



# Heathcote Primary School

## School Information Handbook 2026



Heathcote Primary School  
Respect ~ Learning ~ Teamwork ~ Responsibility

Phone: (03) 5433 3090

Email: [heathcote.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:heathcote.ps@education.vic.gov.au)

Address: 31 Herriot Street, Heathcote, VIC 3523



# Snapshot

## Contact Details

Address: 31 Herriot Street, Heathcote, Victoria 3523

Phone: (03) 5433 3090

Email: [heathcote.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:heathcote.ps@education.vic.gov.au)

Website: [www.heathcoteps.vic.edu.au](http://www.heathcoteps.vic.edu.au)

Region: North-West Victoria Region (NWVR)

Area: Loddon Campaspe

## Office Hours & Banking Information

The school office is open from 8:30am to 4pm.

Account Name: Heathcote Primary School

BSB: 083 001

Account Number: 71 938 5618

## Term Dates – 2026

Term 1:

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January: Partnership meetings

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January: All students onsite

Thursday 2nd April: Term 1 ends

Term 2: Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April to Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June

Term 3: Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July to Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September

Term 4: Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December



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# Student Message

We are so excited that you are thinking about enrolling at Heathcote Primary School! There are amazing things at this school as well as great opportunities.

Our favourite things about Heathcote PS are:

- The people because they are inclusive, kind and helpful
- Specialist subjects, including PE, Art, STEM and the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program
- Incursions, excursions and camps
- Special events such as the House Athletics Carnival, Colour Run, JSC fundraisers and interschool sports
- The teachers because they are all different, friendly, humorous and make us feel important
- Evie, our school dog, who we all like. She spends time in our classrooms
- The Buddy program where Grade 6s help Foundation students
- That we can make some choices about how we learn
- Learning new things in fun ways

If you visit, some of our school leaders will happily show you around.



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# Parent Message

I've been part of the parent community for over six years now. During that time, I've had two children start at Heathcote PS in Foundation and grow all the way through to Year 6—so it's fair to say Heathcote Primary has been a big part of our family for quite a while!

One of the things I've loved most about being involved in School Council is getting that "behind the scenes" look at how the school works. It really gives you an appreciation for everything that goes into creating such a positive environment for our kids—and how important a strong, connected community is in making that happen.

One of the things I value most is that parents/carers at Heathcote Primary School truly have a voice. School Council works closely with school leadership to share feedback, ideas, and experiences from families. Whether it's supporting school initiatives, helping gather volunteers, or contributing to conversations about school events and programs, the role of the committee is to ensure that parent perspectives are heard and considered. Over the years, I've seen how small ideas and conversations can lead to meaningful improvements for our students and families. It's a collaborative, respectful space where everyone is welcome, and every contribution matters.

There are so many ways to get involved—whether that's joining School Council, helping at events, supporting school programs, or simply sharing your thoughts and ideas. You don't need any experience, just a willingness to be part of the community. I'd absolutely encourage you to come along, get involved, and see what it's all about. It's a great way to meet people, feel connected, and play a part in making a great school even better.

I'm incredibly proud of our little school and the community around it, and I look forward to seeing you around.

Ally, School Council President



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# Principal's Message

Welcome to Heathcote Primary School! I have the privilege of partnering with the Heathcote PS community as we work together to create a safe, happy, inclusive culture where every child experiences success and growth and where every family feels valued and connected.

A dedicated team of staff support students to achieve their learning and wellbeing goals. Alongside a focus on core literacy and numeracy skills, students strengthen their social and emotional literacy and emotional intelligence. We are proud of the opportunities available to students and it is a joy to see students challenge themselves and succeed – whether it is understanding a new concept in the classroom, making new friendships or mastering a new sporting skill.

Underpinning all that we do are our four school values; Learning, Teamwork, Respect and Responsibility. These values are incorporated into our behaviour expectations as part of our schoolwide positive behaviour support program.

Student voice is highly valued at Heathcote Primary School. We encourage our students to be creative, use their initiative, solve problems and contribute positively to the school community. There are formal and informal student leadership opportunities across the school. It is always exciting to see our students celebrating their achievements (in and out of the classroom), leading initiatives and looking for ways to make the school an even better place to learn.

Partnering with families to ensure our students are educated in a safe, inclusive, kind and engaging learning environment is a key priority – it takes a village to raise a child. We welcome family engagement and look forward to working with you and your child!





# Our History

Heathcote Primary School has a long history of providing quality education to the children of Heathcote and surrounding areas.

Opening its doors for the first time in 1853 and originally known as Heathcote State School, the school is now in its 173rd year. When the school opened there were 60 students and classes were held in a tent. The school grounds have changed significantly – no tents insight! The 'History of Heathcote' includes a stone schoolhouse, a teacher living onsite, secondary classes starting, secondary classes stopping and at one point, an enrolment of 320 students along with being renamed Heathcote Primary School in 1970.

The original school building was knocked down in 1961. Two new timber classrooms were built on a new site. Today, there are two main buildings which house seven classrooms and administration areas.

A mixed and interesting history indeed!

*The historical information and image on this page is sourced from Department of Education 'History of Heathcote' webpage.*



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# School Profile

Heathcote Primary School is a Foundation to Grade 6 primary school located in Herriot Street, Heathcote, Victoria, Australia.

In 2026, approximately 130 students are enrolled at Heathcote Primary School and there are seven classrooms. The core subjects of literacy and numeracy are complemented by a variety of specialist subjects including visual art, STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Maths), PE, performing arts and the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program. Auslan is taught weekly, individual music lessons are facilitated by an external provider and a choir meets (and performs) regularly.

All staff are committed to maximising opportunities for every student and provide an inclusive learning environment. A dedicated team of teaching, education and administration staff partner with families to support students to achieve their goals.



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# School Values

Heathcote Primary School has four values.

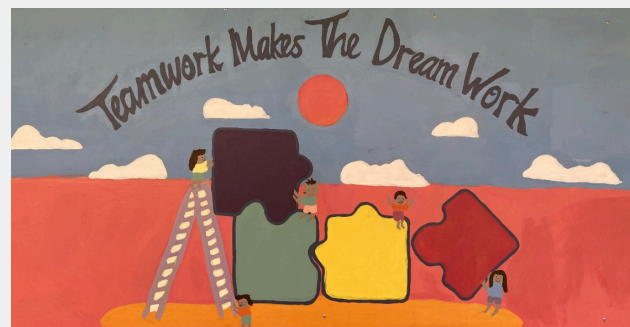
**Respect:** treating people well, recognising and accepting individual differences and valuing other students, our environment and belongings

**Learning:** developing the skills, values and attitudes to become a lifelong learner

**Teamwork:** working together to achieve the best possible outcomes for all

**Responsibility:** being accountable for our own actions, what we say and what we do and accepting the consequences for our behaviour

The school values are displayed as large murals in the astroturf area. This location was chosen as it is a central meeting space. The graduating class of 2024 created the murals as part of a community project in collaboration with our art specialist.



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# Daily Timetable

8:45am

Classroom doors open

*Students take their bag inside and unpack for the day ahead. After doing so, students can go outside to play.*

8:57am

Music begins followed by school bell

*Students make their way to their classroom via the toilets and drink tap (if needed)*

9am - 11am

Learning time

*Includes a healthy snack of fruit or vegetables at approximately 10am and lunch eating time at 10:50am*

11am - 11:30am

Break 1

11:30am - 1:30pm

Learning time

*Includes lunch / snack eating time at 1:20pm*

1:30pm - 2pm

Break 2

2pm - 3pm

Learning time

3pm

Home time

After School Care is available offsite through Trinity Academy. A bus travels from Heathcote PS to Trinity Academy after school each day. Bookings for After School Care can be made by contacting Trinity Academy on 03 4411 6803.



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# Learning

VERSION 2.0





## The Victorian Curriculum F-10

*A curriculum that sets out the knowledge and skills every student should learn during their first 11 years of schooling to become lifelong learners, confident individuals, and active and informed citizens prepared to navigate a diverse and changing world.*

From:



### Key

-  Learning areas and disciplines
-  Capabilities
-  Foundational skills
-  Cross-curriculum priorities



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# Learning



## Helping every child succeed: VTLM 2.0

The new Victorian Teaching and Learning Model (VTLM) 2.0 enhances the work of teachers, and the changes will help every child succeed on their learning journey.



### Elements of learning: how students learn

The elements of learning are based on research into how the brain learns:

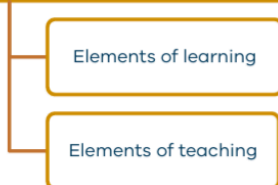
1. **Attention and focus** – learning starts when students are engaged and focused. Teachers create environments that reduce distractions and help students pay attention.
2. **Knowledge and memory** – new learning builds on what we already know. Teachers help students remember previous lessons and link them to new ideas.
3. **Retention and recall** – practice makes permanent, but only when done correctly. Teachers use strategies like spacing, quizzing, and revisiting key concepts to help students remember more over time.
4. **Mastery and application** – students learn best when they can apply knowledge in real-world ways. Teachers ask open-ended questions, problem solving, and peer collaboration to help students apply learning.

### Why are things changing?

Schools are updating their teaching practices to align with the best evidence about how students learn.

The VTLM 2.0 is based on years of research and experience about the most effective teaching strategies.

The new model focuses on 2 components



Learn more:  
[Victorian teaching and learning information for parents and carers](#)



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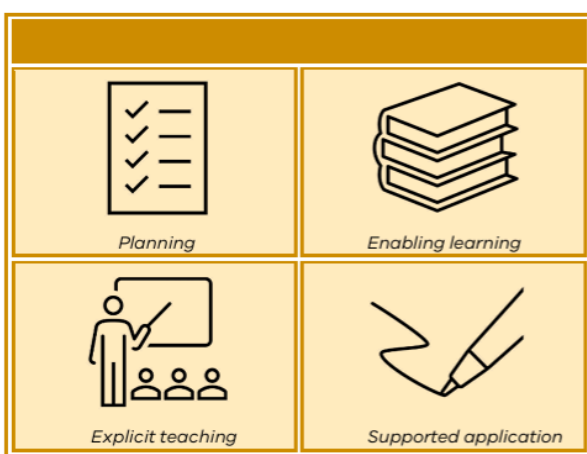
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# Learning

## Elements of teaching: how teachers teach



Schools are focusing on step-by-step or explicit teaching and apply this approach to help students understand, use and remember what they learn.

This means teachers generally start each lesson by clearly explaining what students will learn and why it matters. They break content into smaller steps and actively check for understanding.

Students then practice what they have learnt using different ways over time. This helps them retain information in the long term and apply it with confidence.

## How can families support their children's learning?

Schools are investing in proven strategies that support all learners. As a parent or carer, you can play a key role by asking some questions at home.

### 10 Questions to ask your child about their learning:

- 1 What was a learning goal in class today?
- 2 Can you explain it to me in your own words?
- 3 What helped you understand it better?
- 4 What examples were shared with the class?
- 5 What's one mistake you fixed today?
- 6 How did you practice what you learned?
- 7 How would you explain your learning to others?
- 8 What did you review or remember from earlier lessons?
- 9 How do you know if you're getting better at something?
- 10 What's a question you still have about today's learning?





# Specialist Subjects



Science Technology  
Engineering and Maths (STEM)  
(Foundation - Grade 6)



Physical Education (PE)  
(Foundation - Grade 6)



The Arts  
Visual and Performing Arts  
(Foundation - Grade 6)



Stephanie Alexander Kitchen  
Garden Program  
(Grades 3 - 6)





# Wellbeing

Student wellbeing is a fundamental part of learning and development in the primary years. We recognise that children learn best when they feel safe, supported and valued. Student wellbeing is embedded across our teaching and learning program. Explicit teaching and supports help students to recognise and manage emotions, build resilience and develop positive relationships.

All classes teach the Resilience, Rights, and Respectful Relationships (RRRR) curriculum. Developed following the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence, RRRR is part of a broader initiative to promote respectful relationships and create a safe and supportive learning environment. The program focuses on eight key areas: emotional literacy, personal strengths, positive coping, problem solving, stress management, help seeking, gender and identity, and positive gender relationships.

Students use the Zones of Regulation to identify and manage their emotions. Emotional states are categorised into Blue, Green, Yellow, and Red zones, and through explicit teaching, students are first taught to identify and categorise how they are feeling, then how to manage these feelings.

Students requiring additional, more differentiated and targeted supports, may participate in Social Detectives, work with a member of our wellbeing team or external service provider, including our provisional psychologist.

The school works in collaboration with the regional Student Support Services (SSS) team who provide additional support through the provision of occupational therapists, speech pathologists and visiting teachers.

Evie, our Dogs Connect school dog, is also a key member of the education 'supawt' team. She spends time in classrooms and the office area.





# School Wide Positive Behaviour Support

Like many other schools in Victoria, Heathcote PS has adopted a School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) program. In 2025, the students, staff and families came together to create a school wide behaviour matrix.

HEATHCOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL RESPECT • LEARNING • TEAMWORK • RESPONSIBILITY			
LEARNING			
	ALWAYS	INSIDE	OUTSIDE
RESPECT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We use an appropriate voice</li> <li>We use manners and kind words</li> <li>We follow instructions</li> <li>We keep our hands and feet to ourselves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We follow classroom expectations</li> <li>We walk</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We leave nature in nature</li> <li>We share our spaces</li> </ul>
TEAMWORK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are inclusive</li> <li>We share</li> <li>We wait our turn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We pack up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We choose teams fairly</li> <li>We determine and play by the rules</li> </ul>
RESPONSIBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We use equipment for its intended purpose</li> <li>We arrive on time</li> <li>We look after school property</li> <li>We place rubbish in the correct bin</li> <li>We use our 'calm down' strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We use materials for their intended purpose</li> <li>We participate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We return our sports equipment</li> </ul>

## What is SWPBS?

SWPBS is an evidence-based framework designed to help schools create positive, safe, and fair settings where students and teachers can thrive. It focuses on teaching and encouraging positive behaviour, supporting all students, and providing extra help to those who need it. By doing this, SWPBS helps improve behaviour, wellbeing, and academic success.

Source: <https://www.vic.gov.au/SWPBS>:



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# Real Schools

Heathcote Primary School is a Real Schools partner school. We use restorative practices and explicitly focus on building strong relationships with all our stakeholders (staff, students and parents/carers).

## QUICK SUMMARY

1. Restorative practice is an alternative to adversarial methods
2. Focuses on repairing harm and restoring relationships
3. All parties have input
4. Encourages students to take responsibility for their actions



**REAL  
SCHOOLS**

Restorative practices are an approach to discipline and community building that focuses on repairing harm, restoring relationships and fostering a positive school environment. This method shifts away from punitive measures and instead encourages accountability, empathy and constructive problem-solving.



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# Facilities & Grounds



Spacious school grounds provide space for different games and activities.

Students have access to:

- A covered basketball court
- An oval
- Two playground areas
- A sandpit
- Small netball court area
- Bike track
- Downball courts
- Quiet sitting areas





# Special Events

Throughout the year, Heathcote Primary School hosts multiple whole school events. Some of these are organised by Junior School Council (JSC) representatives alongside other student leaders and with the support of staff. We encourage families to attend.

The events provide opportunities for student leadership, for students to work in mixed age groups and participate in a variety of activities across curriculum areas.

Popular events include:

- 100 Days at School
- Easter Hat Parade & Easter Activities
- Book Week
- Colour Run
- Christmas Concert
- Working Bees
- Mother's Day Morning Tea
- Father's Day Breakfast
- House Athletics Carnival

Students also have the opportunity to attend camps, incursions and excursions.





# Houses

In 2025, the first House Captains spent time researching possible names for the Houses. They worked together to decide on criteria and decided all House names must have a connection with Heathcote or Heathcote PS, be in honour of a person, include both males and females along with having a connection to the traditional owners of the land.

After researching, including meeting with the Heathcote Historical Society and visiting the 'Old Lock Up' museum, the 2025 House Captains are proud to present...

## **Blue House - Hannon**

Blue House is called Hannon in honour of James Hannon.

James Hannon was the first head teacher when Heathcote Primary School opened in 1853. The term 'head teacher' is what we now call a principal. There were 60 students, and they learned in a tent with teacher Mr. Hannon.

As Hannon was the first principal and teacher of Heathcote Primary School, we used his name for Blue House since our uniforms have blue on them. Hannon represents our school value of learning.





# Houses

*continued*

## **Green House – Chauncey**

Green House is called Chauncey in honour of Phillip Chauncey.

Phillip Chauncey is the original surveyor of the town of Heathcote. He mapped the location of everything in the town.

Heathcote Primary School opened in 1853, the same year Chauncey arrived to survey the new town. People think that this means his surveying work facilitated the formal establishment of community buildings like schools.

We made Chauncy Green House because it made us think of the green paddocks and trees and the landscape of Heathcote before the town had lots of buildings.

Chauncey represents our school value of responsibility

## **Red House—Von der Luft**

Red House is called Von der Luft in honour of Matilda (Lottie) Von der Luft.

Lottie opened a school in the former shire hall in 1896. She was also a private tutor from 1891 to 1940. Lottie and her husband William were on the Heathcote Hospital Committee. She worked with lots of people to help make Heathcote the best place possible.

Von der Luft represents our school value of teamwork.

## **Yellow House—Padgham**

Yellow House is called Padgham in honour of Loraine Padgham.

Loraine Padgham was the original Taungurung flag designer. Taungurung is the name of the First Nations people who are the traditional owners of the land on which Heathcote is located.

Loraine won a competition to design the flag. She designed it to reflect the rivers, mountains and the culture of the Taungurung country.

We think Padgham should be Yellow House because the flag includes ochre, black and yellow. People think the yellow reflects the mountains and rivers.

Padgham reflects our school value of respect.





# General Information

*in alphabetical order...*

## **Absences**

There are times when students are unable to attend school, including illness and medical appointments. If a student is unable to attend school, parents/carers are asked to contact the school to advise the reason for the absence. This is a Department of Education requirement. Contact can be made via phone, email or through Compass. Our goal is to have zero unexplained absences.

## **After School Care**

After School Care is available offsite through Trinity Academy. Students attending after school care travel by bus from Heathcote PS to Trinity Academy. Families make arrangements for attendance directly with Trinity Academy.

## **Assembly**

A whole school assembly is held weekly. In 2026, we are trialling assembly at 9:05am on Friday mornings in Term 1 (summer term). This may move to 2:30pm for Terms 2 & 3 (winter terms) before returning to a morning time for Term 4 (summer term). Assembly is held in the astroturf area and is led by the student leadership team. Families are encouraged to attend.

## **Bikes**

Students can ride their bike or scooter to school. Bikes and scooters are 'parked' in the bike rack during learning time. Students have the option of riding their own bike on the bike track at break times or borrowing one from the school's bike shed. To ease traffic congestion, junior students use the bike track at Break 1 and senior students use it at Break 2. Helmets must be worn.





# General Information

*in alphabetical order...*

## **Birthdays**

Students can wear casual clothes to school on their birthday (or the nearest school day if a birthday falls on the weekend or in the school holidays). If students bring a birthday treat to share with classmates, we encourage pre-packaged treats with a list of ingredients included.

## **Breakfast Club**

Breakfast Club is open on Tuesday and Thursday from 8:40am – 8:55am. It is held in the kitchen. Fruit, cereal and toast are available.

## **Buddies**

Foundation students are supported by a Grade 6 buddy. 'Big Buddies' and 'Little Buddies' spend time together completing different activities, including buddy reading.

## **Buses**

The school is serviced by two buses. Prior to travel, students and their families complete an application form (available from the office). There are guidelines and expectations that govern bus travel.

## **Camps**

The school's camp program begins with an after school fun night for Foundation and Grade 1 students, with Grade 2 students staying overnight at school. Grade 3/4 students have a one night camp offsite and students in Grade 5/6 participate in a two night camp. The camping program runs in alternate years.



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*in alphabetical order...*

## **Car Park**

The main carpark is accessed from Herriot Street. It is one way and drivers are asked to limit their speed to 5km/h. The drop off and pick up zone is not a parking space. Vehicles are only able to pause in the zone briefly. If students are not visible upon pick up, please park in one of the parking spaces. There is a disabled parking space in the staff carpark available for all community members.

## **Communication**

The school website houses newsletters, policies, annual reports and other key information. A newsletter is published weekly and shared with families via Compass. Each unit publishes a newsletter at the start of every term to share key learning content that will be covered during the term along with details about upcoming events.

Heathcote PS uses Compass, an online portal. Parents/cares receive a unique login to access the portal. Class Dojo is also used to share student achievements, photos and provide updates.

The school has a closed Facebook group page. News, photos and reminders are shared on the page.

## **Late Arrivals and Early Pick Ups**

If a student arrives after 9am or requires picking up before 3pm, they must sign in / out at the office. This is part of our emergency management plan. A parent/carer needs to sign students out as no student can leave the school grounds before 3pm unaccompanied by an adult.





# General Information

*in alphabetical order...*

## **Medication**

If a student requires medication during the school day, an adult must complete an administration of medication form. Forms are available on the school website and from the office. Medications are stored securely at the office. Students with asthma and/or anaphylaxis must have a current plan along with the required medication.

## **Mobile Phones & Smart Watches**

All Victorian Government schools have a mobile phone policy. Devices capable of communication with another device must be handed into the office before school, switched off. They are stored securely throughout the day and can be collected after the dismissal bell. This also applies for excursions.

## **Music Lessons**

Music lessons are available at school. They are taught by an external provider and can be arranged by contacting the school office.

## **Student Leaders**

Teachers and students work together with student voice and leadership a key feature of Heathcote PS. During a student's primary school years, there are multiple opportunities for formal leadership positions. Every class elects three Junior School Council representatives (JSC reps). In 2026, there are two School Captains and four House Captains. Additionally, Peer Mediators, complete training before providing support to peers at break times. You will spot them in their pink peer mediator vests!



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## **Student Learning Conversations**

Students and families are invited to attend a student learning conversation in the middle of the year. This is an opportunity for teachers, students and families to meet and discuss student achievements and future goals. These conversations follow the publication of mid-year student reports.

## **Student Reports**

Students receive a written report at the end of each Semester. These are published through Compass.

## **Swimming Program**

All students are invited to participate in a swimming program every year. Over the course of a week, students attend five swimming lessons. Sessions focus on water safety, swimming techniques, survival and rescue skills.

## **Uniform**

Heathcote Primary School has a compulsory school uniform. School t-shirts are available in blue or red. Shorts and long pants are blue along with jackets and jumpers. Grade 6 students have the option of purchasing a Grade 6 t-shirt. From September to April, all students are required to wear a broad brimmed hat when outside. The most recent addition to the uniform is a school beanie - available for winter 2026! The school keeps uniform onsite and most orders can be completed within a week.



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# General Information

*in alphabetical order...*

## **Visitors**

All visitors are required to sign in at the office.

## **Volunteers**

We welcome contributions and support from volunteers, whether it be attending excursions, helping at events such as the Athletics Carnival, contributing to the running of the school through School Council or supporting learning in classrooms, there is an opportunity for everyone! All volunteers require a Working With Children Check.

## **Weekly Awards**

Student achievements are celebrated at our weekly whole school assemblies. In 2026, the certificates were redesigned with community members invited to submit designs. Students voted on their preferred design which was then adopted as the certificate template. The weekly awards align with the SWPBS focus of the week.

## **Wellbeing Room**

Students are invited to access the wellbeing space if they need a rest, a reset, or a quieter place to work or play. They are able to choose from sensory activities, books, and games, before returning to their classroom when they are ready for learning. The wellbeing room is also open at break times for students who prefer a quieter space to spend break times.



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