



AXEDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

2024

PARENT HANDBOOK



Excellence Through Endeavour

WELCOME TO AXEDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL

On behalf of the Axedale Primary School community I welcome you to our school. We are fortunate to offer students and families excellent facilities, programs and resources. Our committed staff work closely with families to ensure that quality education is provided to all students.

Education takes place 24 hours a day, every day of your life. School therefore, provides one part of your child's education. We aim to work with you, towards providing the best opportunities for your child to maximise their potential - academically, socially, physically and emotionally.

Axedale Primary School is located 20km from Bendigo and prides itself on providing a supportive learning environment for all students. We access local resources and learning opportunities offered in Bendigo.

**We look forward to forming and maintaining a strong partnership,
built on mutual respect, support and friendship.**

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

In 2024, Axedale Primary School operates with 5 classrooms, with multi-aged groupings in most classrooms.

Principal: Corrina Hartland

Business Manager: Katrina Baldwin

Grade 6: Mel Bingham

Grade 4/5: Steve Christensen

Grade 2/3: Joshua Savage

Grade 1/2: Ben Fiegert

Grade Prep (Foundation): Emma Roberts

Education Support / Tutoring: Michelle Caldwell, Amy Haw, Demi Hall (Semester 2)

Education Support Staff: Jeanette Tenace & Stacey Vanzin

Specialist Areas

Art (Monday): Shannon Leed

MARC Van (Fortnightly Tuesdays): Sue Gentry

Digital Technologies (Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday): Michelle Caldwell

Languages (Auslan): Corrina Hartland (taken across the week)

Library & Admin Assistance (Fortnightly Wednesdays): Deb Tuohey

Music (Friday): Kaine Marsh

School Wellbeing Officer (Monday & Tuesday): Ali Gillett

Bus Driver: Peter Neale

School Cleaner: Linda Kendall

Crossing Supervisor: TBC

**** Please note that the previously known Department of Education and Training (DET) is now referred to as the Department of Education (DE) ****

SETTLING IN TO SCHOOL

Prep Students:

There are many ways in which you can help your prep child to settle in to school.

- Familiarise your child with the school, talking about the school in positive terms.
- Get to know the staff at the school.
- Join the Parents, Volunteers & Friends group to help you get to know other parents.
- This can also help your child to make new friends.
- Encourage your child to be independent, accustomed to dressing, tying shoelaces, managing own items, etc.
- Clearly label all of your child's belongings.
- Make sure your child has a suitable lunch and play lunch in a clearly named container.
- Make sure Prep children have a change of clothes at school. Accidents can happen, and children feel happier if they can change into their own clothing.
- It would be beneficial if children were encouraged to:
 1. know their name and address well enough to repeat them when asked;
 2. know their birth date eg *August 4th or December 28th*;
 3. listen carefully;
 4. know how to use a handkerchief or tissue properly;
 5. know how to use sanitiser;
 6. speak politely;
 7. follow simple instructions;
 8. care for property;
 9. know simple safety rules;
 10. display appropriate manners when eating.

New students entering grades other than Prep:

- Familiarise your child with the school, talking about the school in positive terms.
- Get to know the staff at the school.
- Share this handbook with your child so that you are all aware of how things run.
- Join the Parents, Volunteers & Friends group so that you can make new friends, thus assisting your child to make friends.
- If there are any concerns, please feel free to talk to the Corrina or staff. We are here to help you.
- **School Management System (SMS):** The school uses Compass, an App available for download through Google Play or the App Store, to communicate with families. Parent / carers sign in information is available from the office. The weekly newsletter, school documents, notifications, excursion permissions and important calendar dates are loaded onto Compass.

TERM DATES

2024

Monday 29th January (teachers) Tuesday 30th January (1-6 students), Thursday 1st (prep students) to Thursday 28th March

Monday 15th April to Friday 28th June

Monday 15th July to Friday 20th September

Monday 7th October to Friday 20th December

SCHOOL TIMES

Teacher on Duty: 8.30am for early bus travellers.

Other students: 8.45am

School starts: 9.00am

First Break: 11.00am – 11.40am

(10 minutes supervised eating followed by 30 minutes play time)

Second Break: 1.40pm – 2.20pm

(10 minutes supervised eating followed by 30 minutes play time)

School Dismissal: 3.25pm. Teacher supervision of bus travellers and Raglan Street crossing.

Preps do not attend on WEDNESDAYS during February.

If your child can not be picked up from school at 3.25pm, please ring the office to advise staff.

STUDENT WELLBEING

At Axedale PS we provide every student with the opportunity to be the best they can be in a safe, respectful, caring environment. Our values of Respect, Personal Best, Resilience and Co-operation are embedded across all areas of the school. These values have been chosen as guiding principles for academic expectations as well as classroom, school yard, excursions and camps. A Values and Expected Behaviours Matrix displaying the values and expectations are on display in all learning spaces and a copy has been provided to families.

PROTECT - Child Safe Standards

Axedale Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all students and young people. The Child Safe Standards require our school to consider all aspects of child safety and put measures in place to protect children from all forms of abuse, including: sexual and grooming offences, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, and serious neglect. In July 2022, the Child Safe Standards were updated, with there now being eleven standards. We implement the eleven standards in all our school practices, ensuring that all students are safe.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- **ASSEMBLIES:** Assemblies are held on Mondays at 9.00am. The Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island flags are flown and Advance Australia Fair is sung. Weekly awards are presented, student sports reports and special events from the previous weekend are presented and announcements for the week are made. Parents are welcome to attend weekly school assemblies. Assemblies are held outdoors, weather permitting or in the indoor shared space.
- **ASTHMA:** If your child has asthma, or ever uses a ‘puffer’ **even infrequently**, the school will require you to fill out an annual Asthma Management Plan and bring in their medication to be used at school. Please see the Principal for details.
- **ATTENDANCE:** Attendance at school is compulsory unless your child is ill. If your child is absent, please enter the absence on Compass or phone the school. If your child is late to school or leaving early, please fill in the Arrival and Departure information on the iPad at the office. Students must be signed in by an adult if coming in late.
- **BIKES:** Children are welcome and encouraged to ride bikes to school. Safety in terms of apparel (approved helmet and brightly coloured clothing) and safe road behaviour is encouraged. Children must not ride bikes in the schoolyard, or along Raglan Street before the Axedale Goornong Road.
- **BUS:** The school offers free bus transport to and from school if you live more than 4.8 km from the school. The School Bus Management Portal is used by parents to register students for bus travel. Please speak to office staff to organise the use of this portal.
- **CAMPS:** The school has a camping policy aimed at encouraging children to broaden their experiences and develop new skills. The suggested camping experience is Grades 5/6 and 3/4: 2 nights away, Grade 2: overnight stay at a local camp, Grade 1: 2 day camp experience and Grade Prep: tea and activities after school until 7.00pm.
- **CAMPS, SPORTS and EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF):** The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) provides payments for eligible students to attend camps, sports and excursions. CSEF applications for 2024 open early in Term 1. Parents or legal guardians are required to submit a CSEF application form to the Office. Victorian Government Prep students in 2024 who are CSEF approved recipients are also automatically eligible for uniform support. Order forms will be sent out early in Term 2. Families holding a valid means-tested concession card or temporary foster parents are eligible to apply. \$125 per year is paid for eligible primary school students. Payments are made directly to the school and attached to the family account.

- **COMPUTERS & iPADS:** The school is well equipped with computers and iPads having an excellent ratio of these to students. Computers are in all the classrooms. All students use computers as a tool to support their learning. Grade 4/5/6 students are provided with one-to-one Netbooks as part of their curriculum. Students in grades 5/6 have the opportunity to enter into a paid agreement that enables students to take computers home. An information session is held early in Term One for parents and students.
- **CONCERT:** A school concert is held at the end of the year. Families, extended families and members of the wider community are invited to attend.
- **CROSSINGS:** Please encourage your child to cross the highway at the school crossing between the flags. It is important to observe the rules of the school crossing when dropping children off or picking them up.
Please also observe the guidelines regarding traffic movement in Raglan St. It is important for families to use the designated crossing area which is supervised by a staff member in the afternoons.
Police regularly monitor both crossings and the drop off / collection areas.
- **CURRICULUM DAYS:** Each year schools receive four student-free days that can be used for professional development, school planning and administration, curriculum development, and student assessment and reporting. The first day of Term 1 each year will be a student-free day in all government schools to allow for appropriate planning to take place for the arrival of students. School Councils have the flexibility to schedule the remaining three student-free days each year to meet local school needs.
- **DISCIPLINE:** The school has a Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy in line with DE requirements. A co-created Values and Expected Behaviours Matrix is used to support the policy.
- **EXCURSIONS:** Excursions are encouraged and organised as part of the school's normal curriculum program. Parental permission is required for students to leave the school grounds. A 'blanket' permission is provided each year, covering excursions in the local Axedale area. Permission is required for each individual excursion outside of the Axedale area, which is usually provided through Compass. Permission is provided at the time of each excursion. Parents are welcome to pay the excursion payment at the start of the year or individually throughout the year.
- **EXTREME WEATHER:** In line with DE Policy, weather conditions are monitored closely and decisions made on a needs basis. Decisions may include but are not restricted to students remaining inside during extreme heat or windy days.
- **FAMILY RECORDS:** At the start of each year we ask parents to confirm information about the family circumstances, including addresses, phone numbers and emergency contacts. **Please notify the school immediately if any information changes, so the school can always maintain accurate records. These may be necessary in an emergency.**

- **FOOD:** Please ensure that your child has eaten an appropriate breakfast prior to coming to school. This is the best way to start off a long day of learning. It is also important that your child has sufficient lunch for the two supervised eating breaks. Please provide wholesome food (always foods). It is preferred that foods high in sugar, such as lollies (sometimes foods) are kept as special treats, out of school hours.
- **GROUNDS/GARDEN MAINTENANCE:** The school is provided with some funds to maintain grounds and gardens. We ask families to contribute \$30/family to offset some expenses. We will be seeking your support to assist us in making sure that we provide the best facilities for your child. At different times we need tasks to be completed that require specific skills. We are thankful for the support offered to complete these tasks.
- **HAIR:** It is recommended that students with long hair have it tied back whilst at school. This is a safety suggestion, as well as a health matter. It is preferred that hair dye/colouring is not undertaken during the school term. Plain hair ties or ties in school colours are recommended.
- **HEAD LICE:** These can be a problem at times. It is suggested that students with long hair have it tied back whilst at school, and that parents check student's hair regularly. Please notify the school immediately if you find signs of lice or nits. It is important that any cases of head lice are treated, using a recommended treatment method.
- **HOLIDAYS:** We understand that at times, taking students out of school for family holidays is necessary, but we ask that families try to limit taking regular holidays during school terms. If a family takes holidays during a school term, staff are unable to provide copies of work that will be missed. Staff can suggest resources that can be used to assist during these times.
- **HOMEWORK:** Axedale PS's Homework Policy is written in accordance to DE recommendations. Homework may vary from reading levelled readers to specific work in a curriculum area. Students should be encouraged to complete all homework neatly and promptly, and to discuss their homework and any other schoolwork with their parents / carers. Teacher will notify parents of the homework arrangements for individual classes.
- **ILLNESS:** Sick children should be kept at home as the school has facilities suitable only for emergency use. If a child becomes ill or injured at school, parents will be contacted so that the child may be taken home. In **extreme** cases an ambulance will be called if we are unable to locate family members. Please make sure that the school has up-to-date records of phone numbers - home, work and a friend/relative for emergency contact. It is DE's requirement that we are notified of the reason a student is absent. This can be completed either using the Compass App or by making direct contact with the school. It is School Policy that once a child has been sent home ill or injured, the child must not return to the school that day.

Covid is still evident in the community. It is strongly recommended that students who test positive to remain at home until they test negative. This helps protect peers and staff from the spread of the virus.

- **IMMUNISATION:** All children entering school are required to have an immunisation certificate. These can be obtained from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (you will be sent this statement when your child turns 5 years old), through MyGov or visit your local Medicare office.
- **INFORMATION NIGHTS:** An information night for Prep students will be held early in Term One to enable parents to meet Emma and find out details about classroom programs and expectations. Further information nights may be held during the year for parents to familiarise themselves with particular curriculum areas or current research trends in teaching. Keep an eye on your newsletters for details.
- **INTERVIEWS:** Parent / Teacher formal interviews are offered at different times throughout the year. Parent/ Teacher 'Meet and Greet' meetings are held early in the year and Parent Teacher Conversations are held in conjunction with the Mid Year Reports. Meetings between parents / carers and teachers can be organised at any time. Please contact the principal or classroom / specialist teacher to organise these.
- **JEWELLERY:** Wearing of jewellery at school, including brooches, rings, necklaces etc is discouraged. Stud type or sleeper type earrings are the only form of earrings permitted. Wearing **make up is not permitted.**
- **LIBRARY:** The school has an excellent range of fiction and non-fiction books in the library. Students are encouraged to use the library and are requested to have a cloth library bag to protect the books, thus limiting replacement costs.
- **INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS:** Staff write plans for learning improvement for students achieving well below or above expected level. These plans set out goals for the student and stress the importance of the home and the school complementing each other for the ultimate benefit of the student. IEPs are shared at various times during the year, at formal or informal meetings.
- **LOST PROPERTY:** To assist with the return of your child's lost property please ensure that everything is marked clearly with the family name. Lost property left at the school will be cleared at the end of each term by taking it to the Salvation Army. Please contact the school immediately if an item is lost.
- **LUNCHESES:** Lunch orders are available each day from Rise & Grind. Orders should be written on an envelope with the child's name and grade, and the money inside. Reusable lunch order bags are also available for purchase from the office. These are placed in a box at the office, which will then be delivered to Rise & Grind. Lunches are collected and delivered to students at lunchtime. Only items on the Lunch Order List can be ordered. We have a hot lunch order day once or twice each term. PVF and parent volunteers assist on these days, with foods offered varying across the year.

- **MARC VAN - MOBILE AREA RESOURCE CENTRE:** This is a small van that comes to the school fortnightly, with Sue Gentry providing lessons on library, literature, and resource use. Students borrow from the MARC Van. It is at school every second Tuesday. There is a cost of \$25.00 per year, per student.

- **MEDICATION:** Should it be necessary for your child to have any medication whilst at school, please ensure the medication has the child's name on it and that it is handed to the office, with a completed medication authority form

The medication should not be left in the child's bag.

*** **No child can be given medication without written authorisation** ***

- **MOBILE PHONES / DEVICES**

Axedale PS's Mobile Phone / Devices Policy is written in accordance with DE recommendations. Any phones / devices brought to school must be handed into the office for safe storage and collected at the end of the day. Students travelling to and from school on the bus must place all devices in the tub at the front of the bus and collect as they disembark from the bus. No students are to have devices in their possession whilst traveling on the bus.

- **MUSIC:** Music classes are conducted on Fridays as part of our regular curriculum. The school has an active School Band that practises weekly and performs at school and community events. Students have the opportunity to participate in the Choir, which is offered weekly, during a lunch break. Students can also access weekly guitar and singing lessons via independent teachers who visit our school. Lessons are paid for by parents directly to these teachers.
- **NEWSLETTER:** A newsletter is distributed weekly, on a **THURSDAY**, via Compass. Please get into the habit of checking Compass and reading the contents of the newsletter carefully. Upcoming dates and events are included in the newsletter. If you wish to have anything printed in the newsletter, eg. Community events etc. please have your notice in on Tuesday. The newsletter is also available on our school website www.axedaleps.vic.edu.au.
- **OPEN DAYS:** The school offers open days throughout the year, based on various activities. Education Week and Book Week are favourite open days, with dates advertised in the newsletter. This is a good opportunity to see the school in operation.
- **OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE:** Before and after school care is offered each day and is conducted in the 'brick building.' Dependent on numbers, the service is also offered on curriculum days. TheirCare information is available from the office.
- **PARENTS:** Parents are always welcome at the school. There are opportunities for parents to assist with activities throughout the year. These opportunities range from assisting with reading in the classroom to helping out on Athletic Sports Day. Staff are always willing to talk to parents about student learning and behaviour. It is often difficult to engage in detailed conversations in the morning before school or straight after school. If a detailed conversation is required please organise a

mutually suitable time so that staff are available.

- **PARENTS, VOLUNTEERS & FRIENDS:** Parents, Volunteers & Friends (PVF) is a group of parents/carers who come together to organise and support various events and activities across the year. PVF meets at the school regularly and all parents/carers are welcome to attend these meetings. Attendance will bring you into regular contact with other parents with similar interests and is one of the many ways of keeping abreast with school developments. Please check school newsletters for dates and times of meetings.

PVF coordinate and conduct several fund raising activities across the year. These include, but are not limited to raffles, Mother’s and Father’s Day stalls, Fruit Tree and Pie Drives and the biannual Golf Day. Parents/carers are invited to assist with these activities, even if they are unable to attend meetings.

- **PHOTOS:** Parents are reminded that they are not to share, via social media, photos taken at school or school events which include other students.

School photographs are taken by a professional photographer in Term 1.

Information and order forms will be sent home prior to Photo Day.

- **POLICIES & PROCEDURES:** In line with DE requirements, School Council regularly update school wide policies and procedures covering many aspects of school operations. Policies are available from the office or via the school website.

Available Policies:

Anaphylaxis	Asthma	Attendance	Bullying Prevention
Camps and Excursions	Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy	Child Safety Code of Conduct	Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy and Procedures
Complaints	Digital Learning (Internet, Social Media and Digital Devices)	Health Care Needs	Homework
Mobile Phones	Parent Payments	Personal Property	Photographing, Filming and Recording Students
Privacy	Statement of Values and School Philosophy	Student Wellbeing and Engagement	Visitors
Volunteers			

- **PREPS:** During February, Preps will attend school on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. **Wednesdays are rest days for the first month.** Parents are asked to make a booking for a one-to-one Early Years Assessment on one of these rest days. Assessments are conducted one-on-one by Emma. Bookings can be made at the office. At parent / teacher discretion, additional Wednesdays may be added as rest days for individual prep students.

- **READING:** Reading forms the basis of almost all of our learning. Reading is a skill to be encouraged and nurtured. All children enjoy being read to and sharing stories. Reading should be modelled at home, and reading time should always be a relaxed pleasant time. Students across all year levels are expected to read on a nightly basis.

- **REPORTS:** Written reports are available via Compass in June and December. Reports are written according to DE requirements.
- **SCHOLASTIC BOOK CLUB:** Students have the opportunity to purchase books through Scholastic Book Club at regular intervals throughout the year. Book Club details are included in the newsletter and order forms sent home.
- **SCHOOL COUNCIL:** School Council meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6.30pm at school. Eight meetings must be held each year, with a minimum of at least one meeting per term. Elections are held early in March. More information regarding the role of school councillors is available from the school. Please check newsletters for information regarding becoming a School Councillor and meeting dates.
- **SMOKE AND ALCOHOL-FREE ZONES:** In line with DE Guidelines, the whole school is a smoke and alcohol free zone. Visitors are requested not to smoke in the school grounds, in any building or within 4 metres of the school entrances at any time. Alcohol is not permitted at school based activities held on site.
- **SPORT/PHYSICAL EDUCATION:** As with all other subjects, this is part of the curriculum and is not optional. There is a regular Physical Education program covering areas of Minor games, Fine motor skills, Dance, Gymnastics and Athletics. A swimming program is held early in Term 4. Senior students have the opportunity to participate in various inter-school sports throughout the year. A cost is involved for those students who are selected to participate in inter school sporting activities. Students in years 3-6 attend the Regional Cross Country Run. All students have the opportunity to participate in various sporting clinics across the school year. The school is part of the Emu Valley Cluster Sports Association. Athletic Sports Day is held annually for this cluster.
- **SUNSMART POLICY:** Our school has a SunSmart Policy which requires all children to wear **wide brimmed or legionnaire sun hats when outside**, (baseball hats are not acceptable) from January-April and September-December or on other days when requested by staff. Hats must be maroon in colour (same as school uniform) and must be labelled with student / family name. Students will be required to stay under a covered area in the outdoor inclusive space if an appropriate sunhat is not worn. The wearing of sunscreen is encouraged, with top up sunscreen available at school. Staff are unable to apply sunscreen to students.
- **STUDENT BEHAVIOUR:** It is important that students, parents/carers and staff display the school values of Respect, Personal Best, Resilience and Co-operation each day. Classroom and school yard expectations are outlined in the Values and Expected Behaviours Matrix. Suitable consequences are in place for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour choices made by students. If concerned about school based issues, please speak to Corrina or staff rather than initiating contact between parents of involved students.

- **UNIFORM:** The wearing of school uniform is compulsory at Axedale PS. All uniform items are available for sale through the office. Please ask for our uniform order form to see the full range. **It is expected that all students wear school uniform where possible, but it is essential when on a school excursion, at inter-school sports days or when a visiting speaker attends the school.** We generally have a large supply of good quality second hand uniforms. Please call in to the office if you require uniforms. Students are required to wear suitable shoes for the various school activities that they undertake.
It is important to label all pieces of school uniform. Please regularly check that labels are readable as they often fade when washed.
- **VALUABLES:** Students are discouraged from bringing valuable items to school. The school cannot accept responsibility for any losses or damage. All valuables must be placed in the day safe in the office on arrival to school and collected when the bell goes at the end of the day.
- **VISITORS:** Staff constantly monitor adults in the school yard and buildings. Visitors **MUST** first report to the office before approaching any student, staff member or classroom. Visitors collecting students at the end of the school day are asked to wait outside buildings to keep doorways clear and to allow for the safe exit of students.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Below is the official guide for details of exclusion in cases of infectious diseases:

- **Chicken Pox:** excluded for at least 7 days after illness begins, and until last sore has healed.
- **German Measles (Rubella):** excluded until 10 days have passed since appearance of the rash.
- **Measles:** excluded for at least 7 days from appearance of rash or until Medical Certificate of recovery is produced.
- **Mumps:** excluded until at least 14 days after onset of symptoms.
- **Hepatitis:** excluded until Medical Certificate is provided.
- **Ringworm:** excluded if advised by a medical practitioner.
- **School Sores (Impetigo):** excluded if so advised by medical practitioners. Sores should be treated and **MUST BE COVERED** if the child is attending school.
- **Whooping cough:** for 4 weeks, or until medical certificate is produced.
- **Head lice:** this presents a constant problem at schools. Thorough, regular checking is essential to aid in controlling this pest. Please notify the school of any infection. The child must be kept at home until treatment has been completed.
- **Conjunctivitis:** excluded until infection is under control.
- **Coughs and Colds:** it is important for students to stay home if they have coughs and colds. Younger students are often unable to monitor their own personal hygiene, including use of tissues and hand washing. Students are encouraged to cough / sneeze into their elbow rather than into their hands.
- **COVID:** *It is recommended that staff members, students or visitors who have symptoms of cold, influenza or COVID-19 undergo testing for COVID-19. Parents of symptomatic students should be asked to collect their child from school and keep them home until they are no longer symptomatic. The Department of Health recommends that staff and students who test positive for COVID-19 isolate for a minimum of 5 days and do not attend school until their symptoms resolve.*

*It is requested that students **DO NOT** attend school when they have been vomiting overnight. Please allow 24 hours after the vomiting has ceased before returning to school.*

Note: It is emphasised that children should not be sent to school if they are obviously unwell. Whilst most pupils may be well enough to return after the stipulated time, some will need extra time to recover.