



INFORMATION BOOKLET 2009



COWWARR PRIMARY SCHOOL
CHURCH STREET
COWWARR 3857
PHONE 03 5148 9271
FAX NUMBER 03 5148 9422
EMAIL cowwarr.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au
www.cowwarrps.vic.edu.au

PRINCIPAL - Helen Hellenen

TEACHERS

Leonie Wilson
Helen Hellenen
Marg Reisinger
Chris Ballard

BURSAR

Barb Tomholt

INTEGRATION AIDES

Marg Smith

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO NOTIFY
THE SCHOOL WHEN:**

- Your address changes
- Your telephone number changes
- The contact person who will care for your child in an emergency, changes.
- You will be late collecting your child.
 - When your child is absent

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Dear Parents/Guardians,

On behalf of the staff and school community I am very pleased to welcome you and your child to Cowwarr Primary School and look forward to working with you to give your child the best educational opportunity possible.

We are very proud of Cowwarr Primary School and of the behaviour and attitude exhibited by our pupils. The school enjoys a reputation for the friendly and caring atmosphere created by the staff, pupils and the wider community.

Education is a three way process and involves considerable effort by the teachers, the parents and the students.

The teachers will endeavour to see that every child has a happy beginning, develops fully and enjoys a broad challenging curriculum within a caring learning environment.

You, as a parent, have a vital role to play in the education of your child. You provide the home grounding for your children before they enter school. Once at school you can, in co-operation with the teachers, actively help your child by talking to the teachers, positively involving yourself with your child's work and actively supporting school activities.

With teachers, parents and children all working together as a team, we really can achieve an excellent education for the children at Cowwarr.

We wish you and your child a happy association with our school.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Hellenen – Principal

1. GOALS OF THE SCHOOL

The goals of Cowwarr Primary School are:

CURRICULUM

- To ensure that all students are given the tools to reach their full potential.
- To provide a quality, sequential, balanced and challenging curriculum for all year levels within CSF guidelines in all Essential Learning Areas with an emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy.

ENVIRONMENT

- To provide and maintain a safe, caring and co-operative learning environment.

MANAGEMENT

- To ensure the school's operation is characterised by effective and efficient structures and processes, consultative and efficient decision-making, good communication, clear shared vision of the school's aims and high level of professional growth

RESOURCES -

- To ensure that resource allocation and facilities reflect and support the goals and priority of the school.

THE SCHOOL PRIORITY 2005 - 2007

- To improve Teaching and Learning practices throughout the school.

2. THE SCHOOL BUDGET

Government funding pays for such things as buildings and equipment, staff salaries, curriculum materials and resources, administration, maintenance and the day to day running costs such as electricity and cleaning.

Parents are expected to pay for their children's camps and other excursions, swimming programs, cultural activities, text books, stationary items and more expensive curriculum materials for some practical subjects, for example art materials, science and technology materials. Pens, exercise books and other stationary items are often called student requisites.

The yearly operating budget (excluding teachers wages) for the school is about \$85,000. The Department of Education and Training (DE&T) contributes about \$55,000 which pays for books, indoor & outdoor equipment, office supplies, cleaning, ground & building maintenance, gas, electricity, rates, staff training & development & emergency teachers.

Parents contribute to the cost of their children's education through the excursion fees (see 8.4). The Department of Education and Training expects the Cowwarr School community to contribute to the total budget, thus extra funds are raised through fundraising activities approved by School Council and generally organised by the Parents Committee.

3. MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL

Management of the school is a partnership between elected & co-opted School Council members and the Principal.

3.1 SCHOOL COUNCIL - ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Representing the school and its community in reaching agreement with the DE&T (Department of Education and Training) on the school charter.
- Determining the education policy, goals and priorities of the school within the framework of the school charter and statewide guidelines.
- Approving the school budget, which includes school generated funds, consistent with the school charter.
- Entering into contracts for purposes consistent with the School charter.
- Maintaining and improving buildings and grounds.
- Reporting annually to the school community and to DE&T.
- Making recommendations to the DE&T on the appointment of a school principal.
- Authorizing the employment of non-teaching staff and any staff for short-term projects.
- Developing the school's student dress code.
- Developing the school's student code of conduct as part of the school charter within guidelines set by the DE&T.

While the council has the responsibility to decide on policy, it is the principal's responsibility to ensure that policies are implemented.

3.2 SCHOOL COUNCILLORS, ELECTIONS & MEETINGS

Your current School Council members are: -

Malcolm Stewart, President

Megan Stewart, Secretary

Bev Hookey, Treasurer

Graeme Harrington

Matthew Broad

Ruth O'Brien

Judith Stone

Marg Reisinger, DE&T Representative

Helen Hellenen – *The principal is a voting member of the council and is the Executive Officer of school council. The principal is expected to give professional advice and provide all relevant information to council.*

Please contact any of these people, if you wish to discuss any matters relating to our school.

Elections are held in March every year.

Councillors serve a two-year term of office with half retiring each year.

Co-opted community members serve a one-year term.

All meetings are public and the date of meetings is published in the weekly newsletter.

3.3 THE PRINCIPAL – Mrs. HELEN HELLEREN

The Principal is responsible for:

CURRICULUM - Overseeing the implementation of the curriculum which includes managing teaching staff, period allocation, timetable, assessment & reporting processes, class sizes, etc.

PERSONNEL - Recommending appropriate funding, organising recruitment & monitoring performance.

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS - Establishing procedures for care & maintenance.

FINANCES - Overseeing the maintenance of the school budget, including providing regular reports to council.

DISCIPLINE & DRESS CODE - Implementing policy developed by council.

3.4 PARENTS' CLUB

The Cowwarr Primary School Parents Club meets monthly with evening meetings.

The aim of this Committee is to promote the welfare of the School.

The Committee achieves its aim by fund raising and expending those funds on activities and equipment, which are important for the school and its students.

The Parents Committee complements the role of the School Council and its sub-committee arrangements.

All parents of students at the School are eligible to become members.

Watch for details of meetings and activities in the School Newsletter.

3.5 JUNIOR SCHOOL COUNCIL

The role of Junior School Council is to represent the views of students by:

- Providing comments to the Principal and School Council on plans and priorities for the school.
- Raising issues of concern to students.
- Recommending activities of interest to students.

Elections are held in Term 1 and students from years 3 to 6 are eligible for nomination and election.

Two students from each level are chosen as members of Junior School Council for the year.

4. TERM DATES & PUPIL FREE DAYS - 2009

Principal begins on Monday 19th January, 2009

Other Staff begin on Wednesday 28th January, 2009

Students begin Monday 2nd February, 2009

Term 1 = January 28th – April 4th, 2009

Term 2 = April 20th – June 26th, 2009

Term 3 = July 13th – September 18th, 2009

Term 4 = October 5th – December 18th, 2009

The Department of Education, Employment and Training (DE&T) allows each school to have four pupil-free days per annum. This allows staff to undertake school-based planning and reporting, curriculum development and professional development. These days will be notified well in advance in the School Newsletter.

5. SCHOOL HOURS

School begins at 9.00 a.m. and finishes at 3.00 p.m.

Staff supervision of students begins at 8.50 a.m. and finishes at 3.15 p.m. (**children in the grounds before 8.50 a.m. and after 3.15 p.m. are not the responsibility of staff**).

Lunch begins at 12.45 p.m. and finishes at 1.25 p.m.

Any change to these times will be notified in advance in the School Newsletter.

6. WHAT PARENTS PROVIDE

- Classroom requisites: A specific list is published with the newsletter before the end of each year. It includes things like books, pens, pencils, rubbers etc.
- An art smock (an old adult shirt or T-shirt)
- A school bag
- A library bag
- Plastic Lunch box
- Plastic Drink bottle
- School Uniform (see number 8.2)
- Slippers (see number 8.3)

All your child's possessions should be clearly and permanently marked with his/her name. School bags should have the student's name, address and phone number printed inside the bag.

7. SCHOOL UNIFORM & POLICY

7.1 UNIFORM POLICY

The wearing of school uniform is compulsory.

The official school colours are navy blue and white

On all school outings, when students wear pants or shorts it is requested that they wear a white polo shirt or skivvy (not navy).

All uniform items should be clearly & permanently marked with your child's name.

7.2 SCHOOL UNIFORM

The school uniform consists of the following items: -

- Track pants or slacks - navy
- Shorts - navy or navy and white gingham
- Dress - navy or navy and white gingham
- Pinafore or tunic - navy
- Polo shirt or skivvy - navy or white
- Wind cheater - navy
- Socks - navy or white
- Shoes or boots - black, navy, brown or white
- Sun hat - navy Style: legionnaire or cricket (See number 9.8 for the Sunsmart policy)

Uniform items can be ordered through the school, at times advertised in the newsletter. The school logo is embroidered on all uniform items.

7.3 JEWELLERY - STUDENTS ARE: -

- Permitted to wear a watch.
- Permitted to wear small studs or sleepers, if ears are pierced.
- Permitted to wear no more than 2 decorative clips in hair.
- Not permitted to wear any other items of jewelry.

7.4 FOOT WEAR IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS

For the comfort of your child each classroom has been carpeted.

Children are required to remove their shoes when entering classrooms.

Children are welcome to bring slippers for use inside school buildings and to prolong the life & condition of socks.

8. CURRICULUM & PROGRAMS

Particular emphasis in 2009 will be placed on improving all the skills of the children and increasing their use of, and skills with, technology. We will continue to implement the Curriculum and Standards Framework published by the Department of Education and Training across all areas.

8.1 REPORTING YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS

TERM 1 - An interim report will be sent home late in Term 1. Either the teacher or the parents may also arrange an interview.

TERM 2 - An interview may be arranged at the end of term 2 to discuss your child's educational needs and progress. A written report of progress will also be provided.

TERM 4 - A written report will be provided at the end of term 4.

ADDITIONAL INTERVIEWS can also be requested during the year if parents or staff feel it necessary.

8.2 SCHOOL CAMPS

The annual School Camp is part of the education program for students in years 3 to 6. It provides an opportunity for students to :-

- learn about different places
- practise skills learnt at school.
- experience living away from home;
- develop self-reliance;

The School camp program works on a 4-year rotation allowing all students to experience each camp opportunity.

Year 1 - Melbourne

Year 2 - Organised School Camp e.g. Gelantipy or similar bush camp

Year 3- Provincial Centre e.g. Ballarat

Year 4 - National Park e.g. Wilson's Promontory

The School camp occurs in Term 4

The cost is generally about \$200

A non-refundable deposit of \$20 -\$30 is required in term 2.

8.3 ARTS PERFORMANCES

Arts performances, including drama, puppetry, orchestra and dance are organised each year to broaden students' arts experiences.

Information will be available prior to each performance.

8.4 EXCURSIONS

Over the school year a number of excursions are organised.

It may be a walk to the river to collect water samples or it could be a bus ride to see places, people and things of interest and educational value. Often excursions are conducted in conjunction with the swimming program, where the bus has already been hired so excursion costs are minimized. The cost of all excursions for the year is set at \$120.00 for 2009. This may be paid at the beginning of the year or at the beginning of each term in installments of \$30.00. Anyone who has difficulty in meeting excursion costs should contact the Principal.

A single general excursion form will be sent home at the beginning of the school year to cover all excursions that take place. Any changes to the information provided on this form should be notified to the school immediately.

8.5 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

8.5.1 Religious Education

Religious Education may be offered during the year, depending upon the availability of teachers. Information will be provided to parents when confirmed.

8.5.2 Instrumental Music

Opportunities to learn a musical instrument may be offered depending upon the availability of instructors. Information will be provided to parents when confirmed.

An instructor is available through the school for those wishing to pay for private musical tuition.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY & SERVICES

9.1 IMMUNIZATION POLICY

It is a requirement of the Victorian Health Act that the parents/guardians of a child provide an immunization status certificate in respect of each prescribed infectious disease, to the person in charge of each Primary School, before the child first attends that school. A child can be excluded if their immunization status is deficient.

Certificates are issued by the Shire in which the immunizations were done.

Wellington Shire Phone number 51423333

Please inform the school if your child gets an infectious disease.

9.2 ILLNESS & INJURIES

Staff need to know if your child has any medical conditions, particularly conditions which may interfere with their participation in the full school program.

At the commencement of the year, a questionnaire about the health of your child will be sent home for you to complete.

In case of illness or injury to your child, the school requires your contact details and your doctors.

At the commencement of the year, these details will be requested from you .

**If any of this information changes during the year
please advise the school as soon as possible.**

If your child becomes ill or is injured while at school, it is school policy to phone the emergency numbers you have specified and request the person to call and collect your child.

If your child is ill prior to school commencing, please do not send him/her to school as limited facilities exist at school and staff are not qualified nor have the time to nurse them.

9.3 DAYS OF EXTREME HEAT

Regardless of the temperature, the school will remain open as there are air conditioners in each classroom, however, some modification may be made to the timetable to avoid outdoor or energetic activities.

Consistent with school policy, students will not be permitted to leave the school grounds early, without the **written** consent of their parents.

9.4 HEAD LICE

Occasionally outbreaks of head lice occur in any school.

The school community will be advised if an outbreak occurs.

Please check your child's hair regularly during outbreaks, and inform the school if you notice head lice on your child.

9.5 SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICE

The School Medical Service visits the school each year and carries out:-

- health examinations (particularly hearing & sight) on all Prep year students,
- follow up tests on some children previously tested.

9.6 EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE OFFICER

An Educational Guidance officer is available to help students. Students, parents and teachers can request this service, however all requests must be made via the Principal.

9.7 WELLINGTON YOUTH SERVICE

The aim of the service is to promote young people's well-being and social health status by improving their participation in school, family & community activities by offering prevention and early intervention services.

This service offers:-

- Professional support & assistance to young people;
- Individual & group support;
- An independent party in family situations;
- Programs related to health & general well-being,

Contact David Roberts Ph. 51423340

9.8 SUN-SMART POLICY

Cowwarr P.S. is a Sun-Smart school.

It is compulsory for students to wear approved hats for all outdoor activities. In Terms 1 and 4 this means a cricket or legionnaire style hat.

In Terms 2 and 3 students are expected to wear an approved hat for all outdoor activities.

9.9 BICYCLE POLICY & PROGRAM

The wearing of bicycle helmets when riding is the law in Victoria.

The Road Traffic Authority recommends that children below grade four level should not ride on roads unless accompanied by an adult.

School rules about bikes:

- In the school grounds, bikes must be wheeled, not ridden.
- The school provides a bike shed for storage of bikes during school hours. The bike shed is out of bounds during play times.

BIKE EDUCATION PROGRAM

For the safety of your child the school provides a Bike-Education Program for all students, regularly.

Details about the program will be provided prior to its commencement.

The Bike Education trailer is for hire. The school covers the cost of this program.

9.10 SWIMMING PROGRAM

For the safety of your child the school provides the opportunity for all students to participate in swimming classes at Sale pool, in Term 3. Depending on the weather, a summer program may also be offered at the Heyfield Pool in Term 1.

Austswim – trained staff members and parents oversee the program.

Details about the program will be provided prior to its commencement.

The cost of the swimming program is included in the excursion fees paid by parents.

10. STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

This document will be distributed at the beginning of each year, including the school's anti-bullying policy.

Children are expected to comply with this code at school and on school outings.

11. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

From time to time concerns arise about students or teachers. All concerns and complaints should be directed to the Principal and will be treated seriously, in line with the "Local Complaints Resolution Procedures" as published by the Department of Education, Victoria 1999.

"These guidelines provide advice to principals in the management and resolution of complaints made by students, parents, other members of the school community, or staff members in relation to any action or decision which they consider to be unfair, unreasonable, inappropriate or a breach of any relevant Act, regulation or Ministerial Order." (*Page 2, Local Complaints and Resolution Procedures*) This booklet is available to parents on request.

12. ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES AND TRANSFERS

According to the Department of Education's Reference Guide "Children of school age (six to fifteen years), resident in Victoria are required to be in full-time attendance at a registered school."

A school roll "is required by legislation and attendance records must be maintained."

"When a student is absent without any explanation the Principal will ensure that parents are informed."

School Councils have a responsibility to

1. Develop policies for the support and maintenance of student attendance; and
2. Annually report on student attendance.

Parents have a responsibility to provide a written note explaining the reasons for an absence from school.

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds early, without the written consent of their parents.

Please advise the Principal in advance if you-

- intend taking children on holidays during a school term.
- are considering transferring your child to another school.

13. HOW TO SEND MONEY TO SCHOOL

Throughout the year you will be requested to send sums of money to school for various activities. It would be a great help if you could do so in the following way:-

For small sums of money - place it in a sealed envelope with the child's name, the purpose of the money and the amount on the front of the envelope.

Paying by Cheque - sometimes there are a range of activities which require money and often there are different groups responsible for the money, for example school photos may need to be paid direct to the photographer.

If you need to pay for a range of things by cheque, then check with staff about which things can be grouped together for payment.

14. LUNCH

Children eat their lunches under the supervision of teaching staff, prior to play.

The school's health program teaches children about healthy eating and balanced diets, it would be appreciated if parents could reinforce this message through the food they provide for play lunch and lunch.

Please give your child plastic containers and drink bottles.

European Wasps are also a problem at school; therefore we suggest that children **do not** bring soft drinks in cans.

Glass containers should not be sent to school, they are dangerous and can cause injuries if broken.

14.1 LUNCH ORDERS

Lunch orders are available from Cowwarr General Store, ph. 51489226

The shop delivers 5 minutes before the lunch break.

Please do not order drinks in glass containers as part of your child's lunch.

14.2 TUCK SHOP

The Parents' Club runs a Tuckshop at regular intervals throughout the year. Watch the Newsletter for details & the order form.

14.3 CHILDREN GOING HOME FOR LUNCH

Parents are requested to advise the school when children are required to go home for lunch as children are not permitted to leave the school grounds without written permission.

Children must sign the lunch book before leaving the school and when they return.

15. NEWSLETTER

The newsletter is the school's main method of communicating with all school families. It will be sent home each Thursday with the eldest child in each family.

It contains dates of excursion, curriculum activities, meetings, fundraising events, working bees, etc. It provides news of academic and sporting achievements of students and reports from staff, School Council and Parents' Club.

Many community clubs also request permission to publish articles via our Newsletter.

Please take the time to read the newsletter each week.