

A- Z of General Information

More detailed information is available in the 2009 School Information Handbook.

Attendance

Classes commence at 8.50am and conclude at 3.15pm. Recess time is from 11am to 11.30am and lunch is from 1.30pm to 2.15pm. Children usually commence eating their lunch in class at 1.20pm.

Short Term Absence:

If your child is unable to attend school you need inform the school of the reasons for a student's absence. This may be in writing, in person or via a telephone call whereupon the teacher will note the absence on the roll as having parent explanation. The school seeks reasons for 'unexplained absences' each term.

Late Arrival / Early Release

Students who arrive after 9.05am are required to collect a late arrival note from the office. Students are not permitted to leave the school ground between 8.35am and 3.15pm without a note from their parents or permission from the principal. Parents are required to complete an early release note at the office before collecting children from class.

Long Term Absences:

When a student will be absent for more than three days, e.g. travel or hospitalisation, we ask parents to contact the office in advance to complete a simple form detailing duration and reason for absences.

Low Attendance Rate

The Primary Welfare Officer or class teacher will consult with parents where a student is absent for a second day without prior notification. Parents will be asked to attend an Attendance Meeting where the student's attendance rate falls below 85% or if there is concern about the student's ability to complete their class work.

Appointments

Parents are encouraged to make an appointment when seeking to discuss important matters with the principal, teachers or regional support staff such as the Child Psychologist. This can be arranged through office staff who will seek the earliest time available.

Before Your Child Begins School

Please encourage your child to know:

- his/her name, address and telephone number
- how to travel directly to and from school
- how to use a toilet properly - boys should know how to use a urinal
- how to manage his/her clothing and footwear and how to tie shoe laces
- to never get into a car driven by a stranger.

Change of Contact Information

To avoid unnecessarily distressing an injured student, please ensure your address and phone numbers are kept current at the office.

Curriculum Days

The Department of Education allocates student free days to schools. Actual dates and details of programs are determined by the teaching staff and approved by School Council. Notifications of these days appear in the school newsletter.

The Department provides these days for Whole School Professional Development and other activities approved by the School Council.

Early Closing Of School

The school will close at 2.15pm on the day prior to each school vacation, and 1.30 at the end of the year. Prior to long weekends the school will be dismissed as usual at 3.15pm. Reminders of these times, usually appear in the school newsletter.

Emergency Details *These are CONFIDENTIAL school records*

At the beginning of each year, we send home a form for you to complete. *Please complete this form and return it as soon as possible.*

If we need to contact you urgently in regard to your child, we must have this information. Please notify the school of any alterations to this information.

Evacuation Drill

An evacuation drill is carried out in the third week of the school year. Please comply with directions if you visit during an evacuation.

Family Court Orders / Access Restrictions *See also Permission to Leave School Grounds - page 5*

All information will be kept confidential; please discuss any matters with the Principal. A copy of Family Court Orders must be kept at the school so that access restrictions are to be followed.

Gifted / Extension Programs

Students who show a giftedness or talent in an area of the curriculum are provided with extension and challenging programs and assisted, where possible, with additional support. In the junior grades students are placed into fluid groups that are appropriate to their reading proficiency.

Homework

Avondale Primary School maintains high educational expectations of all students. The key elements of our Homework Policy are stated below:

- Allows for practising, extending and consolidating class work
- Provides training for students in planning and organising time
- Develops a range of skills in identifying and using information resources
- Establishes habits of study, concentration and self-discipline which will service students for the rest of their lives
- Reaffirms the role of parents and caregivers as partners in education
- Provides parents with insights into what is being taught in the classroom and the progress of their children
- Challenges and extends gifted and talented children
- It is a valuable part of schooling.

Immunisation

Children attending school in Victoria should be immunised against diphtheria, HIB (*Haemophilus influenzae Type B*), measles, mumps polio, tetanus, rubella and whooping cough. We ask that you check your child's immunization status with a doctor. A school is required to request proof of immunization when enrolling a student. Failure to provide proof may result in your child being excluded from school should an outbreak occur. A copy of the exclusion diseases and exclusion periods is published on page 22 of the *School Information Handbook*.

Insurance

Parents and guardians are generally responsible for paying the cost of medical treatment for injured students, including any transport costs. Most medical costs will be refundable by Medicare. If you are a member of an ambulance or health insurance fund, you may also be able to claim transport or other expenses from the fund.

The Department of Education and Training does not hold accident insurance for school students.

Other insurance cover is available. The Department is aware of two insurers, *JUA Underwriting Agency Pty Ltd* and *Willis Australia Ltd*, that provide accident insurance policies for students. These policies provide specific benefits for students who are injured in accidents for a reasonably low cost. Other insurers may also do so.

Instrumental Music Program

Keyboard and guitar are available for students in Grade One to Six on a weekly basis. Students are withdrawn from class for small group tuition. These lessons are taught by private tutors; students are permitted to leave class for up to 30 minutes per lesson. Guitar, piano, keyboard and recorder lessons are available. Application forms are available from the office.

Interpreter Services

Interpreters are available when needed. If you require an interpreter for an educational reason please give one week's notice to the Office to organise this service.

Late Arrivals & Early Dismissal - See *Attendance – page 1*

Lost Property

Personal property (clothing - especially school uniforms) should be clearly labelled to ensure ease of identification and prompt return of lost items. Property found, is placed in the containers near the staffroom. Unclaimed items of clothing, except for school uniforms, are forwarded to charitable institutions at the end of each term. Unclaimed school uniforms are kept for use in an emergency.

Medical Information and Accidents

Also see *Student Health - page 21 and Infectious Diseases - page 22 School Information Handbook*.

If a child becomes ill or is injured appropriate First Aid will be given and parents contacted if necessary; parents may be asked to take the child home. If emergency treatment is required, parents will be notified immediately and the child transferred to hospital by ambulance. *In such cases ambulance service and treatment are at the parent's expense.*

A student who takes prescription medication at school, must leave the medication with office staff along with clear instructions detailing the dosage and time when medication is to be administered. The Medications Coordinator will contact parents when medications kept at school are close to their use-by date.

Mobile Phones

Students are expected to leave mobile phones with office staff at the beginning of the day and collect them at the end of the school day. No responsibility will be taken by the school for phones that are lost or stolen and have not been left at the office. Students are strictly prohibited from using their mobile phones to make calls, take photos or videos at school or during school related activities.

Money And Valuables

Students are not encouraged to bring valuables such as jewellery and/or toys to school. Money sent to the school for special events, excursions or canteen should be enclosed in an envelope bearing the student's name, grade, amount and purpose. This is given to the teacher at the start of the school day. Receipts will be issued for payments greater than \$10 unless otherwise requested.

Newsletter

A school newsletter is distributed to each family every Thursday. The newsletter contains articles explaining school programs, special events and insights into the school's educational philosophy. It also contains a *Calendar of Events* to assist families plan for future events. The newsletter will be e-mailed in colour PDF format if requested. A copy of the newsletter is available from the school's website <http://www.avondaleps.vic.edu.au/home/newsletters/>

Permission To Leave The School Grounds

Students are not permitted to leave the school unless this is specifically requested in writing or in person by a parent or guardian. It is essential this procedure is followed, to ensure that the school has current records in case of an emergency.

Non-custodial parents will be able to withdraw students from school only where it complies with the Family Court orders currently held by the school. It is imperative that a copy of the most

recent Family Court Order is provided to the school. Also see *Family Court Orders and Access Restrictions – page 4 School Information Handbook*

Photographs

Permission must be sought from the principal to take photos or videos inside the school or during school related activities. During special events such as *Footy Day* a general permission is usually granted.

Playgroup

As the school has adequate space and some basic facilities, the School Council supports parents running playgroup activities for pre-school children. It is organised and run by parents on Thursday and Friday morning between 10.00am - 12 noon in the Triple Room. This has become increasingly popular. Currently two groups operate weekly. You can contact the school if you wish to be involved in the program (Ph: 9318 1755).

Prep Routine

The first day of school for your child is **Thursday 1st February 2010**, beginning at 8.50am. You are requested to bring your child to school for their first day. It is very important that students have a calm and secure beginning. Please do not send your child to school with an older brother or sister.

During the month of February, Preps attend school for the full school day: 8.50am to 3.15pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. **Students will not attend school on Wednesday during the month of February.** Wednesdays will be used for School Entry Assessment. These are informal interviews with students and parents.

On Wednesdays in February, your child will be given an interview time (about 1 hour) to complete their selected literacy and numeracy activities. Parents will be asked to complete a PEDS questionnaire during this time. **Preparatory grade students will attend school for the full time from the week beginning Monday, 8th March 2010.**

You can help your child start each school day well, by ensuring that they have a good night's sleep, and that they have a well-balanced, unhurried and nutritious diet. We encourage students to drink from suitable water bottles and snack on sliced fruit or vegetables during class.

All students eat lunch inside their own room, supervised by their teacher.

Students have a snack at morning recess (11am) and lunch (1.30pm). Please do not provide more than your child can eat or drink. It is a good idea to have the student's "play lunch" in a bag, and their lunch in their lunch box. This stops confusion about which to eat first, and they also learn not to eat all their food at recess.

It is expected that parents will read to their child as well as hearing their child read for about 10 minutes, daily. This routine is most important.

Privacy

The Department of Education and Training has strict rules regarding privacy. Avondale Primary School meets all requirements.

A copy of students' half year reports is filed at the school. These are kept in a locked cabinet for the duration of a student's attendance and thereafter archived.

Some students have medical and paramedical records at school such as Speech Therapy, Physiotherapy and Psychologists notes. Every record is filed according to its type and secured in a locked cabinet. Access to medical and paramedical records is restricted in accordance with Department rules. The DEECD privacy policy can be accessed at: <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/govrel/Policy/privacy-pol.pdf>

Punctuality

It is important that children be at school before 8.50am so that they are settled and ready for the first bell. Please ensure your child arrives at school on time. Some students become unsettled or upset at being late, and some develop an attitude that they do not have to obey rules because this rule is not observed by parents. We seek your help to ensure a prompt start to the day to avoid interrupting class activities.

It is also important to be on time to meet your child after school. If you are delayed, please contact the school to let us know. It is very important to advise the teacher or office, if someone other than yourself is going to meet your child. We ask parents to wait in the yard not the corridor to avoid crowding. Parents who have neither contacted the school nor collected their children by 3.30pm will incur Aftercare charges.

Reports

Two written reports are provided for every student annually. The mid-year report focuses upon progress in English, Maths and attentiveness to studies. The December Report provides a more comprehensive assessment of student progress. Half-yearly reports of a student's educational progress will be sent to a non-custodial parent if requested.

Parent-Teacher Interviews

There are two parent teacher interviews organised by the school each year. The first is usually in mid-February and provides an opportunity for parents to discuss their child with the class teacher especially in regard to educational expectations. The second interview follows the distribution of the mid-year report and allows parents and teachers to discuss the student's progress in some detail.

Safe Practices

To ensure the safety and comfort of all, a number of safe practices in and around the school are followed:

- For the safety of all children the car parks are out of bounds and are not to be used as a drop off point
- Please obey parking signs
- Street parking is restricted in Clarendon Street during the times that students are delivered to and collected from school. There is ample parking space in Sydney Street
- Be aware of the dangers of turning and pulling away from the kerb when children are outside the school ground. Reversing when young children are around is potentially very dangerous
- Discourage your children from running across the road
- Parking across driveways, or on the nature strip may lead to a parking fine
- Dangerous articles are not allowed at school
- Imitation weapons of any description are banned
- The wearing of make-up, jewellery and earrings, (other than studs and sleepers) is discouraged
- Thongs and open-toed shoes are not permitted as they do not adequately protect student's feet
- The wearing of hats, long sleeved shirts and sun screen *is required* in Terms 1 and 4.
- The riding of bikes, skateboards and roller blades etc. are banned in the school grounds
- Students are not allowed to leave the school grounds, once they arrive at school, unless with a parent/guardian and the school has been notified
- Parents are encouraged to form a Walking Bus to accompany students to school safely.

School Captains and House Captains

Avondale Primary School has two school captains, one girl and one boy, elected by staff and senior students. Our captains represent the school at various official functions throughout the year.

Our school has four houses for intra-school sports:

Viscount (Red)	Electra (Blue)
Comet (Yellow)	Boeing (Green)

Each team has a male and female house captain as well as a male and female vice-captain. Students who are selected for any of these positions will receive a badge to keep as a memento.



School Hours

Children attend school between 9.00am and 3.15pm, Monday to Friday.

Timetable:	8.50am - 11.00am	First session
	11.00am - 11.30am	Morning Recess
	11.30am - 1.30pm	Second session
	1.30pm - 2.15pm	Lunch Recess
	2.15pm - 3.15pm	Third session

Student Book-packs

The materials and books used by the students in the programs are supplied at the beginning of the year. We endeavour to keep the costs to a minimum by purchasing at bulk rates. The purchase of students' supplies are paid for and collected the week before school begins.

School Council requests a contribution to support special curriculum activities as well as financial support in maintaining grounds and safe play equipment.

Parents who have difficulty in meeting these arrangements should discuss the matter with the Principal

Parents who hold a Health Care Card or a Pensioner Concession Card are eligible for concession rate, via the *Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)*, when purchasing book-packs and curriculum resources. Parents should present a current concession card at the general office on the day of purchasing books.

Student Book Club & Book Fair

Avondale Primary operates a student book club. A range of highly recommended books is available for purchase periodically. A Book Fair is held in the library each year. It is a good opportunity to buy high quality books at a reasonable price

Student Representative Council

Two children from each class are elected each term to represent their grade. Students use this forum to discuss issues associated with the school's facilities and programs. They also organise a fundraising activity each term.

Student Wellbeing

This program aims to ensure that the physical, social and emotional wellbeing of every student is being appropriately monitored and supported as required. The Coordinator liaises with visiting teachers, a speech therapist, child psychologists and outside agencies such as Yooralla, to ensure that children experiencing difficulties are supported.

The school is a base for Moonee Valley Family Services who may conduct home visits where a family or parent is experiencing grief or distress. All information regarding wellbeing is in a manner consistent with DEECD privacy policy..

Term Dates – 2010

<i>Term 1</i>	1 February -	26 March
<i>Term 2</i>	12 April -	25 June
<i>Term 3</i>	12 July -	17 September
<i>Term 4</i>	4 October -	17 December

Toys and Electronic Games

We recommend that toys and electronic games be kept at home unless otherwise requested by the teacher. The risk of breakage is high and the school takes no responsibility for damage to these items.

Uniform Also see *Uniforms - page 11 School Information Handbook*

The wearing of the school uniform is compulsory. It has the advantages of:

- Being an economical way of clothing students
- Adding to playground safety as other clothing is readily noticeable to all
- Developing a sense of pride and identity with the school

- Ensuring students wear a hat when outside.

Volunteers

The *Working with Children Act 2005* introduced a Working with Children Check ('WWC Check') and minimum suitability standards for certain people who work or volunteer with children.

A parent who volunteers to support activities that are part of the usual program, such as listening to children read or assisting on an excursion, does not need a WWC.

The Department of Education and Training and school councils have legislative obligations under the Act with respect to ensuring certain volunteers and employees have applied for, and received, a WWC Check.

More information can be gained at the Department of Justice website:

<http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/CA25711C001EBB33/page/Who+is+affected?OpenDocument&1=20-Who+is+affected~&2=~&3=~>

Wheeled Devices

The riding of bicycles, scooters, skateboards or similar toys is prohibited during school hours except where it is part of an organised educational program. Students who ride their bicycle to school should wear a helmet and walk their cycle once inside school grounds. No responsibility is taken by the school for the care or security of bicycles.

Yard Supervision – Inclement Weather

Teachers supervise the school grounds before school from 8.40am - 8.50am, throughout each recess (morning and lunch time) and after school from 3.15pm - 3.30pm.

On wet or hot (35°+) days, a special program allows students to remain inside under teacher supervision, while engaged in suitable indoor activities. If it begins to rain when students are outside, they are brought inside. For safety reasons, students are not permitted inside unless under direct teacher supervision. On hot days, the school uses the current temperature of Essendon Airport shown on the following web site:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDV60900.shtml>

Yard Supervision – Leaving and Collecting Children *Also see Punctuality – page 6 School Information Handbook*

Young children like to develop a degree of independence.

You can assist your child by:

- Waiting for your child in the yard (try to avoid waiting in the corridor as this distracts students)
- Allowing your child to pack / unpack their school bag
- Allowing your child to carry their school bag between the school gate and their classroom
- Setting aside a few minutes to discuss your child's day before heading home.
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Students who have not been escorted home by 3.30pm will be taken to After Care, this will involve a cost of about \$10/hour or part thereof.