

Prep Information Booklet

2023



Name: _____



Dear Parents and Carers,

Stepping up from a pre-school learning environment to primary school is exciting – if not a little daunting. This booklet is designed to answer your questions and spark some questions too.

On behalf of our whole school community, I'd like to warmly welcome your family to Harkaway Primary School.

Your child's first year at school is focused on putting in place the building blocks that enable success in a learning community. We are very deliberate in the way we teach and learn. This first year is all about getting those learning habits in place that will grow from year to year. Harkaway Primary School tries to make the first year and indeed your child's whole school experience, as positive, constructive and inspirational as possible. We view this as a partnership with families and carers.

This booklet is intended to help you and your child have an enjoyable and successful introduction to Harkaway. By providing information that will help you prepare your child and yourself for the start of the year we know some questions will be answered, and others may arise. Please speak with us about any comments, concerns or questions you may have.

Harkaway Primary School children flourish and develop the skills, knowledge and understandings to shape their world. We look forward to partnering with you on this extraordinary learning journey.

Leigh Johnson,
Principal



SCHOOL MISSION

Harkaway Primary School exists to give children the power to shape their world.

A Harkaway Learner has a heart beating with values and a brain connected through knowledge, understandings and the ability to 'do'. Joining the two, are the 16 Habits of mind. These dispositions put our learning into action giving each child the power to shape their world.



SCHOOL VISION

As a community of learners, we work together to curate the conditions in which learning will flourish. We know this is happening when our students are regularly making rules and allocating resources.

We do this through our four 'Big Ideas'.

- 1 - Multiage classes
- 2 - Team teaching
- 3 - Global mindedness
- 4 - Discovery Learning

SCHOOL VALUES

Our learning and teaching culture is grounded in three key values:

- Relationship
- Rigour
- Relevance

BEING A 'HARKAWAY KID' MEANS DEMONSTRATING THE FOLLOWING VALUES:

- Resilience
- Organisation
- Persistence
- Getting Along

Confidence

PHILOSOPHY

Every member of the school community has a right and the responsibility to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive.

Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.

We choose to conduct our interactions with each other in a manner that exemplifies our Mission, Values and Philosophy.

DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES

The program of instruction at Harkaway Primary School supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance.

OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

The Harkaway Primary School community is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. Harkaway Primary School does not tolerate child abuse. We are committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability. Every person involved in our school community has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she/they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all we do and every decision we make.

THE FIRST DAY

All Preps will start school on Monday 30th January, 2023 at 9:30am.



FIRST TERM ARRANGEMENTS AND STARTING FULL TIME

Preps will attend Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9.00 am to 3.30 pm – Not Wednesdays. Wednesday 1st March will be their first Wednesday.

The Wednesdays, when Preps are not at school, will be set aside for an appointment time for their On-line Literacy Interview. An information and reply notice will be sent to you early in 2023.

WHAT TO BRING

On the first day children should bring

- Art Smock (old shirt, etc)
- Sunsmart Hat
- Spare underwear
- A Library Bag
- A Reading Bag or Folder

Please note: chairbags will be purchased by the school and the cost is included in your Parent Payments Arrangement charge.

The children should also bring along their lunch, a water bottle with water in it, and a snack for afternoon play.

All educational requisites (books, pencils, paper, etc.) will be provided with funds from the Parent Payment Arrangements. Notices for 2023 will be finalised and provided in the next few weeks.

We are a Sunsmart school.

If possible, please ensure that children wear shoes that they can undo and do up themselves. Until then, Velcro shoes are welcome.

Closed shoes must be worn. This means no things or open toe footwear.

SCHOOL SESSION TIMES

9.00am – 9.50am	Session 1
9.50am – 10.00am	Huff n Puff
10.00am – 10.50am	Session 2
10.50am – 11.20 am	1 st Lunch
11.20am – 12.10 pm	Session 3
12.10pm – 12.20pm	Huff n Puff
12.20pm – 1.10pm	Session 4
1.10pm – 1.40pm	2 nd Lunch
1.40pm – 2.30pm	Session 5
2.30pm – 2.40pm	Huff n Puff
2.40pm – 3.30pm	Session 6

HOME VISITS AND ONLINE LITERACY INTERVIEWS

On Wednesdays during term one, when Preps are not at school, the teachers schedule a visit to each Prep child's home. This gives the teachers an opportunity to make an early 'contact' with your child and learn about them. It also gives you the opportunity to discuss any issues that may concern you about your child's education at Harkaway. These visits will be organised early in the new school year.

Also on these Wednesdays, we ask you to make an appointment time to bring your child in to complete the On-line Literacy Interview with their teacher. This is an assessment that gives the teacher a useful understanding of your child's Literacy skills. This appointment time will be offered with the home visit form.

LUNCH AND SNACK

Please encourage your child's healthy eating habits. As part of our Health program, an understanding of nutrition will be developed and support from home is invaluable. We encourage you to pack your child's lunch in small reusable labelled containers to help reduce the amount of rubbish that comes to school. Each week students can be rewarded for bringing 'nude food' – unpackaged items such as apples or bananas or sliced carrots.

Our school has many children who have nut allergies. Although we do not ban 'nut' foods and we encourage the children to be involved in the management of their allergy, we do ask that you be aware of this situation and try to help make it manageable for those doing life with an allergy.

Hydration is vital to good health and learning, so children are encouraged to sip water at any time during the day. Their bottles can stay at their tables. The pop-up lid style bottle for water only, minimises spills on school work! Please note that chewing gum is not allowed at school.

JUNIOR SCHOOL CAMP

Our camp program is highly valued and is for all students including our prep children.

Further details of where and when camp will take place will follow.

OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE

Before and After School Care is available to all school families on a user-pay basis. Before School Care is provided in the GP Room from 7.00am until 8.45 and After School Care 3.30 until 6.00pm.

The program is reasonably priced and Centrelink funded places are available. It can be used on a regular basis or as a one-off emergency situation when you're running late or held up. Please call in at the office to register for Before or After School Care.



SUNSMART

Harkaway is a Sun Smart school. Our policy encourages safety in the sun. Hats are available at the office, please label them clearly. Your child will be required to wear it during lunchtimes from the start of September to the end of April and for all PE and outdoor activities. Hats need to remain at school every day. It is also advisable that each child has sunscreen to apply before going out to play. It is a good idea to apply sunscreen before your child comes to school each day.



BEGINNING SCHOOL

The following points have been written to help your child have a happy and positive start to the school year.

Harkaway Primary School is a learning community. We know that the partnership between home and school makes a profound difference to the learning outcomes for our children. With this in mind, we recognise that 'My School My Friend' is true for our students, and we hope that it would also be true for all our families and community members. No one knows your child like you do. There are many different ways to be involved in your child's learning journey. One of the most profound ways is to be the biggest fan of their efforts. This means helping them take risks with their learning, supporting their efforts and nourishing their curiosity.

This information may give some ideas for assisting your child in preparing for school and taking this most important step towards flourishing in life.

Children should not be dropped off at school before 8.45am and must be collected from school by 3.45pm. Before and After School care is available.

WHEN YOUR CHILD STARTS SCHOOL

- On the first day, if tears start, offer initial support, but be firm and consistent. Assure your child that you will pick them up at home time in the prearranged location. Kiss them good-bye and head off. (There will be tissues and Tim Tams for the grown ups in the General-Purpose hall). Our teachers have handled this situation frequently in the past and generally the tears cease very soon after the parents have moved away.

IT'S COOL TO BE AT SCHOOL

Proper attendance helps:

- good school work
- good social adjustment
- development of routines

Absences undermine your child's learning. Their first year at school is very important and unnecessary absenteeism affects their progress.

Just as important is arriving on time and ready for learning. Our daily routines help students orientate their mind to know what their day holds and be switched on to their learning.

However, home is the best place for a sick child. There is a schedule of illnesses that require a child to be away for a period of time. Please check with the office for more details.





WHEN YOUR CHILD STARTS SCHOOL CONTINUED

- Don't send them to school with too much food, as it can be overwhelming to see large amounts of food. A sandwich, small snacks and a piece of fruit are quite sufficient, particularly at the start of a school year and when the weather is hot.
- Cans or bottles of drink are not permitted at school, the children must only have water in their drink bottles.
- Show your child the food you have packed each morning and say when you expect it to be eaten. Try and involve them in the preparation if possible.
- If a child has an illness or condition - for example, asthma, epilepsy, or an allergy - the teacher should be told about it immediately. Please supply an Individual Management Plan. (Check at the office for forms) The teacher should also be told about the effects of any treatment (ie. medicines) that a child is having so that allowances can be made both in and out of the classroom.
- Make sure your child is fully aware of your routine for arriving at, and departing from the school. Pick a meeting place so your child feels confident about where you will meet at the end of the school day. Point out that your child should never leave with someone they do not know. A teacher is on duty in the front playground every afternoon until 3.45pm
- Please teach your child about road safety. Drop off and pick up times can be very busy at Harkaway. Please observe all traffic and parking restrictions and never turn into the school driveways. Turning into the school driveways requires the driver to reverse onto King Road, a practice which could result in a tragedy. Reversing when children can be nearby is dangerous. *Once settled, we strongly encourage parents to park at the Harkaway Tennis Court or Harkaway Hall and walk up to school to collect your child.*
- Point out to your child that they must not leave the school grounds without permission. Prep children are sometimes confused with dismissal times.
- Talk about how long the school day will be eg. "It's as long as kinder, but you'll have your lunch after that and perhaps some stories and then I'll come and get you." Talk about the difference between 'playtime' and 'lunchtime'.
- Teach your child to put on a coat, a jumper and do up a zip without assistance.
- Make sure your child knows how to use tissues, which are available in the classroom.
- Please be punctual at all times. Ensure your child is at school on time to enable them to get off to a good start for the day. Children who arrive after gam miss important information and messages that are vital to the understanding of the day's learning and organisation.
- Be prompt at the end of the day when picking your child from school. Even five minutes can seem a long time in a child's life. In the event of unforeseen circumstances, please advise the school on 9707 1475, if you are running late. We will inform your child and look after them.
- To ensure that your child can develop to their maximum potential, make sure they have sufficient sleep. A regular bedtime is of vital importance to school-age children. School can be very tiring for young children. Up to twelve hours of sleep each night is recommended.



WRITING

Here are some things you can do to help your child to develop as a WRITER.

We use the term WRITER, whereby writing is used as a form of self-expression and communication, and not as in handwriting.

We learn to walk by walking.

We learn to talk by talking.

We learn to read by reading.

We learn to write by writing.

Writers should be provided with opportunities to:

- Talk and write about their experiences.
- Experiment with written language.
- Invent their own words and symbols.
- Make mistakes - we all learn from our mistakes.

Developing writers progress through various stages of written language:

- Scribble
- Invention of symbols
- Strings of letters
- Groups of letters
- Beginning of sound-symbol relationships

In our supportive, literacy-rich environment, children move through the stages of writing at different rates. A great deal of thinking is involved in matching a sound in a word with a written symbol. In the Junior grades, we focus on children attempting to write and we celebrate their efforts.

You may notice your child mixing upper and lower case letters in their writing. This is a natural part of the writing process. To encourage the correct use of these letters, model your writing with your child by not using all capital letters. Writing all letters in capitals is a difficult habit to change.

Your child's handwriting will improve in time. Remember, initially, our emphasis is on getting children to write, hearing the sounds in words and representing each sound with a letter/s. We teach the Victorian Modern Cursive style of handwriting.

READING

During your child's first few years at school, the magical journey of learning to read and write begins and continues. This amazing process is greatly enhanced when home and school work together.

Please encourage your child to read **every day** with you, so they can see that you value the joy and importance of reading, as well as to improve their skills. Your child will actively participate in Book Box sessions most days at school and will choose books to take home and share with you. Book Box time happens at 9:00am. Parent helpers are the key to the success of this program. This is a great way to directly support your child's learning and support the school community. We encourage all parents to assist with Book Boxes. Keep an eye out for the request form from your class teacher.

10 WAYS TO BECOME A BETTER READER

1. Read

6. Read

2. Read

7. READ

3. Read

8. Read

4. READ

9. Read

5. Read

10. Read



MATHEMATICS

As parents, you are able to play an important role in arousing your child's interest in mathematics. Research shows that all people can learn maths – self confidence in this area is a big issue. Communicating a positive expectation to your child (even if you feel maths is not your thing) will influence the effort they put into developing their numeracy skills. This does not require a formal training program for you or your child, it can happen quite incidentally during your normal daily program. Conversations about number and maths concepts happen whilst setting the table, sorting the laundry, at the meal times, in the garden, sorting toys or whilst dressing. Engaging your child in counting and talking about size, order, days of the week, months of the year and time. These will all help your child's mathematical development.

COMMUNICATION

Parent/Teacher/Student conferences are held during the year, but it is usually more beneficial to make appointments with the teacher whenever you have any queries or problems. Similarly, the teacher will ask to see you whenever it is felt necessary. At the official parent/teacher/student conferences, appointments are scheduled for 10 minutes, so please take advantage of our "open-door" policy towards interviews.

PLEASE REMEMBER

Teachers are always happy to discuss your child's progress with you. Make an appointment at any time but resist the temptation to interrupt the teacher while he/she is involved with the grade. The teacher's first responsibility is to the children.

DISCOVERY LEARNING

Children at Harkaway Primary School engage in Discovery Learning (DL) sessions during the week. DL provides different types of opportunities for Juniors, Middles and Seniors to identify everyday concepts that interest them in relation to a selected theme. We help children decide how they might engage with the theme and a range of resources are also made available.

Discovery Learning gives children the opportunity to explore and identify their own interests within the boundaries of the theme. Teachers then work actively with individual children and groups of children to develop their concepts, knowledge, understandings and skills. This means that at the end of a period of study, the children will have engaged in many different experiences and developed a range of concepts.

The aim of Discovery Learning is not to have all the children learn the same thing at the same time. Discovery Learning helps children achieve the Harkaway mission of becoming life-long learners and problem-solvers because they have the opportunity to learn about what interests them.

Children understand learning as a process that is relevant to what they want to know and not just what they think they have to learn for school. DL gives children the opportunity to take responsibility for their learning, work at their own pace and level of understanding, make choices, problem solve, take risks, become confident and develop their skills in organisation, persistence, getting along and resilience.





COMMUNICATION

Currently the school uses two different apps for communication. There is the Xuno app for events permissions & payments, reminders and dates of interest, this is also used for information regarding any impact of fire danger ratings & bushfire updates.

Also used is an app called Class Dojo which is more centred on classroom learning that your child is doing. A valuable tool to use to directly message your child's teacher and visa versa. It is also used for reminders of goings on at the school, eg free dress days etc.

CANTEEN

Lunches can be ordered and paid for (**ONLY on Thursday & Friday**) before school, at the Harkaway General Store (next door to the school). Please be mindful of ordering a healthy lunch for your child and that cans of drinks are not permitted. Lunch orders are delivered to your child's classroom. A current price list is available from the store.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

If you wish to buy new items of the Harkaway school uniform, these can be purchased from the 'Beleza' store in Hallam.

Beleza Hallam

Shop 7, 151 - 159 Princes Hwy, Hallam, VIC 3803

Phone: (03) 9702 3181

<http://www.beleza.com.au/primarypricelist.html>

We have a range of second hand uniforms available for purchase at the school.

Hats, schoolbags and book bags can be purchased at the office.

HARKAWAY HOUSE TEAMS

We have four Houses named after historical homesteads in the area: Chadwick (blue), Melrose (red), Wandeen (yellow) and Wickham (green). The House system forms the basis of united and friendly competition.

CURRENT MOBILE PHONE AND EMAIL ADDRESS

To facilitate contact between school and home, it would be helpful for the school to have your preferred email address and updated / current mobile phone number.

