



# MENTONE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL



## PARENT INFORMATION HANDBOOK 2016

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## Contacts

Mentone Park Primary School  
Broome Avenue  
MENTONE 3194

Principal: Ms Kendra Parker  
Assistant Principal: Mrs Alison Lough  
Tel: 9583 4935  
Fax: 9583 9905  
e-mail: [mentone.park.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:mentone.park.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au)  
www: [www.mentonepark.vic.edu.au](http://www.mentonepark.vic.edu.au)

Out of School Hours Care (OSHC)

Youth Leadership Victoria

Before School Care: 7:00 – 9:00am

After School Care: 3:30 – 6:30pm Tel: 8790 6511 or 0402 192 385

## School Timetable

8:45am	Morning bell to enter school building
9:00	Classes commence
10:40	Morning Recess
11:10	Classes resume
12:50pm	Lunchtime – eating in classrooms
1:00	Playtime – outside
1:50	Classes resume
3:30	Dismissal

## Frequently Asked Questions for Preps

### *Prep Dismissal:*

At the start of the school year, the prep students operate on a reduced timetable for the first few weeks of school, to allow them to settle into the full time program. At Mentone Park PS this means prep students do not come on Wednesday for these weeks. On the days that they do come to school, they will attend for the full school day: 9:00am – 3:30pm. The dates will be published and communicated each year.

During the Wednesdays, preps are invited for an individual appointment with their teacher to complete school entry assessment tasks. Please check for an appointment time with your teacher prior to the school year commencing.

### *Helping at school*

There are many ways for parents to be involved in school life. Please see our separate brochure on Parental Involvement.

### *Fruit Break*

Students are able to have a piece of fruit during the morning session of school. Parents should provide a piece of fruit or a fruit snack in a separate container. Please ensure it is not “messy” fruit as it is often eaten whilst children are working.

At Mentone Park we have a focus on healthy eating, healthy lifestyles. As such, we encourage parents to send healthy foods to school. We also discourage food that is in ‘wrappers’ – for both litter reasons and to minimise the preservative intake of our children.

### *Water Bottles*

The students may take water bottles into their classroom to have with them throughout the day.

### *Kids’ Café*

The school canteen, the Kids’ Café, is open for lunch orders on a Friday. Orders are to be made using the menu that is available on our school website. Orders should be clearly written on a paper bag, which includes your child’s name and grade. The Kids’ Café appreciate the correct change, and that you make sure your order is very specific (i.e., what sort of muffin your child wants).

### *P.E. Days*

The prep students participate in Physical Education lessons, but because of the amount of time it can take for them to take off and put on their shoes, it is not necessary for them to change their footwear for the activity. For this reason, sending them to school in black runners on their P.E. days is a good idea.

### *Specialist Teachers*

The students have specialist teachers for Italian, PE, Art and Performing Arts.

### *Students' Birthdays*

It is always exciting to celebrate your child's birthday with their school friends. If sending a treat to school, we ask that parents respect our healthy food focus and ensure that there is enough for all students in the grade. We also appreciate that if having children's parties, it is not always possible to invite the whole grade. We ask that parents be considerate of those not invited when handing out invitations.

### *Communication*

Communication is an important part of the partnership between home and school. For this reason, the school has a Communication Policy. In Prep, students receive a Take Home Book folder which will be used for books as well as notices between home and school. Please check this regularly and use it for returning notices or absence notes to school.

If you need to speak to your child's teacher, you should phone to make an appointment out of school hours. Please do not take up valuable classroom learning time by trying to discuss issues with your class teacher at 9:00am.

There are 2 scheduled sessions for parent/teacher communication. These are the "Meet the Teacher" sessions in Term 1, and Student Led Conferences in Term2, following the June school report.

### *Helping at School*

See our separate brochure on how you can be involved in school life.

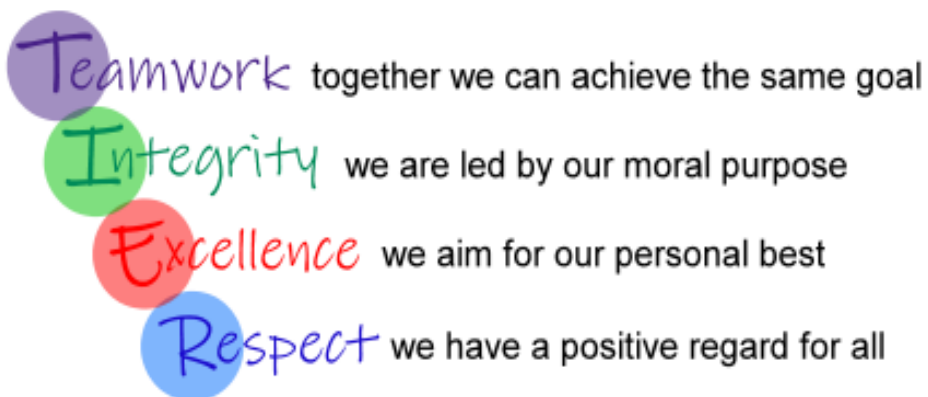
## Purpose Statement

### CORE PURPOSE

To foster curiosity and ignite a passion for learning.

To prepare our students for their future as global citizens.

### CORE VALUES



### DESCRIPTION

#### Curriculum:

We provide a relevant and challenging curriculum that enables students to achieve educational excellence, igniting their curiosity, creativity and passion for lifelong learning.

#### Environment:

We provide an environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive, allowing students to become confident and creative individuals.

#### Connections:

We encourage students to connect with their peers, school, community and the wider world, enabling them to become active and informed citizens.

## Principal's Message

Welcome to the Mentone Park Primary School community. Thank you for entrusting us with your child's primary school education. We look forward to a rewarding and positive relationship over the next 7 years as we share your child's learning journey together.

At Mentone Park we are proud of the work we are doing to *ignite a passion for learning and prepare our students for the future*. Our motto of "Reaching Higher" is achieved through a relevant and challenging curriculum that enables students to achieve educational excellence and ignites their creativity and passion for lifelong learning. Our whole school, personalised approach to learning and teaching ensures all students are provided the opportunity to reach their potential and develop their talents and interests.

Mentone Park Primary School provides an environment that is supportive and inclusive, allowing students to become confident and creative individuals. We encourage students to connect with their peers, their school, their community and with the wider world, enabling them to become active and informed citizens. The school enjoys a positive reputation in the local area for both its curriculum and extra-curricular programs.

Our students work and play within a safe and orderly environment which enables them to learn in optimum conditions. We are focused on continuous school improvement and whole school learning and teaching practices, which means that we are constantly looking at how to improve outcomes for your children.

We look forward to helping your child Dream more, Learn more and therefore Do more!

Kind regards

*Kendra*

Kendra Parker  
PRINCIPAL

## School Profile

At Mentone Park, our core values of **Teamwork, Integrity, Excellence** and **Respect** underpin the way we work as a community. Our strong wellbeing program underpins the school's educational philosophies consisting of Kids Connect (making connections), Bounce Back (resilience), Bully Prevention and Values programs. The Restorative Practice philosophy guides student wellbeing practices by developing responsibility and building relationships.

Our facilities have been updated to include a modern Prep-2 Learning Area and our new Library and Level 4 Learning Centre, built through the Building the Education Revolution program, which all complement our 21st Century learning pedagogy. Additionally, the school enjoys the use of a hall, an art room, dedicated LOTE and music rooms, our Kids' Café, as well as a "green screen" filming room.

An integrated, inquiry based approach is used to deliver a broad curriculum that provides our students with the necessary skills and attitudes for learning, living and working in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Literacy and Numeracy are a core focus of our teaching and learning program. Our school Professional Learning Teams focus on whole school improvement in these areas supported by Information and Communication Technologies. We recognise the importance of teacher effectiveness and as such, provide an extensive professional learning program for our staff.

Our Kids Connect program acknowledges the importance of students connecting and developing positive, strong relationships. Embedded wellbeing programs are key elements of Kids Connect and form an important cultural component to create a supportive atmosphere in the school.

These programs consist of 'Bounce Back' (student resilience), Values, Bully Prevention, eSmart and Restorative Practices.

Innovative programs such as the Healthy Lifestyle Program, (incorporating Sustainability, the Veggie Garden, Kids' Café (School Canteen), Cooking and Fitness), Multimedia (television production), ICT, laptops, iPads, Interactive Whiteboards, lunchtime clubs, 'Earn n Learn' and Passionate Pursuits motivate and engage students to be involved in their learning.

Our student leadership program is strong, with students taking leading roles as School and House Captains as well as Kids' Café, Junior School Council and Green Gang Leaders. Student voice is heard through our Junior School Council, which has representatives from Years 3-6.

We aim to provide our students with a seamless educational journey into, through and beyond the school. Our pre-school to school program is comprehensive and provides our new students many opportunities to familiarise themselves with the school environment. We also provide a comprehensive parent support program to assist parents with understanding the school curriculum and how best to be a partner in their child's learning.

Our strong ties with local pre-schools ensure individual student needs are identified early.

A well planned buddy program between Prep and Year 6 students helps develop connections with school and peers early in the learning journey. Positive relationships are cultivated across year levels through multi-age days, such as Italian Day, Bounce Back Day and House Sports Day. Flexible learning spaces also promote cross-year experiences.



## School Strategic Plan

### *Goals*

**Student Learning:** To improve student learning outcomes in Literacy and Numeracy at all levels Prep to Year 6.

**Student Engagement and Wellbeing:** To improve the connection students have with their peers and with their school.

**Student Pathways and Transitions:** To provide students with a seamless educational journey into, through and beyond the school.

### *Key Improvement Strategies*

Ensure quality and consistency of curriculum programs that are delivered to all students, through embedding theories of action that will inspire curiosity and create powerful learning opportunities.

Build the capacity of staff to personalise learning, based on data from a range of assessment sources.

Develop a Professional Development culture which embraces professional learning linked directly to strategic intentions.

Develop a culture of ambition and high expectations in regard to learning and behaviour.

Develop and formalise contemporary processes relating to transitions at all levels of the school, to provide a seamless learning journey.

## School Council

School council is the legally formed body that is given powers to set the key directions of a school. It is the major governing body of the school that, within DEECD guidelines, decides the future directions for the school and oversees the school's operation.

At Mentone Park we have an active and enthusiastic School Council that meets regularly monthly on Monday nights. All Councillors sit on sub-committees that consider issues related to educational policy, fundraising and grounds and facilities.

The objectives of the School Council include:

- maintain the efficient governance of the school
- ensure students' best interests are primary
- enhance the educational opportunities for students
- ensure compliance with relevant legislation and regulations.

## Parents and Friends' Association

The purpose of the Mentone Park Primary School Parents and Friends' Association (PFA) is to provide a meeting place for parents and friends of students to meet and discuss issues related to the school and the welfare of the students. PFA assists in promoting a feeling of community and school spirit throughout the school.

PFA is responsible for managing particular functions within the school such as:

- Organising Class Representatives
- Changing sheets and cleaning linen in the sick bay each week
- Bringing in crossing flags each morning
- Mothers' & Fathers' Day stalls
- School Disco
- Easter Raffle
- Special days such as Italian Day
- Prep Transition mornings

In addition to assisting with these activities, we ask for one or two parents to be a Class Representative. The role of the Class Rep is to be the point of contact for the class, to liaise with teachers, to coordinate rosters/donations (food or other) for events as necessary, to attend PFA meetings when possible (1 per month on Wednesday mornings at 9:00am – not compulsory for all meetings but does make communication easier) and to organise social activities for the class, suggested 1 per term.

## A-Z of School Life

# A

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### **Absences**

When a student has been absent from school a written explanation is required from the parent/guardian upon the student's return. Telephone calls to school to indicate the student will be absent that day are discouraged.

Telephone calls in reference to a student's absence should be limited to cases in which:

- the absence is to be prolonged (more than 3 days);
- the absence is the result of an accident at school;
- the child has an infectious disease.

### **Accidents**

Accidents can occur in any sphere of activity, particularly where there are numerous active, enthusiastic, adventurous and inquisitive young people. Accidents may occur even though adequate care has been taken to provide appropriate playground equipment and supervision. Parents may take out private accident insurance for their child at school. Information regarding this is provided early in each school year.

The school response to an accident is detailed under 'First Aid'.

### **Accountability**

Just as there are educational standards for students to be assessed against, schools and their management systems have accountability standards in place as well. The School Accountability and Improvement Framework articulates three outcomes that government schools strive to achieve; improved student learning, enhanced student engagement and wellbeing, and successful transitions and pathways.

See the DEECD website for further information.

Also see 'Annual Reports'

### **Address Changes**

It is important for all correspondence, including cases of an injured or ill student, that the school has current contact details of parents and other emergency contacts. Please advise the school promptly of changes of address, telephone numbers (including mobile numbers) or employment.

### **Annual Reports**

Each year the school is required to report to its community through an Annual Report. The annual report focuses on students through reporting on student achievement and curriculum delivery. It also provides information about staff development and the school's financial planning. This report is presented at the School Council AGM each year, as well as being available on the school website.

### **Appointments**

Making an appointment to see a teacher avoids inconvenience to either parent or teacher. Parent-teacher discussions are not appropriate when the teacher is supervising children, as this interrupts valuable teaching and learning time as well as inhibits the supervision of the children. Parents can call the office during school break periods to make an appointment with a teacher.

### **Assemblies**

Whole school assemblies are held every Monday in the hall at 3:00pm. Parents are welcome to attend, but are requested to keep toddlers quiet during the assembly. Occasionally assembly times may vary and this is communicated through the newsletter, class notice and/or Facebook page.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is the ongoing process of gathering, analysing and reflecting on evidence to make informed and consistent judgements to improve future student learning.

Assessment for improved student learning and deep understanding requires a range of assessment practices to be used with three overarching purposes:

- Assessment FOR learning - occurs when teachers use inferences about student progress to inform their teaching
- Assessment AS learning - occurs when students reflect on and monitor their progress to inform their future learning goals
- Assessment OF learning - occurs when teachers use evidence of student learning to make judgements on student achievement against goals and standards.

### **Attendance**

It is a legal requirement that children attend school when they are of compulsory age. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the child attends punctually and regularly. Children are expected to be at school at five minutes to nine to ensure they are ready to start the school day in a relaxed unhurried manner. It is advisable that a child who is unwell overnight or prior to school should not attend school that day.

Any concerns re student attendance will be addressed with parents according to DEECD requirements.

# B

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## **Before and After School Care (see Out of School Hours Care – OSHC)**

Before school care is provided by an outside provider, Youth Leadership Victoria, for students from 7:00am until 8:45am and after school care is provided from 3:30pm until 6:00pm. Parents must register their child with OSHC in order for them to attend out of school hours care. There is a fee payable. Details of current fee structures can be obtained from the Youth Leadership Victoria Out of School Hours Care Co-ordinator. Regular school rules apply at Before and After School Care. Any issues related to Out of School Care Programs should be taken up with Youth Leadership Victoria on 8790 6511.

## **Behaviour Management**

The key factor in behaviour management is mutual respect between students, teachers and parents. The school has set procedures relating to behaviour management, which are outlined in the Student Engagement Policy. The Student Engagement policy is based upon Restorative Practices, the Bounce Back Program and the Student code of conduct.

Both parents should attend parent-teacher interviews to allow for complete discussion re. a student's behaviour. Behaviour management is aided by:

- fostering self-discipline;
- accepting responsibility for one's own actions;
- promoting the positive;
- developing student confidence;
- understanding school rules;
- providing appropriate tasks;
- implementing natural consequences for misbehaviour;
- developing respect for others.

## **Bicycles**

Children are permitted to ride their bicycles to school, although Road Traffic Authority recommends that only children from grade three are ready to ride their bikes to school. Bicycle helmets are compulsory and there is no bike riding permitted in the school grounds. Please be aware that bicycle security can be a problem even if bicycles are chained to the bicycle rack.

## **Book Lists**

Parents will be provided with a book list each year. These are organised through a central supplier to ensure the best prices for the best products. Parents order and pay online for these supplies which are then delivered to school for the school year.

## **Books - Take Home**

These are the books students select to take home to practise their reading or to invite parents to read to them. Sometimes teachers may guide students in their selection of these books. At other times students will choose their own reading material, encouraging them to make choices and develop skills of decision making.

Parents should not feel concerned if their child brings home books which may seem to be too easy or too difficult, or have been read before. Remember, these books have been selected for a variety of reasons. Book selection is a skill that needs to be developed, so experimentation is important.

### **Buddies**

Buddies is a cross-age program where a prep grade joins with a senior grade to participate in activities. The senior student acts as their buddy in the playground if the younger student needs some assistance. It is not the intention to play with their buddies in the playground as similar age peer relationships are encouraged in order to develop social skills. It also allows younger students to get to know the senior students in the school and to assist with helping them settle into school.

### **Bullying**

Bullying involves intimidation that may be physical, verbal or psychological in nature. Bullying is hurtful and deliberate, happens over a period of time and is an imbalance of power. To avoid the development of bullying behaviour children need to spend a great deal of time with people who hold the values of cooperation, friendliness, acceptance, integrity, respect and support. Under no circumstances is bullying accepted at Mentone Park. Our student Code of Conduct and Anti Bullying Policy address the issue of bullying.

See 'Code of Conduct – Student'

# C

## Camps

Camps form an important part of the school's social and personal development program. A three-day camp is undertaken each year by Year Three and Four students, and a five-day camp is undertaken each year by Year Five and Six students. Camps are seen as part of the whole school curriculum and all students are expected to attend.

YEAR LEVEL	ODD YEAR – 2015, 2017		EVEN YEAR – 2016, 2018	
YEAR 3/4	Airey's Inlet	Personal/Interpersonal Development	Sovereign Hill	History
YEAR 5/6	Coolamatong	Personal/Interpersonal Development	Canberra	Civics & Citizenship

## Canteen

See 'Kids' Cafe'

## Car Parking

The staff car park is **for staff parking only**. Please observe all parking restrictions around the school, in the name of safety for your child and other children. Kingston Council does occasionally patrol the streets around the school to check that regulations are being adhered to. There are parking restrictions in both Broome and Blackwood Avenue. Please do not park over our neighbours' driveways or double park at any stage. Safety is a huge issue for us and we need your support to ensure the safety of all.

Please note, parents must not park on the School Crossing.

## Casual Relief Teachers

Short-term staff absences are filled by the school from qualified teachers who may have an association with the school or be employed through a teacher recruitment agency. These teachers must conform to the system and school guidelines, regulations and policies.

## Characteristics of a Prep Year Child

The child may:

- fluctuate from withdrawal, to aggressive reaction, to cooperation;
- rebel non-verbally in a physical manner;
- show an inner urge to prove his or her own will and muscular ability;
- seek success and new experiences;
- enjoy collecting and piling as opposed to discarding and putting away;
- see other children as play objects, therefore group interactions are flexible;
- explore and experiment further if there are secure relationships, thus strengthening the ego;
- practise language structures and ideas through play;

- enjoy repetitive and rhythmic sounds, stories, poems and songs;
- cease to speak if no one listens.

Therefore the teacher will structure the program to cater for the range of individual needs. This structure will incorporate:

- sound planning and preparation;
- flexibility in planning to cater for individual differences;
- a selection of activities that are geared to the child's needs, at each particular stage;
- a stimulating language environment, where the child can fulfil his or her needs;
- a wide variety of concrete materials.

The child needs:

- parental love and a significant adult at school with whom to establish a secure relationship;
- security stemming from established routines and repetitive activities;
- reasonable limits set by adults who articulate or demonstrate acceptable behaviour;
- to experience success;
- to practise conversation in meaningful situations;
- an environment where he or she feels free to ask questions and feels confident to make statements and generalisations to clarify his or her thinking;
- to be selective, thus encouraging the development of independence.

The teacher considers the needs of the students' intellectual and psychosocial development and observable behaviours when organising the classroom environment and planning learning programs and activities.

### **Clothing**

School uniform is to be worn at all times.

See "Uniform"

### **Class Representatives**

One or two parent volunteers from each grade will be appointed at the commencement of each year to act as the Class Representatives. Class representatives provide a link amongst the parents and with the school, as well as assist new families to the school in order for them to find their way and to make new friends.

### **Code of Conduct - Students**

Mentone Park Primary School community believes that school should be a happy and safe learning environment which meets the needs of students at all levels of their primary school life. The Code of Conduct is consistent with Department of Education guidelines and regulations.

Our policy is based on rights, rules, responsibilities and consequences and the following beliefs:

- that all students have the right to be safe
- that all students have the right to be treated with respect
- that all students have the right to work and play without interference
- that all students should be encouraged to be polite, courteous and well-mannered
- that student behaviour management is shared between home and school
- that teachers should expect to be able to teach in an atmosphere of order and



- cooperation
- that parents have an obligation to support the school in its efforts to maintain a productive teaching and learning environment
- that all children will be encouraged to exhibit pride in their school and themselves
- that the Principal and all staff have an obligation to implement the Student Code of Conduct fairly, reasonably and consistently

### **School Rules:**

There are five key school rules.

- Move and play safely.
- Care for yourself and others properly.
- Resolve problems calmly, sensibly and fairly.
- Respect others through your speech and manners.
- Work as well as you can and allow others to do the same

### **Communication**

Responsibility for communication is equally the parents' responsibility as it is the schools. Communication usually includes Parent Information evenings, Meet the Teacher sessions, Student-led conferences, written reports, informal chats, a school Facebook page and weekly newsletters. The newsletter is emailed to parents and is also available on our website. Parents may request a paper copy of the newsletter through the office. Two-way communication is essential for a successful partnership between school and home.

### **Complaints**

The DEECD emphasises fostering positive relationships with parents and families and developing strong school community partnerships. If, however, disputes or complaints arise, a policy is in place for these to be managed. A resolution is always tried to be reached at the school level. Any complaints should be directed to the school in the first instance, as per our Communication and Staff/Parent Interaction policies.

### **Computers (see eLearning)**

### **Cooperative Learning**

Cooperative skills are necessary to work effectively in a group, not only for learning in schools but also for success in the workplace and getting on with people in the home and community.

Teachers structure cooperative activities where two or more students are working together towards the same goal. Many teachers teach cooperative skills to children to promote cohesiveness and responsibility in the classroom.

Cooperative skills may include:

- managing differences;
- problem solving;
- working as a group;
- forming groups.

The outcomes of cooperative learning may be described as follows:

- learning is enjoyable;
- leadership skills are developed;
- positive attitudes are promoted;

- a sense of belonging is created;
- self esteem is promoted;
- positive peer relationships are built;
- children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.

The role of the teacher is to demonstrate cooperative skills in action and to support children as they learn these skills in the context of daily class activities. It is not assumed that all children have the skills to work well together. The teacher may need to make these skills explicit and allow for plenty of practice.

## Curriculum

The Victorian Curriculum is the Foundation to Year 10 curriculum that provides a single, coherent and comprehensive set of prescribed content and common achievement standards, which schools use to plan student learning programs, assess student progress and report to parents.

The Victorian Curriculum incorporates the Australian Curriculum F-10 for English, Mathematics, History and Science within the curriculum framework first developed for the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS). The Victorian Curriculum uses an eleven level structure to reflect the design of the new Australian Curriculum whilst retaining Victorian priorities and approaches to teaching and learning.

Further information related to the curriculum can be found at <http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/>

### Mathematics

The Victorian Curriculum: Mathematics aims to ensure that students:

- are confident, creative users and communicators of mathematics, able to investigate, represent and interpret situations in their personal and work lives and as active citizens
- develop an increasingly sophisticated understanding of mathematical concepts and fluency with processes, and are able to pose and solve problems and reason in *Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, and Statistics and Probability*
- recognise connections between the areas of mathematics and other disciplines and appreciate mathematics as an accessible and enjoyable discipline to study.

### English

The Victorian Curriculum: English is organised into three interrelated strands that support students' growing understanding and use of Standard Australian English (English). Together the three strands focus on developing students' knowledge, understanding and skills in listening, reading, viewing, speaking and writing. The three strands are:

*Language*: knowing about the English language

*Literature*: understanding, appreciating, responding to, analysing and creating literature

*Literacy*: expanding the repertoire of English usage.



# D

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## **Department of Education and Early Childhood Development**

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is the governing body for Victorian schools. The DEECD website is a useful resource for parents:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au>

## **Disabilities and Impairments**

See Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD)

# E

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## **Early Dismissals**

Schools dismiss early on the last day of each term, and prior to the Easter holiday period.

## **Early Years of Schooling**

The Early Years of Schooling in Victoria are the years Prep to Year 4. During this important time, students form the basis of their education to support them through the latter years of school. As students move from Prep to Year 4 we expect them to become more independent in their learning. This is a vital skill for effective learning to occur in Years 5 & 6, 7 & 8 (Middle Years).

## **eLearning**

eLearning provides students with the tools and skills to transform their learning and to enrich their learning environment using ICT (Information and Communication Technology).

ICT refers to the hardware and software that enables data to be digitally processed, stored and communicated. ICT can be used to access, process, manage and present information; model and control events; construct new understanding; and communicate with others.

The knowledge, skills and behaviours identified for this domain enable students to:

- develop new thinking and learning skills that produce creative and innovative insights
- develop more productive ways of working and solving problems individually and collaboratively
- create information products that demonstrate their understanding of concepts, issues, relationships and processes
- express themselves in contemporary and socially relevant ways
- communicate locally and globally to solve problems and to share knowledge
- understand the implications of the use of ICT and their social and ethical responsibilities as users of ICT.

At MPPS, students have access to a broad range of ICT equipment including computers, laptops, iPads, iPods, digital cameras and video cameras.

## **Emergency Information**

Appropriate care of an ill or injured child depends on accurate and current contact information being supplied by the parent. All emergency contacts should be able to get to school in a reasonable time

in case of emergency. It is best if two or three emergency contacts (apart from parents) are listed. Please ensure that updated information is passed on to the school office if your emergency contacts move house or change phone numbers (landlines and mobiles please).

### **Emergency Management**

All schools are required to develop an Emergency Management Plan detailing procedures for dealing with emergencies such as fire, gas leaks, explosions, bombs or the taking of hostages.

An emergency is defined as any actual or imminent event which in any way endangers or threatens to endanger any person or threatens to damage property. In the event of an emergency these rehearsed procedures are enacted promptly to ensure the safety of all people on the site, the alerting of appropriate support services (for example police, ambulance) and the protection of property.

### **Enrolment**

Prep enrolments are due in the first week of August in the year preceding the child commencing. This is a common date for all schools in the Kingston area. Relevant enrolment forms must be completed and support documentation, including birth certificate and immunization certificate, provided.

### **Extension and Enrichment**

At MPPS we encourage children to extend and enrich their learning through a variety of programs and activities. By providing a diverse curriculum and extra-curricular program, our students are able to challenge themselves to develop their individual strengths and talents. Such enrichment activities include invitations to G.A.T.E.W.A.Y.S., Marine Ambassador Program, Science program with John Monash Science School, and attendance at other activities as appropriate.

### **Excursions**

School excursions should enhance children's development and be related directly to the curriculum. The classroom program should include both a pre-excursion and post-excursion focus to ensure maximum benefit from the excursion. Written parental consent is required. Payment for excursions is done through a bulk excursion charge for the whole year, which is included in the parent contribution.

# F

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## **First Aid**

Mentone Park Primary School has fully qualified first aid officers who attend children in need of first aid treatment. When a child is mildly unwell or suffers a minor accident:

- appropriate first aid/care is administered;
- the child may be placed in the sick room;
- the parent will be notified if it is felt the child should go home

If a serious accident occurs:

- a staff member will remain with the child;
- appropriate assistance will be summoned;
- the parents or emergency contacts will be notified;

If contact is not achieved, medical treatment deemed necessary will be undertaken (including ambulance). All such medical costs will be the parents' responsibility.

## **Foundation Year**

This refers to the first year of schooling and means preparation for more formal learning. It should be regarded as the transition time between kinder and the commencement of the school's formal learning program. Parents need realistic expectations about what should be taught and learnt during this time. The program usually includes a good proportion of oral work, play and establishing routines.

## **Fruit Break**

All classes have a fruit break between 9:00 and 10:40am. Only fresh fruit is permitted during this break.

## **Fundamental Motor Skills**

An important part of a comprehensive physical education program is instruction in fundamental motor skills. Fundamental motor skills include running, leaping, catching, overhand throwing, kicking, vertical jumping, ball bouncing, dodging, punt kicking, forehand striking and a two-handed side-arm strike. These form the building blocks which underpin the learning of more complicated sport and movement skills.

# G

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# H

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## **Handwriting**

Handwriting is an important aspect of the learning process. Attention in school is given to pencil grip, letter formation, spacing and fluency. Parents can support this at home by practicing writing with their child.

## **Hats**

As a Sunsmart school, hats are a compulsory part of the school uniform during terms one and four and must be worn at all times during any outside activities. We have a “No Hat, No Play” policy which means that if a child does not have a hat they must remain in a shaded area during recess and lunchtime. Hats are vital for participation in Physical Education lessons during terms one and four. We do not encourage the borrowing of hats due to health reasons.

## **Head Lice**

Parents are legally responsible for notifying the school if their child has head lice. DEECD regulations state that a child shall be excluded until appropriate treatment has commenced. Confirmation is required that treatment has been administered before the child may return to school. Head lice is an infestation, not an infectious disease. Students with long hair should tie their hair up as this helps reduce the spread of head lice.

## **Helping at Home**

Parents and teachers form a unique partnership in the student’s development. At home, parents can help by:

- demonstrating a love of books;
- encouragement;
- reading to your child while he or she is sitting on your knee;
- involving your child in appropriate decision-making;
- encouraging your child to take responsibility for his or her learning and behaviour;
- discussing news and current affairs events.

## **Homework**

Homework benefits students by complementing classroom learning, fostering good study habits and providing an opportunity for students to be responsible for their own learning.

The purpose of homework is to support and extend classroom learning and develop positive study routines. Homework is the responsibility of the student and not the parent, and any difficulties should be referred to the class teacher to help assist with managing expectations and consequences.

## **House System**

Mentone Park Primary School has a house system for the organisation of activities such as games and sport days. A house system encourages interest and loyalty in citizenship and sporting areas.

The houses are named after pioneers of the Aviation Industry. They are:

- Kingston Smith            Blue
- Flynn                        White
- Hawker                      Green
- Hinkler                      Red

# I

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## **Illness at School**

If children complain of feeling ill, it is better to keep them at home. It can be difficult for a child to concentrate at school and can also cause others to be “at risk” of the infection. If a child becomes unwell at school parents or emergency contacts will be notified. Parents must ensure that the current emergency contact details are up to date. Should the school deem it essential to call an ambulance or a doctor it will be at the parent's expense.

## **Individual Differences**

Children come to school from different background experiences and the basis for excellent teaching is accepting these differences and building on them, not trying to make everyone fit the same standard pattern. Learning is an individual act. Children differ in the way they learn and the rate at which they learn.

## **Infectious Diseases**

The Victorian Department of Health provides the regulations regarding exclusion requirements for infectious diseases. These can be found at:

<http://ideas.health.vic.gov.au/guidelines/school-exclusion-table.asp>

## **Inquiry Learning**

At Mentone Park teachers work together in VELs levels to plan units of work which are implemented across a two year timeframe. Units of work are structured according to an Inquiry approach. This is an open-ended, activity based, child centred teaching and learning approach which integrates across curriculum areas and fosters connections between learning. Through this, students are regularly provided with the opportunity to negotiate and reflect on their learning.

## **Interschool Sport**

Interschool sport is a sporting competition between the schools in the local district. It includes summer and winter sports, such as cricket, netball, soccer, tee ball, as well as athletics. Grade five and six students participate in Friday sport, with grades three to six participating in athletics. The aim of interschool sport is to:

- foster participation in sport;
- develop positive attitudes;
- experience a variety of games;
- encourage sportsmanship;
- improve skills.



# J

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## **Junior School Council (JSC)**

The Junior School Council was formed to allow children to take an active role in running certain aspects of the school. The students select two students from each grade from 3– 6 and they attend regular meetings. Students in Year 6 are considered the Junior School Council Leaders. The Junior School Council may be involved in organising special events and activities, for example Clean Up Australia day or social service fundraisers such as ANZAC Day badges or the State School Relief Appeal activity. Junior School Council members also raise concerns and suggestions from their peers, which are discussed during their meetings. Junior School Council members report back to their grades after each meeting and grade 5 and 6 students report to the junior school grades.

# K

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## **Kids' Café**

Kids' Café operates weekly on a Friday. The Kids' Café supports Mentone Park's whole school approach to healthy eating, healthy lifestyle, as well as our sustainability and environmental programs. We are always looking for extra support, so please volunteer your services if you are able to on a Friday.

Parent volunteers support the Kids' Café by assisting with cooking, preparation, cleaning, processing orders, counting money and serving. The menu is low in fat, sugar, salt and preservatives. Orders are placed via the QKR app. Students may also purchase items to eat at morning recess and lunchtime.

A menu is available from the school office or it can be downloaded from the school website:

<http://www.mentonepark.vic.edu.au/index.html>

# L

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## **Language Other Than English (LOTE)**

The learning of a language other than English enhances greater tolerance, understanding and appreciation of people from different cultural backgrounds as well as developing communication skills and literacy. At Mentone Park our students study the Italian language and culture. The highlight each year is our wonderful Italian Day.

## **Learning - Helping Your Child**

Some advice:

- Foster self-esteem and confidence in your child.
- Realise that making mistakes is an essential part of learning.
- Ensure that your expectations are realistic.
- The amount of written work (for example work sheets) may not be an accurate indicator of your child's competence, achievement or progress.
- Refrain from comparisons with siblings and peers.
- Compare achievements with your child's own past performance.
- Assist your child to make connections between home and school learning experiences.
- Encourage your child to inquire, explore and question.
- Assist your child towards developing learning independence by participating in planning, organisation and completion of work.

Discuss everyday items -- news, family events, school or community events -- to enhance language and understandings.

## **Leaving School Early**

Withdrawing a child from school prior to the normal dismissal should be limited to unavoidable occasions. Written advice to the teacher informing of an early dismissal is required. The child must be signed out in the Register at the school office and the slip provided to the teacher.

## **Library – School**

Children's access to the school library will be:

- during scheduled library lessons;
- using time available for research;
- at lunchtimes.

Teachers aim to promote a love of books and the realisation that books are a source of information. The key skills promoted in libraries are independence in library routines and the development of research skills.

## **Life Education**

The Life Education Van visits the school every year and children from grade P – 6 attend. A parent program is also offered so watch the school newsletter for information regarding this.

## **Literacy Programs**

### **Writing**

Authentic Writing, a whole school writing program, was introduced at Mentone Park in 2012. Key components of the program include Writer's Notebook- a prompt and resource for writing, Author's Chair to present and receive constructive feedback from their peers, regular writing, free choice writing, teacher demonstration of skills, regular individual conferencing with students and goal setting to improve writing. Students work through the writing process of thinking about what they will write about (prewriting), having a go (drafting), conferencing with the teacher (revising), rereading to a friend or to the teacher (proofreading) and then creating a 'good copy' (publishing).

### **Reading**

Students are exposed to a variety of reading activities and teaching methods. Mentone Park is developing a Readers' Workshop approach to the teaching of reading, in which students read regularly, work in ability groups reading texts appropriate to their level and develop comprehension skills by analysing content, text structure, language conventions and making links from text to self, text to text and text to the world.

### **Literacy Support**

We are fortunate to provide a Literacy Support teacher who works with small groups of children across the school. Students are identified from school assessments which suggest that they would benefit from small group, targeted intervention sessions to improve their Literacy Learning.

### **Lost Property**

Lost Property is an ongoing issue at school. You can help reduce this by naming all uniform items, lunch boxes, containers and drink bottles.

# M

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## **Medication**

Parents must send a note with medication to indicate the dosage and how to administer it. **All medication must be in its original container with the child's name and dosage written on it. Medication with another person's name cannot be accepted.** All medication must be stored in the First Aid room or the fridge if necessary.

***Teachers will not administer medication without a note from the parent.***

## **Meetings – Staff**

All schools have regular staff meetings for administration, planning, communication or professional development. Staff meetings are held each Wednesday straight after school. Staff are unavailable for parent-teacher discussions during these times.

## **Money**

Money brought to school for social service, or special activities organised by the school should be in an envelope showing the child's name, grade, the amount and its purpose. Pre-printed envelopes are available from the office.

## **Music**

Students attend a music lesson once a week with a specialist music teacher.

# N

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## **NAPLAN**

The NAPLAN is a national assessment and reporting program in English and Mathematics for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9.

The results of this national testing program are used to compare literacy and numeracy results between all Australian states and territories. The results of these tests will tell you how your child is progressing in relation to national literacy and numeracy benchmarks.

Please remember that teachers use a range of assessments over time to build a picture of your child's strengths and needs. The NAPLAN test is a snapshot of your child's ability on a single day. The NAPLAN tests contribute information which enables you to see your child's achievements in a wider context.

All NAPLAN tasks are completed at the school.

## **Newsletter/Notices**

A fortnightly newsletter called "We Connect" is the regular form of communication from the school to the school community. Level newsletters with information relevant to each year level, are published on the alternate fortnight. To do our bit for the environment, we no longer produce a paper copy of the newsletter, but rather it is distributed via email to families on a Thursday. Please look for it in your inbox and read it each week to keep up with what is happening at school and read about what your child is learning. The newsletter is also available from our school website:

[www.mentonepark.vic.edu.au/news/newsletters](http://www.mentonepark.vic.edu.au/news/newsletters)

Notices for excursions and other school events will be sent home as necessary. Please look for these in your child's bag.

Tiqbiz is the school app used for communicating important information and sending out reminders on a day to day basis. Please ensure you have downloaded the app onto your Smartphone, iPad, tablet or computer.

# O

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# P

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## **Parents and Friends' Association**

See separate section earlier in the handbook.

## **Parent Information Evenings**

Parent Information evenings are held as needed for various reasons, including as an introduction to the school year or prior to a special activity (for example a camp). They are a source of valuable information. Attendance is recommended to meet the teachers, as no two years are identical.

## **Parent Involvement**

See separate brochure.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parents are strongly advised to avail themselves of all opportunities for formal parent-teacher conferences. Communication needs to be teacher-to-parent and also parent-to-teacher.

Conferences should be sought as soon as a need arises, rather than waiting until a written report is provided or an official conference is scheduled.

Scheduled conferences include the "Meet the Teacher" sessions at the start of the year as well as Student-Led conferences following the June reports.

## **Perceptual Motor Program**

See 'PMP'

## **Phone Calls to Teachers**

Staff are available to receive telephone calls but not when supervising children. Either phone during recess, lunch or before school (see 'Bell Times') or leave a message. Telephone messages to be relayed to children can be inconvenient, although if you are unavoidably delayed in picking up your child a telephone call is warranted.

## **Photographs**

School photos are taken each year, including class and optional individual and family photos. Families can purchase these using the envelopes that are sent home at the time.

## **Play-lunch**

Children need a snack to eat during morning recesses. Do not over cater for the very young child. Healthy snacks keep the children going until lunchtime and are preferable to foods high in sugar, fat and preservatives. Please support us being a healthy, proactive school by providing healthy food choices for your child.

## **Policies**

Using Departmental policies and guidelines, school are required to establish their vision, goals and school specific policies. Various approaches are used for involving the school community in policy formation, such as the Education Sub-committee and the School Council which is responsible for the adoption of school policies.

### **Pre-school to School Transition**

Mentone Park Primary School conducts a thorough prep transition program that includes tours of the school, information evenings, open days, parent information sessions and provides literature detailing school programs. Regular communication between the pre-schools and kindergartens is essential. Mentone Park has a healthy relationship with many of the local kindergartens and pre-schools.

### **Private Music Tuition**

The provision of the broadest possible curriculum is our aim at Mentone Park. Private music tuition is offered for piano and guitar. The school provides the venue, with the parents being responsible for the provision of instruments and the payment of fees to the independent music instructors.

### **Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD)**

The Program for Students with Disabilities is the DEECD's program to provide access and success for students with impairments and disabilities who are at risk. They may require the assistance of an integration aide in addition to modified programs.

The program is organised so that the whole school population continues to receive equal opportunity and access to a wide range of learning opportunities. It is most important that you make us aware of any disability when you enrol your child so that we can plan for appropriate support for your child.

### **Punctuality**

It is important for students to arrive at school on time. Being punctual to class allows students to settle into the routine of the day and ensures they do not miss important information that may be explained at the start of the day.

If your child is late, you must obtain a late pass from the office.

### **Pupil Free Days (Curriculum Days)**

Industrial agreements provide for a number of these days annually for professional development, staff planning and reporting to the school community. Supervision of pupils on the school grounds is NOT provided by the school on pupil-free days, also called reporting days or curriculum days.

Q

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# R

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## **Reading**

### ***Helping Your Child with Reading***

- read to your child as he or she follows the print;
- allow rehearsal time before oral reading;
- discuss the story or content and the reading behaviour provide a wide variety of reading materials;
- encourage your child to read both fiction and non-fiction material;
- allow for re-reading favourite books;
- encourage your child to predict unknown words.

### ***Comprehension***

Comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from the text. Comprehension activities should encourage children to think about, discuss and react to what they read.

### ***Re-reading (Read it Again)***

Young children frequently request parents and teachers to reread favourite books. This is a positive aspect of learning to read and should be encouraged.

### ***Home Reading (Modelling)***

Parents provide excellent models of good reading behaviour by reading to children a variety of written material and sharing reading experiences.

### ***Silent Reading***

Regular silent reading is an important skill for learner readers. It provides an opportunity for children to practise their reading skills without 'fear of failure'. Children should be encouraged to read the book (or passage) silently before being expected to read aloud.

### ***Sight Vocabulary***

This refers to the words children recognise automatically without needing to analyse the word or use the context to identify an unknown word.

### ***Word Attack Skills (Word Identification, Decoding)***

In order to learn about the structure of words, it is important that children learn word attack/decoding skills. However, this knowledge is very complex and should be learned over time. Word attack skills should be learnt through actual reading and writing. Parents can assist by talking about the structure of words through natural, everyday situations.



## **Reporting to Parents**

Parents will receive a written report about their child's progress against the AusVELS/VELS standards twice per year – in June and December. The June report then forms the basis of discussion in student-led conferences that are held following the report. The student report shows the level a student is performing at compared to the state level.

Reporting is not just a single written report. It is a process of feedback about the learner over time. Parents are entitled to regular feedback about their child's performance and teachers will provide this feedback both informally and formally through a variety of ways throughout the year.

Teachers are reporting to parents every time a discussion or interview takes place about a child's work. The mid-year and end of year student report is a summary of the child's work and progress over a given period of time and emphasis should not be placed on this in isolation from other information.

It is important that parents know the school's educational objectives and the requirements of class programs to understand how the child is progressing. To meet this objective it is vital that you attend information sessions and parent /teacher conferences and make a point of reading year level newsletters and the weekly school newsletter *We Connect*.

Reporting during the school year should provide:

- evidence of what the child has learnt;
- information about what curriculum has been covered;
- opportunities for communication between children, teachers and parents;
- a record of the child as a learner;
- a description of a range of achievements;
- advice about improving weaknesses.

## **Rights and Responsibilities**

Rights and Responsibilities are detailed in the Student Engagement Policy.

## **Rules – School**

School rules are detailed in the Student Engagement Policy and Code of Conduct.

# S

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## **School Council**

See the section earlier in the handbook.

## **Special Days**

Special days provide a variety of experiences to complement the learning program. At Mentone Park these may include Crazy Hair Day, Footy Sports Day, Easter Bonnet Parade, and Free Dress days. These aim to add interest and enjoyment to school life

## **Specialists**

This term is used to describe teachers who teach a particular curriculum area. At Mentone Park we have specialist teachers for Music, Visual Art, Italian and Physical Education.

## **State Schools' Relief Committee**

This organisation assists with support for pupils in cases where parents are experiencing financial hardship. Parents requiring assistance should see the Principal.

## **Strangers**

Children need to be aware of strangers and associated potential risks. Walking to and from school with friends is a sound precaution. Making a child aware of the dangers from strangers presents the family with a problem. The child needs to understand the risk a stranger may present to their safety, but two other factors need to be addressed:

- that the understanding of stranger danger doesn't develop into a paranoia that destroys the child's enjoyment of being a child.
- that most dangers to the child emanate from people known to the child -- not strangers.

## **Sunscreen**

It is advisable for children to wear sunscreen for protection when playing outdoors. Parents should supply sunscreen for their children.

## **Support Services to Schools**

South Eastern Victoria Region has available a variety of services to support schools. These may include senior administrative staff, curriculum consultants, educational psychologists, speech pathologists, social workers, and visiting teachers for hearing, visually and physically impaired children.

Support service personnel have trained in a specialist area and are based at a central location. These services are available to visit schools when requested through the principal. Parents may request a particular service for their child through the school principal. Support services also provide professional development programs for teachers and schools regarding current educational information.

## **Suspension**

A principal may suspend a student who presents a physical or emotional danger to a teacher or a student. There are Departmental regulations and guidelines for this procedure. The process for the suspension of a student is documented in the school's Student Engagement Policy.

## **Swimming**

Swimming tuition is taken by qualified instructors and involves water safety and survival skills as well as stroke technique.

Mentone Park Primary School participates in two swimming programs:

- A ten day intensive program for Years Prep – 4
- A one week Beach program for Years 5 – 6

# T

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## **Transferring From One School to Another**

If your child is transferring to another school a transfer note is required. Please ensure all library books and any school equipment is returned before departure.

## **Transition to Secondary School**

Transition usually refers to the move from one stage of the education process to the next. Most schools conduct transition programs to minimise any difficulties children may encounter. Parents are advised to begin planning for the next school in the year prior to having to make a choice. Reading the school's handbook, policy documentation, newsletters, magazines and booklists will better inform parents.

## **Tri-skills**

Tri-skills is a sequential gymnastics program taken by qualified instructors who come to school to teach the children.

# U

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## **Uniform**

School uniforms are more economical, remove dress competition, add to the tone of the school, and help to develop school pride and aid discipline. Components of the school uniform should be functional, easy to remove and put on, sensible and appealing to the children. Every item of the school uniform should be labelled with the child's name.

# V

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## **VCAA**

The Victoria Curriculum and Assessment Authority set the curriculum and assessment policy for all Victorian schools in Years 11 and 12, and for all government schools from Prep to Year 10. Many Catholic and independent schools also follow the VCAA's curriculum and assessment guidelines in their Prep to Year 10 levels.

## **Valuables**

Valuables (anything highly esteemed) should not be brought to school.

## **Visual Arts**

The visual arts curriculum includes two-dimensional (drawing, painting) and three-dimensional (pottery, modelling, threads and textiles) activities. All classes participate once per week in the Art/Craft room with a specialist teacher. Additional art/craft activities are included in the classroom program.

Art smocks are to be worn during all Art/Craft sessions. An old shirt is adequate.

# W

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## **Wellbeing – Students**

An effective student wellbeing policy is one developed cooperatively by all members of the school community. The basis of student wellbeing at Mentone Park Primary School is that:

- Student Wellbeing underpins everything we do.
- Every person has the right to learn and to be safe.
- No person has the right to stop others from learning or being safe.
- See also Student Engagement policy.

## **Wet Days**

Special arrangements are made by the principal to supervise students indoors when the weather prevents them from playing outside. There is no provision for the closure of school during days of heavy rain or extreme heat.

## **Working Bees**

Working bees are conducted by all schools although the formats vary greatly. Working bees promote school life, foster a feeling of ownership, enhance teacher-parent-pupil relationships, show that projects are valued and save the school from diverting scarce resources into having the projects undertaken commercially.

# X Y Z

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## **Yard Duty/Yard Supervision**

Children must be supervised during recess and lunch time. Also included is the fifteen minutes immediately before and after school. The enrolment, site and building design all impinge on the supervision. Industrial agreements and teacher preparations for the day are also key factors. Very early arrival of children at school should be discouraged, as the yard is unsupervised before 8:45am. Before school care is available for early arrivals.