

BEECHWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL



**PARENT
INFORMATION
BOOKLET
2021-2022**

Beechworth Primary School



Welcome to the Beechworth Primary School

At Beechworth Primary School we have a lovely blend of new and old. We value and pay respect to our long history, and look forwards to an innovative and collaborative learning environment where students are encouraged to embrace all opportunities. Communication, critical thinking, and sustainability are at the core of our learning. Strong learning partnerships with our families and the wider school community are important to us.

We have a strong focus on deep learning in Literacy and Numeracy, which underpins learning in all other curriculum areas. We encourage global thinking and citizenship and work hard at preparing students to be confident and successful in the new digital age and their life beyond school.

Thank you for taking the time to read through our Information Book. This booklet provides you with an overview of the School, if you require further information regarding any aspect of the School, please contact the office.

Principal: Sue McDonald



Child Safe Statement

Beechworth Primary School is committed to the implementation of Child Safe Standards to promote the safety and wellbeing of all young people.

Office Hours: 8.30am to 4.30 pm

PH: 5728 1066

EMAIL: beechworth.ps@education.vic.gov.au

WEBSITE: <http://www.beechworthps.vic.edu.au/>

Philosophy:

Beechworth Primary School is a child-centred school. The voices of the children are significant and their views are respected. We believe that children are adventurous in acquiring knowledge, intellectually curious and keen to actively engage in making sense of their world. We encourage joyful pursuit and excitement of learning for our entire School Community.

Motto:

Be Respectful, Safe, Persistent, Caring ... Always!

Vision:

Empowering all students to be respectful, persistent and caring learners in a safe and connected community.

Mission:

We aim for excellence in all we do, our decisions and choices are guided by our values; respect, safety, persistence and caring. The celebration and promotion of personal best is at the forefront of our learning journey. Through this we build productive and positive relationships with all members of our school community.

Context.

Beechworth is a historic gold mining town in North East Victoria. Like all small, rural towns it has unique characteristics. In Beechworth the preservation of heritage buildings, a beautiful natural environment and a vibrant arts community has combined to create an environment in which tourism is a major industry. Beechworth Primary School was built in 1875 and consists of a central heritage building classified by the National Trust and a newly constructed 21st century open learning space which houses our senior students.

Beechworth Primary School is set on five acres of spacious and attractive grounds that feature a stand of sequoias more than 100 years old. The grounds offer a stimulating physical environment that enhances formal education.

The school draws its students from the town and the surrounding rural area and is a major focus within the community. Our current enrolment is 180 students and we expect it to remain around that number in the coming years.

Beechworth Primary School Values.

Respect, Safety, Persistence and Caring ... Always!

Respect

At Beechworth Primary School, we demonstrate respect to ourselves, our peers, our teachers and visitors to the school. We also show respect to equipment and our school environment.

We demonstrate respect by:

- Following staff instructions respectfully
- Listening attentively to our teachers, classmates and visitors to our school
- Valuing the opinions of others
- Speaking kindly and thoughtfully to each other
- Looking after school equipment, classrooms, the school grounds and our personal belongings

Safety

At Beechworth Primary School we seek to make our school community a safe place for students, staff, families and all visitors.

We share in the responsibility of keeping ourselves and others safe by:

- Moving around the school grounds and buildings safely
- Entering and exiting the school grounds in the correct manner
- Using school and individual equipment appropriately
- Being Cyber Safe when using technology
- Playing and learning in spaces where we are supervised
- Using all school facilities the way they are intended to be used
- Looking out for the safety of others

Persistence

At Beechworth Primary School we seek challenges in our education and we work hard towards achieving our goals. We continually grow as individuals and as learners by giving/trying our best in the classroom, in the playground and at home.

We demonstrate persistence by:

- Listening to feedback and taking on suggestions for improvement
- Persevering in academic, social and extra-curricular activities and by knowing when to seek help
- Having a growth mindset to understand that mistakes and challenges are a part of learning
- Never giving up and seeing something through to the end

Caring

At Beechworth Primary School we strive towards caring for ourselves, others and our environment. We are a caring school community that displays kindness and understanding to others through our words and actions.

We demonstrate caring through:

- Speaking to others how we would like to be spoken to
- Considering others needs by showing generosity, patience and understanding
- Making others feel special by including them in our games and part of a community
- '*Friending*' someone on the buddy bench
- Using encouraging words
- Being honest
- Looking after ourselves (exercise, good nutrition, plenty of sleep, effective hygiene practices)
- Picking up rubbish in the yard and tidying up after ourselves in all settings

See **Beechworth Primary School Behaviour Matrix** at end of booklet.

CURRICULUM



FOCUS – Every Child, Every Opportunity.

At Beechworth Primary School we value the skills and talents of every child. We want our students to become active learners and contributors to their education and to develop enthusiasm for lifelong learning. Our teaching and learning empowers students to be actively involved in their learning journey; we encourage them to be responsible for their own learning, to set goals and work solidly to attain those goals.

Beechworth Primary School addresses the learning needs and interests of each and every child. In this ever-evolving digital world, development of skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, negotiation, responsible leadership and collaboration are more important than a focus on the memorisation or retention of easily out-dated static information.

We believe that resilience, grit and effort are just as important as academic rigor. We encourage our learners to take a risk with their learning whilst challenging themselves to try new things. Success builds our confidence in our abilities, but a great deal more can be learned from reflecting on errors to develop our learning.

We believe children learn best when they know the purpose for their learning, are given timely, targeted feedback for improvements and are involved in real-life, multi-disciplinary projects that inspire them and encourage them to make choices for themselves.

We believe that student engagement is an essential ingredient to student improvements and achievement, and as such, we embrace student voice and a strengths-based approach.

Finally, we believe that parents are the primary educators and that strong partnerships between parents, teachers and the school are essential to students' success throughout their educational journey.

LEARNING TO LEARN

During Term 1 each year, all classes are involved in a program which involves students developing a set of expectations and requirements for their classroom environment for the coming year. The main focus of this program is to reinforce our school values of Respect, Safety, Persistence and Caring. Students develop a deeper understanding of how they learn and what things they need to do to ensure they achieve their potential.

LITERACY

Literacy is the underlying foundation for all areas of the curriculum. With this in mind, the first two hours of the day is devoted to Literacy (one hour block for reading and one hour block for writing) in the F-2 area. Wherever practicable this also applies in the Year 3-6 area. The teaching instructional model follows a whole group-small group-whole group structure which allows the staff to optimise the teaching and learning needs for all students at BPS.

During the literacy block, the students learning is directed through explicit instruction on learning intentions, criteria for successful learning and goals targeted at individual learning needs. The partnership between school and home is strengthened through the practice of daily reading, for all students, at home to consolidate the learning that has occurred throughout the school day.

NUMERACY

During numeracy sessions we have strong focus on students exploring mathematical methods and approaches through our classroom Number Talks. Number Talks allow students to learn from each other, express their ideas and strategies and see that there is often more than one way to solve a problem. Each numeracy session also includes time for explicit teaching and targeted student learning. Student learning is a combination of collaborative and independent work and uses goal setting, questioning and feedback to drive it. Each session ends with time for reflection and during this time students look at how successful they have been as a learner and set future goals. Every student completes 1 hour of Numeracy per day (5 hours of numeracy per week).



MAPPEN – INTEGRATED STUDIES

MAPPEN is an inquiry-based program that runs on a repeating 2 year-cycle, and integrates a number of subject areas. MAPPEN units are designed around eight concepts. The eight concepts are Community, Sustainability, Social Justice, Creativity, Identity, Change, Necessity and Curiosity. Following the MAPPEN program all students explore the same concept at the same time, allowing for whole school immersion and cross level collaboration. MAPPEN commences in Year 1.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEP)

Some students may need Individual Education Plans (IEP), which teachers devise and implement along with student/parent input. These plans set targeted learning goals for children identified with additional needs in any area of the curriculum or in social behaviour. Additional needs can be extension for high achievers, or support for students experiencing learning difficulties. We have outside agencies we call on to help us meet specific needs, such as speech pathologists, school psychologist, and school engagement workers. Funding via an application and evaluation process through DET Victoria is available for children with special physical, educational or emotional needs.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

At Beechworth Primary School we are proud to offer a specialist Physical Education Teacher for all students in Foundation to Year 6. Students have 1 hour of PE class each week, plus additional PE activities with their classroom teacher. We conduct whole school Athletics Carnival, Swimming Sports, Cross Country running, plus winter sports such as football, netball, soccer, and T'Ball.

Beechworth Primary School values the importance of physical activity for all children. Our programs include swimming, physical fitness, athletics and dance. Our Year 3-6 students participate in Winter sports carnivals for football, netball, soccer and T'Ball as well as Kanga8 cricket during the summer months. Students participate in District and Regional events for swimming, cross country running and athletics. Parents are more than welcome to join in as an observer or help with coaching or supporting. Our spacious school grounds provide the perfect opportunity for all sporting activities. We have a huge oval, synthetic rubber and synthetic grass courts for various ball games, plus we offer shaded playground equipment for all students.

PERFORMING ARTS

At Beechworth Primary School we are very proud of our Performing Arts program. All students participate in Music and Performing Arts throughout the year. Each year we hold a Senior School Production in which every child in Years 3 to 6 participates. Junior School Concert is held in December each year. These productions provide all students the opportunity to develop their drama skills and excel in the area of performance.

LIBRARY

We foster the love of literature and children are encouraged to borrow books from the school library. A book-return tub is located inside the library door and we ask that all families are vigilant in returning books to the library. All classes attend the school library once a week.



COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOMS

We have developed a network of computers enabling each classroom to access various applications, the Internet and telecommunications. Our students use the technology in all classrooms as a tool for learning. All classrooms have interactive screens/boards. All classrooms have a bank of laptops and iPads. These devices are used in all aspects of student learning programs from Literacy and Numeracy to the Arts.

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

Our camping program operates for students in Years 3 to 6. Year 3 and 4 students alternate each year with an adventure type camp and an educational camp (Echuca). The Year 5 and 6 students alternate between an adventure camp (Borambola) and educational camp (Canberra). The cost of these camps is usually around \$400 and parents are advised well in advance to allow for payment.

WELL-BEING PROGRAMS

Throughout a child's schooling there can be times when things happen that are challenging socially or emotionally. Our school recognises this and has a range of short-term programs and supports that can be offered should the need arise. These are offered to students following consultation with the parent and are used by a wide cross section of our community at times of need. One such program is called 'Seasons for Growth'. Children experiencing grief, loss, transition difficulties etc. may access the program.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC TUITION

The school offers instrumental music lessons for students, from Year 1 up, wishing to learn from a range of instruments. These lessons can be individual or in small groups. This is a "user pays" system and parents organise payment with the teacher involved.

Students have a number of opportunities through the year to perform for each other, their parents and the wider community.

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM – LITERACY AND NUMERACY

All students in Years 3 and 5 sit the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). These tests are set by the Government and they provide the school with a comprehensive view of the progress of each child. They enable the school to compare our data against similar schools and also against national benchmarks. Tests are conducted in May each year, with the results provided to schools by around August. The NAPLAN tests are one component of our assessment program.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

Reporting is an integral part of teaching and learning. Assessment is a vital component of a teacher's work and here at Beechworth we use our Assessment data to inform our teaching programs. Students are also asked to set personal learning goals, to reflect and self-evaluate their learning with the support of their teachers.

Parents receive written reports against the Victorian Curriculum progression points twice a year (June and December). Interviews are also offered in Term 1 and Term 3. We ask that all students attend parent/teacher/student interviews to ensure they are involved in the learning process.

Parents are encouraged to contact the teachers and make an appointment if there are concerns in relation to your child.



STUDENT VOICE

At Beechworth Primary School we believe students need to be at the centre of their learning and should have true ownership in their school. Students are given opportunities to have input into decisions, voice concerns and make suggestions to improve their school, as well as becoming more aware of the wider community.

Student voice, agency and leadership are supported and encouraged across the school.

Student Voice – is not simply about giving students the opportunity to communicate ideas and opinions; it is about students having the power to influence change. Authentic student voice provides opportunities for students to collaborate and make decisions with adults around what and how they learn and how their learning is assessed. This is known to lead to improved educational outcomes.

Student Agency – refers to the level of autonomy and power that a student experiences in the learning environment. Student voice and agency are intrinsically linked. Agency gives students the power to direct and take responsibility for their learning, creating independent and self-regulating learners.

Student Leadership – is not confined to a small group of individuals, as leadership potential is inherent within all learners. Student leadership includes listening to and being able to clarify the issues of the students they represent and advocating on their behalf. Student leaders have an increased sense of responsibility to help others and to model leadership principles and values. Trust, autonomy and relationships are enhanced through the development of leadership qualities.

Leadership is integral to life-long learning. All students should have the opportunity to demonstrate and develop leadership skills. Student leadership roles include School Captains, House Captains, Junior School Councillors and Team Leaders.



SCHOOL CAPTAINS AND HOUSE CAPTAINS

As the most significant student leaders in the school, School Captains are expected to be ambassadors who embody the school values. They must be approachable, reliable and trustworthy with high expectations of themselves and others. The School Captains are to take an active role in all aspects of the school community and work with others to achieve the best possible outcomes. School Captains are chosen from the pool of grade 6 students for the following year.

The role of a House Captain is to encourage all students to participate in house activities and house events. They are to set a good example. House Captains must always be approachable, reliable and embody the school's values.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL(SRC)

SRC plays an active role within our school in charity work and event organisation. Each classroom elects a representative to be on our SRC and all decisions made are done in consultation with the group.



OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

We believe our school is a community resource and that the education of children is a joint effort with valued input from children, teachers, parents and members of the wider community. This foundation is fostered by:

- Striving to make our school **friendly and welcoming** for all and having a strong sense of belonging;
- Developing an atmosphere of **trust and tolerance** by having clearly defined expectations of **all** people within our school community;
- Providing a school where everyone feels **safe and confident** by dealing honestly and justly with all concerns.
- Actively supporting **open communication** whenever possible. Communication in the first instance should be directed to the classroom teacher. If you would like to speak with the Principal, please make an appointment through the office.
- **Respecting each other** and developing supportive guidelines for everyone within our school community.

TEACHERS

Our teachers value learning not only for the children, but also for themselves. Professional learning is a high priority at this school. It adds depth and value to our programs, which in turn improves student learning. We are an innovative school and the methods of teaching are modified and enhanced when we adopt practices to meet the needs of our children.

Curriculum planning is done on a whole school, team and individual level.

Some students may need individual learning plans, which teachers devise and implement along with student/parent input. Please feel free to contact your classroom teacher if you have any concerns relating to your child. As teachers have meetings and other activities outside classroom time, making an appointment is better for all. We know you will understand when we ask parents not to interrupt classes for informal chats as this is taking away valuable learning time from all children.



PARENTS

We encourage parents to become involved in our school, to work with us for the benefit of all our children. Parents are welcome in the classrooms and in any capacity they wish to support education in our school; help at working bees or fund-raising events throughout the year; attending school assemblies (we have student-led assemblies every Monday morning and also at the end of each term); becoming involved in school programs, such as camps and excursions or starting an activity group or program within the school. Parents are vital members of our School Council and Parents and Friends Association.

If parents wish to help, they are asked to see the relevant teacher to arrange the best possible time for this. We also have a visitors' code of conduct to ensure that our students' privacy is kept confidential and that the welfare of the volunteer, the students and staff is all respected. All volunteers within the school are asked to undergo a volunteers' working with children check. This is required by law. Working With Children forms are available at the Post Office. Parents may also wish to join our Parents and Friends Association (P.A.F.A.). This group actively participates in various events which create opportunities for our school community to come together as well as raising money for school resources.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

We have a proactive School Council that helps in the running of the school at the policy level. Parents are encouraged to become involved either on the Council or a Sub-committee of the Council. Elections for membership on School Council are conducted at the beginning of each School year. Information regarding elections is published in the School Newsletter. The council meets twice a term, on the 3rd Wednesday of the month.

WIDER COMMUNITY

We work with our Shire Council, Landcare, Water Watch, Environ Waste, Energy sustainability and other organisations to enhance learning opportunities for our students and to support the community in which they live. We actively seek to be a productive part of our community and assist our students in becoming good citizens and having a community conscience.



GENERAL INFORMATION

2021 TERM DATES

Term 3 **23 July to 17 September**

Term 4 **4 October to 17 December**

2022 TERM DATES

Term 1 **31 January to 8 April**

Term 2 **26 April to 24 June**

Term 3 **11 July to 16 September**

Term 4 **3 October to 20 December**

SCHOOL TIMES

School times are:

Starting at:	9am
Morning break:	11:00am – 11.30 am
Supervised Lunch:	11.30 am – 11:45 am
Afternoon break:	1.45 pm – 2.15 pm
Supervised Snack:	2:15pm – 2.25pm
Dismissal:	3.25pm

All children are expected to be at school within these hours. To keep everyone safe, children are not permitted to leave the grounds unless they have permission or are collected from the office by their parents or guardians. We ask that students be at school by 8.50am so they are ready to start classes at 9am. If you collect your child during the day, we ask that you come to the office and sign them out in the appropriate book. Students who arrive at school prior to 8.45 should be booked into the on-site before school car program, TheirCare.

OFFICE

Office hours are: Monday to Friday 8.30 – 4.30 during school terms. The school office is closed during term breaks and on public holidays.

The office at the school is where parents may collect information, leave messages, etc. or pay any accounts. **Our office staff** are there to help you in any way possible. Please use the reception window for any inquiries.

COMPASS

Compass is a web-based school management system that our school uses for a variety of administration tasks including: attendance and roll-marking, absence notifications, our semester reporting, excursion permissions and payments. Compass can be accessed on any device including apps for android and iPhones and iPads, in addition to computers. All families will be provided login details for Compass following enrolment with directions provided by the office.

GRADE / STAFF STRUCTURE

Class structure for the coming school year is normally finalised in December. It is a difficult process as we have to wait for confirmation of our projected student enrolment numbers. Student allocation to classes is also confirmed in December and we endeavour to maintain friendship groupings where possible. In the event of a concern with concentration, focus in class or other issues, we will consult with parents to ensure the best possible placement for your child. During Term 4 we ask for parents to put forward considerations in regard to their child's class placement. This is to help us in placing each child in the best group for learning. These considerations assist us in having all facts at our disposal and **must** be in writing and addressed to the Principal.

PUPIL-FREE DAYS

Every school in Victoria is allocated 4 pupil free days throughout the year. These days are to be used for staff professional development and Assessment and Reporting. Each year, teachers begin school, 1 day prior to students. Staff are involved in curriculum planning, professional development and organisation relating to the new school year. The remaining 3 days are scheduled throughout the year. Advanced notice is always given in the School Newsletter and Parent Planners which are available online.

SCHOOL POLICIES

Our Beechworth Primary School Policies are available on our school website; <http://www.beechworthps.vic.edu.au>. The policies can be found under the 'Parent Information' Tab, in Policies and Forms.

SCHOOL FEES

The Victorian State Government requires all families to pay for the individual requisites of their children. The fee structure is sent out annually and fees may be paid in full or by instalments, cheque, cash, Eftpos or via Compass.

Payment for all camps and excursions must be paid in full prior to the event in line with our Camps and Excursions Payment Policy. Camp and excursion permission forms are available via compass prior to the event.

TRAVEL

Students can ride their bikes to school but we recommend students under the age of ten be supervised by a parent. (This is in line with state laws.) Students must wear an approved helmet and bikes are to be brought into school through the back gate (via the park) and are to be housed in the bike shed. This area is out of bounds for all students during the day. Some children travel to and from school on the school bus provided by the Department of Education and Training (DET). One bus travels from the Wooragee area, another from the Stanley area, one from Fighting Gully Road while the fourth operates in the township of Beechworth. Conveyance allowance is provided for students who travel more than 4.8km to school. See staff in the office for details.

WALKING SCHOOL BUS

The Walking School bus is a program coordinated by Beechworth Health Service. Students can meet the walking School Bus at designated points within the township of Beechworth. A community volunteer will then walk with the students to School. This program promotes active children. Inquiries regarding this program can be made to the Beechworth Health Service.

ABSENCES

If your child is absent from school, it is a legal requirement that you must inform the school **via phone, email** or a **note** to be given to the class teacher. All absences must be recorded by 9.30am, this is a DET requirement. If your child becomes ill during the day, a staff member will contact you.

MEDICATION

Staff are not permitted to give medication to children unless parents have signed a permission slip for this purpose. We have staff trained in first aid at our school and all staff have a current CPR accreditation. **All medication** is to be handed to the office along with the signed medication form. Without this form, no medication can be given. In cases of emergency, it is important that all parent contact details are current. Please ensure your contact details are up to date at all times.

SUNSMART

Our school is a SunSmart school and all children are to wear broad-brimmed hats when outdoors. However, they have the choice of a beanie, broad-brimmed hat or no hat from May 1 to August 31. In order to protect our students from the harmful rays of the sun, we have a no hat, no play policy. Hats may be bought at the office. Students should have sunscreen applied at home prior to school. Please note that the school does not supply sunscreen, however, students will be reminded to apply it should they have it in their bags.

LUNCH

We encourage all children to bring a healthy lunch and to bring treats only on very special occasions. Please note under Department of Education and Training guidelines, soft drinks are not permitted at school. Glass bottles are also not permitted here at school.

Children are encouraged to have a fruit/veggie snack at 10am and to have a drink bottle of water in the classroom for access throughout the day during class time. We encourage all students in class to drink water and eat fruit and vegetables in order to keep their concentration at its best and themselves fit and healthy. We actively encourage children to eat well so that they can maximise their learning time while at school.

SPECIAL NEEDS

We have students at our school who suffer from anaphylaxis. This is a severe life threatening allergy to certain foods such as peanut butter and other nut products. We ask for your support with measures we have in place for these children. We ask that children do not share food at school. We have training for parents and staff in the treatment of an anaphylactic reaction. More information is available through classes and in the School Newsletter from time to time.

PROPERTY

Please ensure all property is clearly labelled. Lost property is to be found in the BER Building (the new building) in a large basket. This is cleaned out once periodically.

NEWSLETTER

The newsletter is produced every Friday and provides a valuable communication tool between home and the school. Our School Newsletter is produced electronically and can be emailed to you or accessed via the School's website or Facebook page. If you would prefer an emailed copy, please provide your email address to the office.

YARD SUPERVISION

We commence duty at 8:45 am with only 1 staff member on duty, supervising at the front of the school. Once bags are put away students are expected to wait in the front of the school under supervision until the bell rings at 8.55. There will be 3 staff members on duty at all times in the yard and during breaks 1 & 2. There is also a staff member on duty at the bus every afternoon. We encourage children not to be at school any earlier than 8:45 a.m. as there are no teachers on duty until then.

IMMUNISATION CERTIFICATES

All Certificates are now issued by ACIR – **1800 653 809** (Australian Childhood Immunisation Record) automatically – if all immunisations have been completed. If a child has been properly immunised and the address is the same as the address on their Medicare card, it is recorded at ACIR and parents can obtain their certificate from them. If you have difficulties obtaining a certificate, it probably means that the address has changed or all details have not been received.

STUDENT MOBILE PHONES

We understand that in today's world, students may have the need to have access to mobile electronic devices such as phones and iPods. **For security reasons and in line with Department of Education policy, we ask that students sign these in with classroom teachers at the beginning of the day and then collect them at 3.25pm.** The Department of Education and Training does not hold personal item insurance and therefore does not take any responsibility for items brought to school by staff or students.

There are a number of attachments included in your information folder. Please ensure that all forms are completed and returned to School as soon as possible. This will ensure that we have all the necessary information we require. We appreciate your prompt return and support with returning all forms.