



Challenge, Opportunity & Achievement

INFORMATION HANDBOOK



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Challenge, Opportunity and Achievement



INTRODUCTION

The staff, students, School Council and community of Stawell West Primary School extends to you a warm welcome.

This booklet has been prepared to provide background information about our school and its programs for parents/carers who are new to our school community or interested in finding out more. Please read it carefully and keep it handy for future reference. If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact the school office on 5358 1661 or 5358 5062.

Our school recognises that the best educational opportunities are provided when a positive relationship exists between school and home. We look forward to working with you to develop exemplary programs for your child, in a partnership of learning and understanding.

WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE FROM OTHER LOCAL SCHOOLS?

In 2017, our NAPLAN data showed that our students' learning growth was significantly or very significantly above 'like schools' and the improvement has happened every year for the past 3 years.

We run a specialist 'hands-on' Science program using *Primary Connections: Linking science with literacy*. It is an innovative program developed by the Australian Academy of Science linking the teaching of science with the teaching of literacy in primary schools.

We have a Chaplain in the school for 2 days a week. Our chaplain support the emotional wellbeing of our students by providing pastoral care services and strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of the broader school community. He also works closely with wellbeing and allied health staff in our community to support students and their educational outcomes, staff, families and the wider school community.

We run the Fountas and Pinnell Reading Intervention program which is delivering excellent results for our students

We started operating a Maths Intervention Program in 2018 to ensure no student slips through the 'maths understanding net'

The CAFÉ Reading Program is run in every classroom, in every reading session. The program enables students to learn the specific reading strategies and also have a voice in their goal setting and learning. The Wimmera Schools network was identified as having the best reading improvement in the 2017 NAPLAN Reading results and many of the schools that showed the most improvement in the network use CAFÉ Reading.

For 12 months, the school employed a Mathematics Coach from England who introduced a new maths instructional model that included Number Talk. Number Talks are short, daily exercises aimed at building number sense. Number sense is the ability to play with numbers meaning students can visualize problem solving, perform calculations quickly, and are flexible in their mathematical strategy. Number Talk is also used to identify what students know and where teachers can help them to develop.

Our students are taught Chinese all the way through from Prep to Year 6. In 2018, two of our students participated in the international Chinese bilingual competition in Melbourne where they were both placed third.



ADMISSION PROCEDURES

Children who turn 5 years of age by the 30th of April 2018 were admitted to our Foundation class in 2018. For the 2019 school year, children who turn 5 years of age by the 30th of April 2019 can be admitted to our Foundation class.

Parents may enroll their child by calling at the school to collect and complete the detailed enrolment form. Please bring with you a copy of your child's birth certificate and certificate of immunization for our records.

Foundation students find the first few months of school very tiring. As a result, they do not attend school on Wednesdays during the month of February.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Stawell West Primary School's mission is to develop in its students, staff and community a commitment to life-long learning, a passion for achievement, excellence, and an understanding that all individuals can contribute as successful, responsible citizens.

The Stawell West School Community values:

- Honesty
- Fairness
- Responsibility
- Support (being kind, showing care and compassion)
- Cooperation
- Acceptance of differences (accepting, respecting, living with and finding the positive side of differences)
- Friendliness and inclusion (being friendly and socially responsible, including others in games, activities and conversations)
- Commitment (to learning, themselves and all that we do).

In order to achieve the best possible outcomes for our students we aim to:

- Provide a safe, welcoming, inclusive and tolerant learning and teaching environment
- Create a positive, purposeful and stimulating learning environment that encourages personal responsibility and self-motivation and rewards personal and group achievement
- Provide planned, comprehensive, engaging curriculum programs that encompass all Victorian Curriculum Domains, with particular emphasis given to literacy and numeracy
- Deliver curriculum programs in ways that enable students to set realistic, challenging goals for their own learning, which accommodate different learning needs and styles, and that develop critical and creative thinking and learning skills
- Encourage high levels of parental and community interest and participation in all aspects of school programming
- Ensure clear, timely and efficient consultative decision making and communication processes within the school and between the school and the community
- Employ management practices that foster strong staff morale, a commitment to professional growth, and support a focus on improving educational and social outcomes for students
- Ensure the efficient and strategic management of human, physical and financial resources to support the curriculum, environment and management goals of the school
- Provide learning activities that reflect relevant global and environmental awareness in all learning
- Integrate current ICT practices
- Foster positive relationships and interactions between students across all year levels
- Reflect on teaching and learning practices in order to maximise students learning potential.

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Stawell West Primary is a community school for students from Foundation to Year 6. At the commencement of 2018, we had an enrolment of 88 students from all parts of Stawell as well as outlying districts. 15 of these students were in the Prep classroom.

The school is set in extensive, attractive grounds with considerable shade and undercover areas. The grounds also feature two wonderful modern adventure playgrounds.

The main building provides an innovative learning environment supported by modern learning centres in the Year F-2 and 3/6 teaching spaces. The modern learning environment is supported by well-equipped classrooms with laptop banks giving a computer to student ratio of 1:3. The school has interactive whiteboards in all learning spaces, digital and DVD cameras and data projectors as well as iPads and Apple TV facilities.

The dedicated staff of Stawell West Primary work as a team to provide quality teaching and learning experiences for all students. The staffing profile at Stawell West has been consistent for the last 4 years, ensuring a continuation of student improvement and consistency in managing student expectations. An equally committed Education Support staff and the School Chaplain support the teaching staff.

TERM DATES FOR 2018

Term 1	Students begin Wednesday January 31 st	Thursday, 29 th March	9 weeks
Term 2	Monday, 16 th April	Friday, 29 th June	11 weeks
Term 3	Monday, 16 th July	Friday, 21 st September	10 weeks
Term 4	Monday, 8 th October	Friday, 21 st December	11 weeks



CURRICULUM PROVISION

At Stawell West Primary School a diverse curriculum in a smaller school setting allows for personal attention for every student in small classes. Particular attention is given to reduced class sizes so we can deliver more explicit lessons to cater for every student's learning and wellbeing needs.

Stawell West Primary is proud of its learning, wellbeing and engagement programs, which are delivered in a safe, caring and supportive environment by a team of dedicated teachers, student support officers, parents and friends of the school.

The school's curriculum is comprehensive and well resourced, placing a strong emphasis on the successful attainment of literacy and numeracy skills. We follow the Curriculum set out in the Victorian Curriculum which ensures we are delivering programs that help to develop well-rounded and educated students.

The Learning Areas for 2018 are:

- The Arts
 - Visual Arts
 - Design
 - Visual Communications
 - Drama
- English
- Health and Physical Education
- The Humanities
 - Civics and Citizenship
 - Economics
 - Geography
 - History
- Languages – Chinese
- Mathematics
- Science
- Technologies
 - Design and Technologies
 - Digital Technologies

To enrich the learning, we will also ensure that we interweave the teaching of the follow Capabilities:

- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Ethical
- Intercultural
- Personal and Social

To support and enrich these curriculum learning areas and ensure the deep learning of the Capabilities, the following initiatives are provided:

Swimming and Water Safety, Bike Education for Years 4 and 5, camps and excursions, cultural activities, interschool sport, house captains, Sewing Club, Junior School Council, choir, the 'BounceBack!' student welfare program, Reading Intervention Program, Language Support Program, Mathematics Intervention Program, Chaplaincy, drug education, cross-age tutoring and effective transition programs.

At Stawell West Primary School, we also follow a whole school approach to positive behaviour and the understanding and teaching of this flows across all subjects within our school.

SCHOOL ORGANISATION

School Times

The school day is divided into three learning blocks.

BLOCK 1 [Reading and Writing] commences at 9:00 am and ends at morning recess – 11:00 am.

BLOCK 2 [Spelling and Mathematics] commences at 11:20 am and ends at lunch time – 1:20 pm.
(Students have supervised eating time in their classroom from 1:20 to 1:30 pm.)

BLOCK 3 [Specialist programs or Literacy/Mathematics] commences at 2:20 pm and ends at 3.20 pm.

A school bell rings at 8:50 am which indicates that students can enter the school building and prepare themselves for their day. At 8:58 am music plays over the public address system, reminding our students that they need to make their way to classrooms before 9:00 am, when another bell rings.

Music also signals the end of morning recess and lunch-play prior to the bell being rung.

Every Friday afternoon at 3:00 pm we have an assembly in the Multipurpose Building. Parents/Carers are very welcome to attend our Friday afternoon assemblies.

Office Hours

The school office is open from 8:30 am to 4:40 pm each school day. Items to be handed into the office such as money, permission forms or other notifications can be 'posted' in the letterbox located at the inquiry window in the office. Students are encouraged to post items before 9.00 am each day.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND STUDENT SAFETY

Each morning the school playground is supervised from 8:30 am. We ask parents to ensure that students do not arrive at school before this time. The Cooper Street crossing flags are also put out at this time, staffed by a crossing supervisor. The playground is supervised by staff during each of the recess breaks and after school. After school, the crossing is staffed by a school crossing supervisor until 3.45 pm.



ABSENCES

Stawell West Primary School is committed to the belief that for children to become effective learners and form positive relationships with others, they must attend school on time and on a daily basis.

If your child is away from school a note is required so that we can record the absence as 'authorised'. This process is a legal requirement.

If your child is ill, he or she should not attend school as they might not be able to undertake normal class programs and their attendance at school could affect the health of other students.

If collecting your child from the school during class time, we ask all parents and guardians to sign out the student through the school office so that we have a record of student movements.

ILLNESS OR ACCIDENTS AT SCHOOL

If your child becomes ill at school or is injured, we will endeavour to contact you or your nominated contact person, so that arrangements can be made for collection. The school has a team of qualified, experienced Level 2 First Aid trained personnel on site at all times.

STUDENT RECORDS AND FAMILY DETAILS

In the interests of student safety, it is vital that our school keeps accurate records. Please ensure that you notify the school immediately should your personal/family details alter: particularly personal, work and emergency telephone contact numbers.

WET DAYS/DAYS OF EXTREME HEAT

Students are not dismissed early on wet days or days of extreme heat. On such occasions, they are supervised in classrooms or in the library during lunchtime and the recess break. On normal summer days there are plenty of shady trees and our classrooms are air-conditioned, so school programs will operate as usual.



SCHOOL UNIFORM

The wearing of our school uniform helps to encourage pride in our school and assists in the development of a strong school identity. School uniforms provide a standard of dress, reducing competition amongst children. It also provides economical standard clothing, which assists parents.

Stawell West Primary School uniform is compulsory and all children are required to wear school uniform at all times.

It is extremely important that children come to school in neat, clean clothes every day. Please do not allow children to wear thongs or sandals as they do not provide adequate protection. Closed-toe shoes or sports shoes are suitable for school wear.

Children must wear navy blue wide brimmed or bucket hats during Terms 1 and 4 in accordance with our Sunsmart policy.

Wide brimmed hats are part of our uniform. Baseball caps are not acceptable as they do not protect the ears, neck and sides of the face.

GIRLS

SUMMER

Red and white check dress
with sleeves and collar
or
Plain navy blue shorts/skort
or
Navy blue netball skirt with sports briefs
White or navy blue polo shirt
Navy blue windcheater
White socks

WINTER

Plain navy blue trousers
Navy blue trackpants
or
Navy blue skirt / pinafore
Navy or white polo shirt or
skivvy
Navy blue windcheater
Navy blue polar-fleece vest
Navy blue /black or white socks
Navy blue or red tights

Navy blue broad-brimmed or bucket hat.

BOYS

SUMMER

Plain navy blue shorts
White or navy blue polo shirt
Navy blue windcheater
White socks

WINTER

Plain navy blue trousers
Navy blue trackpants
Navy blue or white polo shirt or skivvy
Navy blue windcheater
Navy blue polar-fleece vest
Navy blue, black or white socks

Navy blue broad-brimmed or bucket hat

Additional uniform suggestions from our School Council

1. White polo shirts/skivvies are to be worn on more formal, pre-arranged occasions, e.g. school photos, excursions, sporting events.
2. School logos on windcheaters and polo shirts are preferred by the School Council
3. Year 6 windcheaters are only to be worn by current Year 6 students
4. Jeans, zip-legged and three-quarter length trousers are not permitted as items of school uniform
5. No thongs, crocs, rubber boots, high-heels or open-toed sandals are to be worn
6. School logo bags are available from the school (optional)

Uniforms can be purchased from 'Fosters Mensland' in Main Street, Stawell.



BOUNCE BACK! STUDENT RESILIENCE AND WELLBEING PROGRAM

Each week, teachers lead learning in the Bounce Back! program. Bounce Back! is an award-winning wellbeing and resilience class-based program that offers practical strategies to help our students function well at school and in life. It is a whole-school social and emotional learning curriculum program which promotes positive mental health, wellbeing and resilience for students and teachers plus safe and supportive class and school learning environments.

Each week at our whole school assembly 'Fill the Bucket' comments are shared with our school community. During the course of each week, students are given the opportunity to thank or be grateful to other students in our school that have helped them emotionally in some way.

Bad times don't last. Things always get better. Stay Optimistic.

Other people can help if you talk to them. Get a reality check.

Unhelpful thinking makes you feel more upset.

Nobody is perfect - not you and not others.

Concentrate on the positives (no matter how small) and use laughter.

Everybody experiences sadness, hurt, failure, rejection and setbacks sometimes. They are a normal part of life, try not to personalise them.

Blame fairly, how much of what happened was because of you, how much was because of others and how much was because of bad luck or circumstances.

Accept the things you can't change, but try to change what you can first.

Catastrophising exaggerates your worries. Don't believe the worst possible picture.

Keep things in perspective. It's only one part of your life.

SAFETY AT SCHOOL – STUDENT WELFARE AND DISCIPLINE

We have a general school rule that we do not do anything that will cause hurt or worry to ourselves or to others. This helps to keep all students safe and happy. Our aim is to help children co-operate with others and to be responsible for their own behaviour. A summary of the school's discipline plan is set out below.

SCHOOL WELFARE AND DISCIPLINE PLAN

At Stawell West Primary School we recognise the importance of a positive and consistent approach to student welfare and discipline. **We believe that children should be respectful, thoughtful and courteous to their teachers and peers at all times.** The class teacher remains responsible for discipline in his or her room. Teachers devise class rules in consultation with children for their particular class. These rules are consistent with our overall approach to welfare and discipline.

The whole school discipline plan consists of three key elements:

- . **A clear set of rules**
- . **Strategies for recognising, rewarding and encouraging the many positive behaviours and attitudes our children display at school**
- . **A set of consequences, of increasing severity, enforced consistently when students choose to break our rules**

SCHOOL RULES

Stawell West is a caring school and our rules are simple and easily understood

- + We are considerate of others, co-operative and courteous
- + We believe that everyone's rights, feelings and property should be treated with respect
- + We keep our school and grounds attractive and tidy, and dispose of our rubbish properly
- + We move in and around our school buildings in a quiet and orderly manner
- + We participate in all activities and games safely in the appropriate places, observing "out of bounds", "quiet" and "playing" areas
- + We observe all traffic and safety rules, including correct use of the school crossing
- + We only enter school buildings when supervised
- + We gain permission prior to leaving the school grounds during school hours

CONSEQUENCES

A set of consequences are used to implement a consistent approach to those who choose to disobey the school rules. Dangerous activities such as throwing stones and fighting are viewed as behaviours that cannot be tolerated as they compromise a child's right to feel safe in the school environment. As a consequence of such behaviours, students may be excluded from the yard and a note sent home to keep the parents up-to-date with their child's behavior.

Classroom - Behaviour Management Process

Rationale

Research shows that the classroom teacher has the greatest influence on modifying student behaviour. In order to achieve this, a sound behaviour management plan within the classroom is critical to the success of the school's Behaviour Management Policy.

Classroom Behaviour Management Plan

1. With reference to the school's Behaviour Management Policy, each teacher will establish classroom rules and a series of rewards and consequences that reinforce positive behaviour.
2. Classroom expectations will be discussed and displayed in each classroom and referred to and/or discussed on a regular basis.
3. If a student's behaviour is not appropriate, the following process is to be followed:

Verbal warning



Student name on board



Removal from the student's learning group for a short period of time (still within classroom)



Removal from the classroom to an alternative classroom



Removal from the alternative classroom to the Principal's office



The teacher will meet with the student at the end of the learning session to discuss their behaviour, consequences of their behaviour in relation to themselves, other students and teacher, and strategies for improvement.

- Parents are contacted if their child has been removed from the classroom or if there are repeated warnings to the student about their behavior.
- Internal or at home suspension - following Department of Education and Training procedures
- Expulsion - following Department of Education and Training procedures

The school reserves the right to suspend a child at any stage of this process if the behaviour warrants a more serious consequence. Staff arranging camps and excursions may decide that, based on a student's previous behaviour both within the school and while on excursions or camps, there is a strong probability that the student's behaviour may disrupt the program or endanger other students or staff. If this is the case, then a meeting will be held with the parents to outline concerns and advise that the student may not be allowed to join the group.

CYBER SAFETY

Our school takes part in eSmart, a guiding framework for schools to manage cybersafety and wellbeing. eSmart helps teachers, students and the whole school community embrace the benefits of technology and reduce our exposure to cyberspace risks such as cyberbullying, identity theft, online sexual predation and accessing or sending inappropriate images and content.

Funded by the Victorian Government, eSmart is an initiative of The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, a national charity committed to protecting children from violence.

Our work towards achieving eSmart status involves the whole school community — for example, we'll be integrating cybersafety into our wellbeing policies, establishing clear procedures to deal with incidents, and delivering curriculum around the smart, safe and responsible use of technology.

We'll regularly update you on our progress through the school newsletter, website and Facebook Page. More information is also available at www.esmart.org.au

SCHOOL - HOME CO-OPERATION AND SUPPORT

Working together to ensure success

Teachers at Stawell West Primary School are very keen to involve parents/carers in as many school activities as possible. We believe that it is important for parents/carers and teachers to work together in the education of all children.

At school

In strengthening the partnership between home and school, you may like to become involved in some of the following school activities –

- attending camps and excursions
- hearing children read
- helping in the classroom with numeracy and language activities
- typing children's stories
- covering library books
- reading stories to small groups of children
- helping with cooking
- helping with working bees, watering, or looking after the garden
- assisting with sporting activities such as swimming, school sports, coaching and Bike Education
- participating in School Council

At home

It is vital for your child's positive educational development that they know you are interested in their school work. We ask parents to hear their child read every week-night and to demonstrate an interest in books that they have read. Encourage them to complete any homework they have and please don't hesitate to speak to any of the teachers or the Principal if you have any worries about any aspect of your child's school life.

Home Reading

In keeping with our commitment to home-school partnerships, the staff of Stawell West Primary School place a great deal of emphasis on our home-reading program. Information booklets are available to assist parents to work with the school staff to develop their child's love of books and enthusiasm for reading. Information sessions are conducted so that we can share what is happening in the home-reading program. It is only through co-operation between parents, students and teachers, and with regular reading, that children are able to develop their reading skills.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SCHOOL AND HOME

The Weekly Newsletter

An important method of communication with our school community is the “Stawell West Primary School Newsletter”. We aim to provide as much information in the newsletter as possible to eliminate the need for separate notices. The newsletter is issued every Friday throughout the term and it is important that you check important dates and events that need to be noted.

We also have available the phone app School Enews which allows the newsletter, as well as other school notes and information, to go directly to your device. To download the free app, type the web address below into your search engine, such as Safari or Chrome, on your device. Open the app and search for “stawell west”.

1. iPhone and iPod Touch app: <http://iphone.schoolenews.com.au>
2. iPad app: <http://ipad.schoolenews.com.au>
3. Android app: <http://android.schoolenews.com.au>
4. All other phones: <http://webapp.schoolenews.com.au>

Notices

Despite attempts to include most items of information in the newsletter, some other notices will be necessary – notes about excursions, canteen lists or events that occur in between newsletters. These notices and the newsletter will be given to the eldest child in your family attending our school, unless the notice only applies to a particular class or part of the school. Please check with your child each day to see if any information has been sent home.

Website

The school’s website is at www.stawellwestps.vic.edu.au/

Facebook

The school manages a Facebook Page. Search for ‘Stawell West Primary School’.

STAWELL WEST PLAYGROUP

A Playgroup operates in our Multipurpose Building on Thursdays of each school week. Our Playgroup is for babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers and their parents or caregivers. At our Playgroup, children are able to:

- make new friends
- have new experiences
- gain self confidence
- develop physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually
- develop their skills of cooperation through music, group singing, free play and snack time
- develop verbal and non verbal communication skills through their contact with other children and adults
- develop fine and gross motor skills
- gain better body control, hand to eye coordination, spatial awareness and balance when they play with balls, sand, blocks, puzzles, playdough, paint and paste
- discover shape, size, texture, quantity and consistency when they play with dough and clay
- learn to recognise colours, develop fine motor skills and express emotions by experimenting with paint, collage, chalk, crayons and stamps
- extend their experience of literacy in a social environment.

STAWELL WEST PARENTS’ CLUB

Stawell West Primary School has an extremely supportive group of parents who work to extend the involvement of parents in the school. Participation in our Parents’ Club activities creates opportunities for members of our

school community to become involved in the practical workings of the school. If you would like to join the group, read the school's newsletter for information or come along to one of the meetings.

STAWELL WEST SCHOOL COUNCIL

The Stawell West Primary School Council is an elected body that represents the community and teachers. Its functions are:

- To work with the Principal and staff to develop school policy and educational aims. This forms the basis of our School Strategic Plan
- To administer school finances
- To ensure buildings and grounds are maintained and improved
- To foster community interest in the school

School Council is an extremely important decision-making group and we encourage you to contact us if you are interested in becoming a member. We are always looking for parents to assist.

School Council members also need to know the views of our community in regards to the school. Please get to know the members of our School Council and help them to make decisions that will influence your child's education. Our School Council has five parent representatives, three co-opted parent members and four staff representatives, including the Principal. Half the elected representatives retire each year but they can seek re-election. New members are elected for a two-year period, with elections taking place during the month of March.

The Stawell West Primary School Council members for 2018 are:

Liny Chester - President
Glenn Squire - Vice President
Cathy Nellthorp - Minute Secretary
Gary Raeburn
Michelle Simpkin
Russell Holmes
Joanne Murphy
Justin Murphy
Sue Harrison
Garry Wood - DET member
Rebecca McDonald - DET member
Jim O'Brien – Executive Officer

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

In 2019, the school will undertake an extensive review of all aspects of its operation. From the review findings, we will develop an Implementation Plan that will further improved the teaching and learning within the classrooms, the behaviours of our students and the school-home relationships. We are doing some excellent work in these areas already but Stawell West Primary has identified a need to further improve and make our school a 'school of choice' in our local community.

In relation to the curriculum, we revamped the structure of our learning programs to ensure every student has the appropriate learning gain each term. Teachers have continued to upskill their knowledge and understanding of the subject areas and the best practices available to deliver the best learning to all of our students.