

2017

Foundation Handbook



McKinnon Primary School

Principal: **Simone Eirth**



McKinnon Primary School

1B World School

Principal's Message

Congratulations on choosing McKinnon Primary School for your child's start to their formal education. Welcome to you and your family as we begin the partnership together to ensure your child has the best learning experiences and development opportunities possible in their Foundation to Year 6, years of schooling.

Our school is well positioned to draw on the most current and recognised teaching and learning theories and practices. As a department of Education and Training school, we access the best available education resources to enable our teachers to support our students to learn, and to enjoy learning as a lifelong endeavour.

McKinnon Primary School is contemporary in its approach to educating our students. They learn in an environment that is conducive to preparing them for a rapidly changing world that demands technological capacity and intelligence, heightened interpersonal skills, significant emotional intelligence, resilience and strong English and Mathematical skills.

The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme offers students the opportunity to learn about an interconnected world where knowledge is constantly developing. The International Baccalaureate® (IB) Primary Years Programme prepares students to be active global citizens in a lifelong journey of learning.

Professionalism, instructional capacity and accountability of our teachers are fundamental to the education students receive, ensuring each child's learning is scaffolded in their learning zone. Significant resources are applied to ensure our teachers provide quality instruction and evidence-based student outcomes.

Your involvement in your child's learning in partnership with the school cannot be over-emphasised. As parents, the school values your support to optimize your child's learning and development. I encourage you to be involved where possible, whether it be through reading at home with them, supporting and encouraging your child's independence appropriate to their age, or simply being positive about school and learning.

The teachers, staff and I are most keen to enjoy the partnership journey with you to support your child to be a happy, confident and life-long learner.

Welcome!

Simone Eirth
Principal



Inquire • Think • Learn

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Preparing For School

Beginning school is an exciting time for the whole family. We seek to make your child's transition a happy and secure time.

Your child will adjust more quickly and happily to school if he/she can:

- Leave you for a few hours without being upset.
- Independently put on own shoes (Velcro is helpful)
- Button or zip up his/her jacket.
- Know how to use a handkerchief/tissue correctly.
- Wash hands, especially after using the toilet and before eating.
- Attend to own toilet needs and adjust own clothing – boys need to be familiar with using urinals.
- Put away toys and materials after use.
- Say who will collect him/her after school each day.

To Support Your Child

School requires children to cope with bigger buildings, many more children who are older, less adults for support, new rules and routines.

To support your child:

- Visit the school and familiarise your child with the placement of toilets, playground and buildings. Please note that the toilets for boys include urinals.
- Prepare him/her for the school bell and music and what it means.
- Talk to him/her about how long the school day will be in a way that he/she can understand.
- Ensure that he/she gets enough sleep by establishing a set bedtime and keep to routines that allow for rest and free play. Be sure he/she has a **balanced breakfast**.
- Have him/her dress himself/herself so he/she can manage things like taking jumpers and shoes on and off at school.
- Encourage him/her to take care of his/her belongings. **Clearly label all belongings** that come to school including clothing, lunch boxes, drink bottles and 'Share and Learn' items.
- Show him/her where these labels have been placed and help him/her to recognise his/her name.
- **Pack a healthy snack, water bottle and lunch in named containers** that he/she can open and close. Explain when the containers and water bottle are to be used and have some trial runs.
- Instruct him/her about appropriate use of the School Crossing – practise safe road crossing.

Be positive, encouraging and reassuring about school.

Once at School

- Develop a morning routine so that your child arrives at school organised and on time.
- Leave home cheerfully.
- Arrive at school with sufficient time to say goodbye to your child before instruction time begins and leave the school promptly.
- Seek assistance promptly from your home group teacher if transition procedures are causing undue distress for your child.
- Children usually settle down as soon as parents are out of sight.
- Be punctual when collecting your child from school – a few minutes to you may seem a long time to a child left waiting. Please notify the school if you are unavoidably detained.
- Make time for your child at the end of the day. Listen BUT don't ask too many questions.
- Absences – Please send a note if your child has been absent and log your child's absence on Compass. If you are collecting your child before the school day ends, or alternatively if your child arrives to school late, you must sign your child in/out on the iPad found at the front office. We are required to keep records of absences, late arrivals, and early departures. These are recorded in your child's report.
- In an effort to reduce waste, we encourage students to use containers for their snacks, rather than wrappers.

Your positive attitude and supportive guidance will foster in your child's confidence in their ability to negotiate and enjoy this new experience.

Your Child's Safety at School

We do our utmost to ensure that your child receives the best care and attention. It is however, important that at all times the Office has an emergency telephone number where you, a relative or a specified emergency contact can be reached.

Please notify the Office immediately, in writing of any change to your:

- Address
- Home telephone
- Mobile
- Place of employment and related contact details
- Emergency telephone numbers

Learning is Fun!

Beginning school is exciting for children. It will however, mean changes in your child's life such as:

- Separation from home and family for long periods during the day time.
- Meeting new people, children, teachers and other adults.
- Many new learning experiences.

Reinforce school learning experiences with interesting activities at home. Play games with colours, numbers, letters and days of the week. It is important that your family takes the time to read books together daily. Encourage your child to listen carefully, follow instructions, co-operate with others and engage in extended conversations with you.

Beginning school should be a positive experience for both students and parents and we are here to help.

What To Expect

First Day of School

The first day is an important day for your child. Dress them up, brush their hair, take a photo and get ready for some tears (yours, not theirs!)

Come to the learning space at 9:00am and say a quick goodbye. We ask that all parents leave the learning space prior to 9:15am and join the other new parents/carers in the staffroom for morning tea, friendship and connections. The students will be taught where to line up for the following day.

At the end of the day teachers will bring students to the area outside ready for collection. During the first week Foundation students will leave school at 1:00pm. Paid after care facilities will be available for students unable to be collected at this time. This service is provided by Camp Australia.

On the first day, your child will need to be in full school uniform and bring to school:

- A school bag clearly named.
- The McKinnon Primary School sun smart hat clearly named.
- Snack and lunch packed separately, in clearly named containers.
- A drink bottle clearly named.

During The First Month

You will quickly realise that your child is very tired after a day at school. Give your child time to talk about the day's experiences but be aware that your child may not want to share immediately at the end of the school day – some children need 'thinking time' and are more likely to discuss their day later in the evening. A cool drink and healthy afternoon snack should be part of their after school routine.

Establish a regular bedtime for your child and create a calm routine. This will ensure they have enough rest and will aid their learning and concentration at school.

Students can be dropped off at school from 8:45am when there will be a teacher on duty in the playground. They will then enter their flexible learning space with their teacher at 9:00am. To ensure a happy and reassuring start for all students at this busy time, home group teachers are available between 8:45am and 9:00am for the quick transfer of information. Home group teachers would be pleased to speak with you informally before or after school, or an appointment can be arranged.

Our Day

9:00am	Students enter learning spaces Instruction begins
10:45am	Morning recess – supervised eating of snack
11:00am – 11:30am	Morning recess outdoor play
11:30am – 12:50pm	Instruction resumes
12:50pm – 1:10pm	Lunch – supervised eating of lunch
1:10pm – 2:00pm	Lunch outdoor play
2:00pm	Instruction resumes
3:30pm	Dismissal – students meet parents/carers outside of the school building in designated line up area

Student/Parent/Carer/Teacher Interview and Student Assessments

To enhance the relationship between the home group teacher, child and parents, Foundation students at McKinnon Primary School begin the year with a student/parent/carer/teacher meeting. This is an opportunity for your child to visit their flexible learning space and meet their home group teacher. It is also a time for you to inform us of any relevant information that may support your child's transition to school.

Every Wednesday will be a rest day for students up until week ending Friday 10th March. Teachers will make an appointment for Foundation Entry Assessments. These appointments will take approximately one hour, and you will not be required to attend these appointments with your child.

All Foundation students will be assessed in the first five weeks of Term One. Assessments will take place on Wednesdays in February and March, when regular classes for Foundations students will not be held. This assessment will then be used to assist in planning programs to cater for the learning needs of every student. The assessment sessions are designed to be a positive experience for the students and will involve aspects of English and Mathematics.

There will be one assessment session with two components that your child will be required to attend. The first is an **English Online Interview** that all Victoria students in Foundation – Year 2 participate in.

The English Online Interview tasks include:

- Oral Language
- Phonemic Awareness (identifying sounds in words)
- Reading text and Comprehension
- Letter and Word Identification
- Retell and Comprehension of a text
- Writing task

The second component is the **Mathematics Online Interview**. It consists of hands-on assessment tasks where students demonstrate mathematical understandings in the following areas:

- Counting/Number
- Time
- Measurement
- Shape and Pattern

Your child will be working individually with a teacher during this time therefore only your child is required to attend the Wednesday assessment sessions. It is critical that you arrive on time for your child's allocated session. Teachers are timetabled with consecutive assessment sessions – your promptness will assist in all students being assessed in a timely manner.

Please ensure you are punctual in collecting your child at the conclusion of the assessment session.

Students are encouraged and assisted to progress at their own pace. When talking to other parents remember this and consult with staff if you have any concern or questions. Our door is always open. Please feel free to make a time to see us.

Essential Knowledge

Curriculum

All learning and teaching programs at McKinnon Primary School are based on the Victorian Curriculum F-10. Our students participate in a range of specialist programs, including: LOTE - Mandarin, Performing Arts, Physical Education and Visual Arts.

Further complementing the teaching and learning programs, as students' progress through the school they have the opportunity to participate in Inter-School Sport, Instrumental Music and Camps. There is a strong emphasis on student leadership and leadership opportunities exist through our Student Representative Council, School Captaincy and Sports House System.

Communication - Compass

An electronic newsletter is prepared fortnightly and Year Level Learning Updates are provided on a weekly basis. All correspondence is circulated via the School's Compass Portal. Please take the time to read these documents as they contain important notices, dates, reminders and items of interest.

Reporting to Parents/Carers

Term One:	Parent/Carer/Teacher Conference
Term Two:	Written mid-year report Student Led Conference
Term Four:	Written end of year report

All parents/carers are encouraged to arrange an appointment to discuss their child's progress with the classroom teacher as the need arises.

School Support Services

The Department of Education and Training provides an opportunity to support students through Student Support Services, which comprise a broad range of professionals including psychologists, guidance officers, speech pathologists, social workers and visiting teachers. Student Support Service officers work as part of an integrated health and wellbeing team within networks of schools, focusing on providing group-based and individual support, workforce capacity building and the provision of specialised services. Written parental consent is required for a student to be seen by these professionals.

MiniLit Program

MiniLit stands for 'Meeting Initial Needs In Literacy' and is an early literacy intervention program. It is designed to be delivered daily, for one hour, to small groups of up to four Foundation - Year 2 students who have struggled to make adequate progress in learning to read during their first year of schooling.

MiniLit consists of 80 carefully structured lessons (sufficient for at least two terms of instruction) in an easy to hard sequence and is divided into two levels, Levels 1 and 2, with 40 lessons at each level. There are three main components of each lesson, all of which should be carried out on each occasion that a MiniLit lesson is taught. These three main components are:

- Sounds and Words Activities
- Text Reading, and
- Story Book Reading

Assembly

All students attend a whole school assembly once a month. Foundation students also begin the school year attending a brief year level assembly. As the year progresses, and students begin to establish the routine of how assemblies are conducted, each class will then begin to host a 'Celebration of Learning' assembly in Semester Two.

Lunch Provision and Procedure

When full school days begin:

- Provide your child with **lunch**, a **separate snack** for morning tea and a **drink bottle**.
- Students **eat their lunch under supervision**, either in the learning space or outside (weather permitting).
- **Classroom Cuisine lunch orders** are available on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Lunch orders can be purchased online at : www.classroomcuisine.com.au
- **AJ's Bakery lunch orders** are available Monday – Friday. All orders can be made through QKR!
Please note: Children with lunch orders require a separate snack to be brought from home for their morning tea.

Healthy Eating

A healthy, well-balanced diet is essential for students to aid learning and concentration throughout the school day.

- Morning tea – a nourishing snack for morning recess. Salty chips, chocolates and sweets are discouraged.
- Lunch – packed with nourishing food that your child enjoys. Please consider what will keep well until lunchtime!
- A bottle of water.

We encourage students to bring wrap-free lunches; using plastic containers where possible. Please ensure these containers are clearly labelled with your child's name.

Outdoor Play

Foundation students play in a specific play space supervised by their classroom teachers, to ensure the safety and security of your child for the first few weeks of school. Foundation students also play outdoors at a different time to the rest of the school students, in order to establish the routine of lining up when the music plays to meet their teacher. When they become confident in the playground, students venture to new areas. Foundation students do not go across the road during play times.

Your child will enjoy playing at the front of the school on the playground equipment, the sandpit and green grass areas.

On Wet or Extreme Weather Days

All students remain in their flexible learning spaces if it is raining during recess and lunch times until weather clears and it is possible to go outside. Students are supervised inside. On days of extreme heat students remain inside and are encouraged to drink plenty of fluids.

There is no provision to send students home on very hot days. Students must have drink bottles, a broad-brimmed hat and sunscreen.

Sun Smart

McKinnon Primary School is a Sun Smart school. All students must wear the McKinnon Sun Smart hat between **1st September** and the **30th April** each year. Students must wear hats whenever they are outside during breaks, playing sport or participating in learning outdoors. Students who are not wearing hats will be required to stay in a sheltered area. Please encourage your child to put on their own sunscreen – roll on sunscreen is recommended.

Buddy System

In Term One all students are allocated a Year Six student as a buddy. Your child's buddy will assist him/her to become familiar with the playground and general aspects of school life. Students are also involved in co-operative learning with their buddies throughout the year.

Home Reading and Take Home Sight Word Box

Information will be distributed early in the year outlining the Home Reading Program and Take Home Sight Word Box.

Share and Learn

Each student will be allocated a Share and Learn day each week. Topics to share are directly related to our Unit of Inquiry, and encourages students to make personal connections with what they are learning in the unit. Further information will be distributed throughout the year at the beginning of each new Unit of Inquiry.

Personal Belongings

Precious toys, trading cards and games are not to be brought to school from home. This is to avoid tears if they are misplaced or damaged. It is difficult for young students to be responsible for these items. The Department of Education and Training (DET) has asked schools to advise parents that the DET is not responsible for the loss of property brought to school by students and property is not insured.

Lost Property

If something belonging to your child is missing, please check the learning space and lost property, located near the Office. Things may go missing for a few days but if they are named, they can be easily returned.

Our School Library

The Library at McKinnon Primary School is computerised and operates much the same as your local library. Your child will visit the Library once a week on a designated day and have the opportunity to select picture books to borrow. We ask that all books are returned in your child's library bag, a week later, on their designated library day.

Leaving School Grounds

Students can be dropped off or collected outside specified hours BUT on these occasions they must be signed in or out in the register located at the Office. Students can only be collected by parents/carers as nominated on the enrolment form. Prior notification is required for any change in this routine.

Please note that your child cannot enter the school grounds unaccompanied and is NOT permitted to leave the school grounds unaccompanied.

School Crossing Usage

It is law that when the Children's Crossing signs are displayed that people use the crossing to get from one side of the road to the other. Failure to do so compromises safety. A School Crossing Supervisor is on duty before and after school. There are financial penalties issued by the relevant authority on a regular basis for incorrect use of the crossing.

House System

All students are placed in one of four houses, which are named; Gold, Green, Blue or Red House. House Sport Competitions are held throughout the year when students are required to wear a t-shirt in their House colour. If there are siblings within the school, they are usually placed in the same house system.

Getting Involved

Class Representatives

At least one parent from each grade will be asked to be the Class Representative. The Class Representatives are the liaison with other parents and are vital to the effective running of the school. Please support the Class Representatives wherever possible.

Parents' Club

The school has an active Parents' Club, which creates a sense of community through fundraising activities, with an emphasis on creating a friendly social network. New members and fresh ideas are always very welcome.

School Council

The School Council consists of 8 parent representatives, 3 Department representatives, and 1 community representative for the school community and the Principal as Executive Officer. The council meets at least twice each term, with at least eight meetings held every year.

The Sub-Committees of School Council are:

- Finance
- Policy
- Parent's Club
- Community Partnerships

Parents/Carers are encouraged to become members of the School Council and its sub-committees. By attending these meeting, parents/carers can actively participate in continuing the growth and strengthening of McKinnon Primary School.

Getting Involved – in the Classroom

Help in the Classroom

You can be of assistance in programs such as:

- The English Block
- The Mathematics Block
- Sporting Events
- Assisting with the swimming program and excursions
- Helping with major school events

Early in the year, a parent workshop will be provided on assisting with reading in the classroom.

As parents you can also assist by observing the following:

- CLEARLY NAME all of your child's belongings.
- Ensure your child has a good night's sleep by going to bed on time.
- Send your child well equipped and on time.

If you can assist with excursions and in-school visits, this is appreciated not only by the school but also your child. Children love to have mum or dad participating in the school. We encourage you to offer your services, they will always be greatly appreciated!

Working with Children's Checks

"The Victorian Government has a checking system that will affect many adults who work or volunteer with children under 18 years of age. This check helps protect children from sexual or physical harm by checking a person's criminal history for serious sexual, serious violence or serious drug offences and findings from certain professional disciplinary bodies such as the Victorian Institute of Teaching. The WWC Check creates a mandatory minimum standard for a range of child-related industries."

(Taken from the WWC Application Form).

As a volunteer working with children across a range of school activities, you are required to apply for the WWC Check at an Australia Post outlet. Only the photograph taken at Australia Post fits the new ID card. We do not wish to limit parent involvement or contact with school programs. Rather we want to ensure that all of us who work with children at McKinnon Primary have been checked. By law you are unable to volunteer at the school without this WWC. The duty of care we share for safety of children in our care at all times is undeniable.

To ensure your involvement around the school it would be a good idea to apply for your check now. There is no charge for volunteers to have the check conducted. However, there is a charge for the passport quality photograph.

Parent Payments

Annual Parent Contribution

Parents are asked to make a small financial contribution at the start of each year. This is used to fund teaching materials, ground maintenance and computing.

As you will discover, the school and its staff do an incredible job with the resources they are given. The State Government provides our school with two sources of funding. The first is a quarterly grant, which pays for our operating costs (telephone, electricity, gas, postage, fire services) and the other is a student allowance, which varies depending upon the students' year level.

This allowance does not adequately cover your child's educational expenses. Therefore, each year parents are asked to make a contribution.

The amount is set each year by School Council after the School Budget is finalised for the following year.

Before and After School Care – Camp Australia

The Out of School Care Program operates each school day.

The Before School Care Program starts at 7am and continues through until 8.45am. The After School Care Program starts at 3.30pm and runs until 6pm. The program is housed in the School Gymnasium.

Supervision is also available on Student Free Days, where there are sufficient numbers. Chargers for all programs are available on the Camp Australia website. <https://www.campaustralia.com.au/>

Holiday Programs

Camp Australia offers Holiday Programs, which run during the school holidays each term. Details of the program and enrolment forms are available prior to the end of each term.

Excursions and Incursions

Any excursions and incursions involving your child requires written approval from a parent/carer. Notifications will be sent via Compass prior to the event and consent and payments must be provided by the due date online.

A general approval is obtained for walking excursions within the school neighbourhood at the beginning of the year.

School Uniform

McKinnon Primary School has a compulsory school uniform. All students are required to wear the correct uniform. There are a variety of options as to how the uniform can be worn. This is explained in the School Uniform policy.

How to Purchase

Uniforms can be purchased online at www.psw.com.au or by visiting the PSW store at:

Address:

1/596 North Road,

Ormond VIC 3204

Phone: 03 9768 0387

Email: ormond@psw.com.au

Trading Hours:

Tuesday – Friday: 9am-5pm

Saturday: 10am-1pm

A price list can be found online at:

<http://mckinnon-primary.vic.edu.au/documentation/uniform/>

IS YOUR CHILD READY FOR SCHOOL?

Try to look at your child's readiness in all areas of their development. Remember that children develop at different rates and that your child's 'stage' is more important than their age.

LANGUAGE SKILLS: Does your child:

- Speak in full sentences?
- Have a fairly wide vocabulary?
- Make up his/her own stories when looking at pictures?

MOTOR SKILLS: Can your child:

- Use scissors to cut paper?
- Hold a pencil and draw bold lines?
- Copy a circle 'o'?
- Run and hop, with an alternating movement?
- Climb confidently on outdoor equipment?
- Catch a large ball and throw a ball with direction?

SOCIAL SKILLS: Does your child:

- Finish what he/she starts?
- Work alongside other children without distraction?
- Play co-operatively with other children?
- Separate easily from parent/carer?
- Follow rules in a group led by an adult?
- Share most of his/her toys and take turns when requested?
- Go to the toilet independently?
- Know his/her full name, age and sex?

COGNITIVE SKILLS: Can your child:

- Recognise his/her first name, when in print?
- Name colours and shapes?
- Count items 1-10?
- Draw a basic person?
- Listen to stories being read to him/her?

For more information on school readiness visit www.transitiontoschool.com.au

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

Over the Summer Holidays

- Purchase your child's school uniform including a hat and bag from PSW.
- Purchase runners or school shoes – no open toed shoes.
- Purchase a lunch box and water bottle (let your child choose one they can open themselves).
- Take your child shopping to purchase a key ring that will help them easily identify their school bag.
- Visit the school for a play over the holidays to maintain your child's confidence of beginning school.
- Write your child's name **clearly** on all his/her belongings and get him/her to practise identifying his/her name.
- Have a picnic and practice unwrapping a sandwich and/or opening containers.
- If your son is starting school, practise using a urinal.

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- Lay out your child's clothes ready for the first day of school.
- Help your child to pack his/her school bag.
- Pack a spare pair of underwear and socks and let your child know where these are located in the school bag.
- Talk positively about school with your child.
- Take lots of photos.
- Pack a roll on sunscreen in your child's bag and let them know it is there.

The First Few Weeks of School

- Your child's teacher will provide a timetable with weekly special events such as Physical Education etc.
- Remember that children are often very tired in the first few weeks of school. Your child needs LOTS of sleep.
- Give your child a healthy breakfast every morning.
- Try to make sure your child knows if they are going to After Care and who will be picking them up from the program.
- Try to establish morning routines.