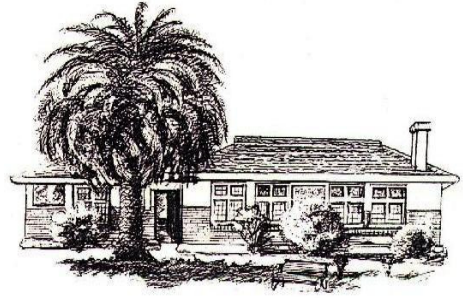

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1.0 Welcome

Welcome to Heathcote Primary School.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide parents, carers and other interested persons with information about our school.

Your child's time at primary school should be happy, stimulating and educationally profitable. Regular communication between the home and school is highly desirable in the achievement of the best education for your child.

Please feel free to visit the school and become involved in the school's activities.

Active support and encouragement from parents is vital to the educational growth of children. You can stimulate this growth by taking an interest in the achievements of your children, the work they bring home and by visiting the school on both formal and informal occasions. Involvement in school life demonstrates to your children that you value the role that the school can play in their lives. Our school has an 'open door' policy.

A weekly newsletter is distributed to each family in the school every Thursday. This is the main source of communication between the school and your home. Please take time to read the information it contains. The newsletter is posted on our website each week.

www.heathcoteps.vic.edu.au

Copies of the School Policies and Strategic Plan are available from the office.

Parents are most welcome to work with or visit their child at any time. We particularly require help during our Literacy Block (9.00 – 11.00am).

2.0 School History

Heathcote Primary School began as a tent school at the McIvor Diggings on 19th December 1853. The first permanent school was established in 1856 on the site of the present police station.

In 1926 a Higher Elementary School was opened in Herriot St, and the Junior School moved onto this site in 1961. This building is a monument to those that served in World War 1.

On 19th October 2003 a new school was opened to celebrate the school's 150th Anniversary. In the same year the Police Commissioners Residence, built in 1888 was refurbished for use by the school.

Heathcote Primary continues its proud tradition of serving the Heathcote Community in buildings that have their origins over three different centuries.

3.0 Curriculum

The guiding principle of the school is “Every child is every teacher’s responsibility”. The teachers plan and work in teams, providing class programs that include Units of Study (projects) open ended tasks and activities and strategies that cater for individual difference.

The school is organised into two units:

- Junior Learning Community (P-3)
- Senior Learning Community (two grades of 4/5/6)

3.1 School Timetable

9.00	-	11.00	Literacy
11.00	-	11.45	Recess
11.45	-	1.05	Mathematics
1.05	-	1.15	Lunch
2.00	-	3.30	Afternoon session

3.2 Assessment and Reporting

The school policy is currently under review. The current Heathcote Primary School Assessment and Reporting policy is aimed at keeping you fully informed on your child’s progress at school. This policy has the following main features.

Communication Book.

This book provides a comprehensive and meaningful picture of your child’s progress at school. Included in the book will be examples of work, mid and final year reports, project reports and information on specialist areas. These books will be sent home once per term for you to view and to discuss with your child. Comments from parents are also a valued part of this process. At the end of the year the book will become your personal record of your child’s achievements for that year.

Student Report Cards

As mentioned above two written reports will be sent home during the year in the communication books. These reports are standardised across the state and give information in regard to your child’s achievement against state wide standards.

Interviews

These are held with parents in conjunction with a visit to the classroom. During the first half of the year a mutually convenient time will be arranged for your visit. You will be able to observe and work with your child in the classroom during this time.

This session will be followed by a discussion with your child’s teacher. The class observation session will help to make the parent / teacher meeting more meaningful and allow you an even great input into your child’s education. (Other interviews as requested by the teacher or parent are readily available).

3.3 School Code of Conduct

The following values are central to the philosophy of our school and express how all members of the school community will conduct themselves:

- Respect – recognising and accepting individual differences and valuing our environment and belongings
- Learning – developing the skills, values and attitudes to become a lifelong learner
- Teamwork – learning together to achieve the best possible outcomes for all
- Responsibility – being accountable for our own actions, what we say and what we do

It is expected that children behave in a way that allows all children the opportunity to learn in a happy, co-operative environment whilst demonstrating the above values. Underpinning the behaviour code is the philosophy of restorative practice where students are assisted to recognise the impact of their behaviour on others and how they can work to restore relationships when things go wrong.

The schools behaviour code is regularly reinforced and reviewed to ensure that the behaviour of our children is that of which we can be proud.

All incidences of misbehaviour are followed through with the appropriate consequences. Refer to 12.3 Unacceptable Behaviour Notes for further information.

3.4 Classroom Code of Conduct

The school values are at the core of classroom management. We expect children to behave in a manner that reflects these values. Restorative practice principles and circle time are used to resolve most inappropriate classroom behaviours. More serious consequences, as per the school code of conduct and DEECD guidelines are utilised if needed.

3.5 Home Reading

All students are expected to take home books daily. Please ensure these are read and returned each day.

3.6 Homework and Assignments

All students are expected to complete all tasks set as homework. Homework details and obligations are set out in your child's homework book.

3.7 Swimming

A Swimming Program for all children is held during February each year at the Heathcote Pool. A certificate is presented to each child that records swimming achievements.

3.8 Athletic Sports

The McIvor and District Primary School Sports are held annually. Heathcote Primary and Holy Rosary schools are involved

Heathcote Primary has four house teams named after local minerals. Each student is placed in a House at their enrolment (for sporting competitions and other activities held during the year). The houses are:

(Jasper – Red), (Jade - Green), (Quartz - Blue) and (Gold - Yellow).

House Captains and Vice Captains are chosen for sporting competitions. They are student leaders who are responsible for the organization of house teams and the encouragement of house spirit.

3.9 Religious Education

A non-denominational Religious Education Course is run at the school by volunteers on a weekly basis.

3.10 Library

Each group within the school has a weekly library session. Book bags are required to protect borrowed books.

Borrowed books are to be returned within two weeks. If a child loses a library book you will be expected to pay the replacement cost of the book.

4.0 School Excursions

4.1 Camps

This school has a camping program which operates throughout the school. Each year level can expect at least one camp per year, as well as experiences in outdoor education.

More information will be sent home about camps during the year.

4.2 Excursions

From time to time, students will be going on excursions outside the school. In these cases, an Excursion Approval Form will be sent home which parents need to complete and return to the school prior to the excursion.

In the case of camps, a medical form is required, detailing any relevant information concerning the student's medical or special dietary needs. These forms remain confidential and are destroyed after the students have returned from the camp.

4.3 Performances

We offer two cultural based performances each year.

5.0 Support Structures

5.1 Numeracy

The school implements the Department of Education and Training's Early and Middle Years Numeracy program.

5.2 Literacy

The school implements the Department of Education and Training's Early and Middle Years Literacy program.

5.3 Welfare Team

A Welfare Team is established to support children and their families with social, emotional and learning difficulties. Meetings are held fortnightly. The school also has a Primary Welfare Officer appointed to co-ordinate all welfare matters.

5.4 Teaching and Learning Team

A Teaching and Learning Team operates to ensure that teaching programs are relevant, current and appropriate for our school. The team currently comprises staff and parent representatives are welcome. Meetings are held fortnightly.

6.0 Parent Organizations

6.1 School Council

The School Council is the major administrative body of the school and is the focal point for decision making on school policies covering Curriculum, Finance and Planning, Maintenance and Development of Buildings and Grounds, and general business relating to the schools operation.

The School Council is constituted as follows:

- Principal
- Four staff members
- Ten parents

Meetings are held monthly. Each year (prior to 31st March) elections are held for half the positions. The term of office for an elected School Council member is 2 years.

6.2 Fundraising Committee

The Fundraising Committee is responsible for organizing a range of fundraising activities for the school with a particular focus on the whole community.

7.0 Junior School Council

7.1 Objectives

- To represent the initiatives, desires and suggestions of the student body to the School.
- To provide a forum for students to have input into the day to day life of students at the school and to help effect necessary changes.
- To raise funds and direct them into areas of importance both within the school and the wider community as decided by the children.

7.2 Executive

A President, Vice President and Secretary are to be elected each year.

7.3 Representatives

The JSC has two student representatives from each grade and a teacher co-ordinator. During 2009 this co-ordinator is Mr. Philip McGuffie

8.0 Funding

The School provides all materials used by children. This includes stationery, art materials, sporting equipment etc. Finance for these, as well as maintenance and improvements to the school, running costs, administration costs, and purchase of equipment comes from several sources. These sources are:

- Direct Grant from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development based on enrolment and site area
- Commission and interest paid to the school by banks
- Locally raised funds - The Fundraising Committee and Student Council provide many activities to raise funds.
- Materials and Requisites Fee paid by all families

A Finance Committee oversees all financial transactions and reports directly to School Council

8.1 Education Maintenance Allowance

This allowance is paid to families who hold a current Government HealthCare Card or Pension Card. The card is to be presented when an application form is lodged. The EMA is paid in two instalments – 70% 1st Instalment available late First Term and 30% 2nd Instalment available late Term 3. Specific details will be included in the Newsletter at the appropriate time.

9.0 Child Safety

The safety and well-being of children whilst at school, or travelling to and from school is of utmost importance.

It is therefore essential that parents are aware of the following:

9.1 School Crossing

A supervised crossing is located on High Street and an unsupervised crossing at the front of the school in Herriot Street. Children are taught to use the crossings correctly, however regular reminders from home is advisable.

9.2 Bus Travellers

Bus travellers are issued with instructions regarding acceptable and safe behaviour.

9.3 Car Park

The car park is one way with the entrance from Herriot Street and the exit via the old railway track. The speed limit is **strictly 5km** per hour.

Please do not park in the signed No Parking area.

Children need to be supervised to and from the gate by an adult.

9.4 Yard Duty

At all times at least one teacher is on Yard Duty to reinforce acceptable behaviour and minimize the chance of accidents occurring. Teachers wear a fluoro vest and carry a two way radio so that they can contact the office at any time. A teacher is on duty at 8.45am each morning. Children should not arrive prior to this time.

9.5 Visitors Policy

We aim to make the school ground a safe and secure environment for all students in our care. To help achieve this we need to know where students are at all times and who has responsibility for them. We also need to know when parents have collected children outside the normal arrival or dismissal times. We need to know if parents or visitors are on the premises especially if they need to be contacted or in case of an emergency.

Guidelines for Parents

- Parents wishing to collect children (outside of normal delivery and collection times) will report to the general office first to **sign their child out**.
- Parents who are in the school need to **sign in at the office and sign out on their departure**.
- During morning or lunch recess, **any student who is to be collected will be paged from the office** so we can ensure they leave the school grounds safely.
- Parents are welcome to be part of classroom programs **at designated times as implemented by the teacher** (eg daily Reading Time and at other times as arranged with the classroom teacher).
- **Drop off and collection of students is not permitted in the Staff car park or designated bus area.**
- Heathcote Primary School is a **smoke free zone**.
- All volunteers are required to have a 'Working with Children Check'.

10.0 Health, Welfare & Emergency Information

10.1 Emergency Information

If you have a change of address or phone number please notify the school immediately.

10.2 Access / Custody

If you have a Custody Order or Court Order relating to access please notify the school so that appropriate action can be taken if necessary.

10.3 Medication

Any **prescribed** medication should be clearly labelled with the student's name and dosage required and must be left at the office. Staff are not permitted to administer Panadol, aspirin, cough mixture, etc.

10.4 Asthma

We encourage all children with asthma to be responsible for their own "puffers" while at school. Parents are asked to complete an Asthma Management Plan.

10.5 Serious Accidents

The policy of the school regarding serious accidents is:

- Attendance by First Aid trained staff
- Ambulance contacted
- Parents contacted
- Hospital Admission if necessary.

We therefore encourage ALL parents to be subscribers to the Ambulance Service, as this service is very expensive if required.

10.6 First Aid

The school always has staff members with First Aid Training

10.7 Non-contagious medical conditions

These may require medication, exemption from class activities or use of special apparatus. Please notify the class teacher in writing if the condition will cause any disruption to the student's normal school routine.

10.8 Contagious medical conditions

Parents are asked to keep their children away from school if they have a contagious medical condition until the child is completely well and the incubation period is over.

The following diseases are classified as contagious : Chicken Pox, Conjunctivitis, Diarrhoea, Diphtheria, Glandular Fever, German Measles (Rubella), Head Lice, Hepatitis A & B, Leprosy, Measles, Mumps, Polio, Scabies, Scarlet Fever, School Sores, Trachoma, Tuberculosis (TB), Typhoid, Vomiting, Whooping Cough and Worms.

Head Lice checks are held on a regular basis by qualified community nurses or volunteers. A permission form for all children must be completed on enrolment.

10.9 Immunization Certificates

All new students enrolling are now required by law to provide an Immunization Certificate. These Certificates are available from the local municipal offices (where the immunizations were administered).

10.10 Nutrition

All students require breakfast each morning as this prevents loss of energy. A solid snack at morning recess is also advised, along with a healthy lunch – including at least one piece of fruit. Students are also encouraged to bring a bottle filled with water to school each day.

10.11 Conveyance Allowance

A Conveyance Allowance is paid for the following:

- A bus traveller who lives more than 4.8 kms. from their nearest bus stop.
- Students who live more than 4.8 kms. from the school.

For eligible students the Conveyance Allowance needs to be applied for at the commencement of each year. It is paid twice yearly.

10.12 Disaster Plan

A Disaster Plan has been developed for use in emergency situations. Students will participate in regular drills to ensure that all students and staff are able to evacuate the buildings safely and efficiently and assemble for roll call in the designated safe area.

11.0 General Information

11.1 Wet / Hot Weather Arrangements

During wet or extreme cold / hot weather the students will remain inside during recess and lunch breaks, supervised by teachers.

11.2 Parking

The staff car park and designated bus area is NOT for public use.

11.3 Working Bees

These are a valuable part of school life and all help is much appreciated. A notice of working bees will appear in the newsletter.

11.4 Lunch Orders

There is no canteen operating at Heathcote Primary, however we will be having “special lunches” throughout the year organised through our Fundraising Committee.

12.0 School Communication

12.1 Contacting the School

The office can be contacted between 8.30 am – 4.30 pm on phone 54 333090, fax 54 333 091 or on the school’s email, heathcote.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

Our web site is www.heathcoteps.vic.edu.au

12.2 Student Absences

It is essential for your child’s education that they attend school as often as possible. A note is required for all student absences.

12.3 Unacceptable Behaviour Notes

The Unacceptable Behaviour notes are a means of the school communicating with the parent over a problem concerning the child. The note is sent home with the student and the parent must ensure that the situation is discussed with the child and the school supported. Parents also need to sign the form and return it on the next school day.

12.4 Exemption activities

Where students, for medical or other reasons, are unable to participate in an organized activity, a note from the parent is required, stating the reason for exemption and the length of time required.

12.5 Messages

Messages from parents to students during school hours are restricted to emergencies and unavoidable changes in circumstances. Parents are encouraged to make appropriate arrangements with their children before school.

12.6 Assembly

A general school assembly is held on Monday morning of each week. Announcements are made at this time of any specific events happening in the week. Please feel free to attend.

13.0 Uniform

13.1 Compulsory Uniform

The school uniform is compulsory (see uniform policy) School hats are compulsory in Terms 1 and 3. The school uniform is available from Heathcote Clothing 97A High St. Heathcote 54332866

Hats and beanies are available from the office.

13.2 Lost Property

All items of student clothing, books, bags, etc. should be clearly labelled. All named property is returned to students. Unnamed property is donated to the Opportunity Shop at the end of each Term.

14.0 School Calendar

14.1 Public Holidays

Australia Day, Labour Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, ANZAC Day, Queen's Birthday, Heathcote Show Day.

15.0 Student Property

15.1 Valuable Items

Valuable items are not permitted at school. The school accepts no responsibility for loss or damage.

15.2 Bicycles

Students riding a bicycle to school must wear a helmet. Bike racks are provided. Riding a bike around the school grounds at any time is banned. The school takes no responsibility for bicycles that are lost, stolen or damaged on school grounds.

15.3 Prohibited Items

The following items are NOT permitted to be brought to school under any circumstances.

-
- Tobacco products
 - Non-prescription drugs
 - Matches, cigarette lighters
 - Chewing gum
 - Alcoholic products
 - Knives or weapons of any type
 - Objects, music, books, magazines that may offend others
 - Any objects which the school considers inappropriate.

If any student is found with these goods in their possession, they will be immediately confiscated and depending on the item, further action may be taken.

15.4 Books and Stationery

All books and stationery are supplied through our school requisites fee.

16.0 School Grounds and Buildings

16.1 Out of Bounds Areas

Students are not to leave the school grounds un-escorted at any time. The following areas are out of bounds:

- The staff car park and bus area
- Around the Residence
- Outside boundary fences

16.2 Staff Room

The staff room is for the use of staff. Students are to enter only on the invitation of a staff member. If a need arises during recess or lunch time for a student to see a teacher, the first point of reference is the Yard Duty Teacher, who will deal with the matter or, if necessary, redirect the student to the staff room.

Some Suggestions for Parents

Conscientious parents are always looking for ways of helping their children do well at school. Here are a few hints that can be guaranteed to get results.

- Help your child feel good about themselves and about learning. Encourage every effort. Try to praise rather than blame.
- Read to them from the earliest age. There is no better way to create a desire to read.
- Give presents of simply-written and well-illustrated books on a whole range of topics – both fiction and non fiction.
- Encourage your child to write regularly in a variety of ways – letters, diaries, factual accounts, imaginative stories etc.
- With the younger ones especially, try to cultivate a sense of number, size, length, height, width, volume, area, weight and time in everyday life. Join with them in estimating, counting, calculating and so on.

-
- Take time to discuss everyday happenings. Encourage questions and show how answers can be found.
 - Regularly give them one of the most precious gifts you can – your time.