during February

To ease the transition into school, Foundation (Prep) children will be increasing their school hours on the following schedule **to be confirmed**.

All students will have a parent / teacher/ carer interview on ?? January 2021.

Families are asked to book their interview time using COMPASS (see attached information). Bookings will open in mid December.

The purpose of this interview is for the teacher to start to get to know their new students and their families and to carry out some learning tasks to determine learning goals for term 1.

A curriculum day for staff will take place after this where they will use the information gathered during the interviews to plan for the students' individual learning needs.

All students will start school on "to be confirmed".

Monday Morning Whole School Assembly

The new prep children **will not** be involved in the first assembly of the year.

Preparing Your Child for School

Below are listed some ideas for things you can do to help your child settle into school life.

- Practise walking to and from school and become familiar with the school grounds.
- Practise packing a lunch box together and talk with your child about eating times at school - morning recess and lunch recess.
- During the first weeks of settling in at school, you may find that your child eats only small amounts of food. It helps to pack small portions in your child's lunch box that are varied and offer a balanced diet – for example, pieces of orange, cheese, sultanas, biscuits, a sandwich with their favourite filling. Avoid cling wrap, as it can be difficult to manage.
- Let your child practise getting dressed and undressed, especially taking shoes on and off .
- Children in Foundation (Prep) class are often tired during the first few months of school. It is important to establish a routine and ensure they have adequate sleep and get to bed at a reasonable time.
- Discuss with your child what will happen after school finishes. If they are to be attending the Out of School Hours Care Program, let them know they will be collected from the classroom by the Care Program staff.
- Encourage your child to start taking responsibility for themselves e.g. tidying up their toys and helping you put things away.
- Develop your child's skills in listening by playing games where they have to listen carefully.
- With your child, name the things they will be bringing to school – school bag, lunch box, drink bottle, school uniform, hat, etc. – so that your child will easily recognise any lost belongings.
- Encourage your child to learn their address and telephone number.
- Organize plays with other children who will be attending the Westgrove Primary School. It helps if your child knows another child in their class.
- Adopt a low-key approach to the big day, initiating casual conversations with your child about this new step in their life and sharing positive memories of your own school life with your child.

Helping Your Child at School

- Show interest in your child's account of the day when they are ready to talk about it. Most Foundation (Prep) students are very tired after school and need time to relax, especially at the beginning of the year.
- Understand that through 'play' a child builds up his/her confidence, establishes sound social relationships with other children, improves his/her powers of conversation and promotes dexterity.
- If your child has a problem, please come to the school and discuss it with us so we can eliminate those small concerns that worry every child. It is not productive to ask children about problems that occur during the day that should be discussed with the teacher. Ask questions like what was your favourite part of the day - what is the most important thing you learnt today? If there is a problem your child is experiencing you could say – What will you do if that happens again? This way you are empowering your child and reinforcing the processes students need to follow to problem solve or get help.

- Encourage your child to organise clean clothes and pack their books and bag the night before. Also check your child's bag for notes and sign and organize payments for activities such as excursions. Make sure the envelope containing the money is carefully sealed and all details are recorded. Pack these notes in your child's bag together so that they will be able to pass them on to the teacher.
- Establish a routine with a set bedtime to ensure your child is well rested and ready for the busy school day.
- Be sure your child has a balanced breakfast. Healthy eating has a long-lasting and positive impact on a child's growth, development and health. Healthy eating will also maximise a child's concentration and ability to learn.
- Avoid the last-minute rush by leaving home early so that you arrive at school well before 9 o'clock.
- Notify the school if your child is taking medication and complete the Medication Form at the office if medication is to be administered at school. All medication must be handed in at the office.
- Ensure your child attends school every day unless they are sick. Children who are regularly absent from school are at risk of missing out on learning the basic building blocks in subjects, and may experience long-term learning difficulties. Schedule medical/dental appointments outside of school hours where possible.
- Be aware that not all children develop at the same rate and it is unhelpful to compare your child's progress with other siblings or students. Teachers carefully monitor and keep records of each student's progress. Arrange a time to speak to your child's teacher if you wish to discuss aspects of your child's development or progress. Praise and encouragement will build your child's self-esteem and confidence to engage in new learning experiences.
- Avoid organizing or enrolling your child in extra curricula activities such as sport, music and other activities for at least their first semester at school. Beginning school can be very tiring for children and they need time to relax after the demands of a busy school day.

Student Permission Forms

Parental permission to meet The Department of Education requirements is required for Local Walking Excursions, Headlice checks, Consent for Medical Attention and Publicity. Parents are required to sign the required permission forms before your child commences school.

Local Walk Excursion

During the year, the children may take part in several walks around the local community as part of their curriculum studies, eg walk to the local river, park and along neighbouring streets to observe seasonal changes and traffic patterns.

The Local Walk Excursion note covers any local excursion within walking distance. Parents will always be informed of these outings either in the Newsfeed or by notice.

Headlice Checks

Westgrove Primary School has a head lice policy to help parents manage head lice. Parents will be notified if a child has live headlice. In this instance the child needs to be excluded from school until treatment has occurred. A child may return to school after treatment has commenced.

Parents will also be notified if eggs are present and treatment is expected to eliminate the possibility of further outbreaks.

Publicity

To promote the school in the educational and local community and on the school's website, newspapers and television stations are sometimes invited or they request the opportunity to film and photograph the school programs and special events.

Other than names and the school details no personal information about students would ever be provided without specific parental permission.

Parents/guardians who have security concerns regarding custody and restraining orders or personally object to images of their child being used are asked to provide the appropriate paperwork to the office such as custody order, intervention order and the Images approval form etc.