



PARENT HANDBOOK

Information for parents and students

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WELCOME

PARENTS & GUARDIANS

We welcome you and your children to our school and thank you for considering our school for your family. We hope you find this parent handbook useful as you navigate your way through the starting school process.

At Larnook we consider our students and our community part of our family, providing a sense of belonging and pride that is key to a child's positive academic, social and emotional growth and development.

To help foster and nurture your child's development, we have a highly experienced team of self-motivated, friendly staff who take pride in their student's achievements and strive to provide positive learning experiences for both you and your child. Caring about each and every child within our classroom is something we, as a small school, are able to achieve. Your child will be able to receive one on one attention from staff who go above and beyond to ensure your child achieves their full potential.

Larnook School is a member of the Big Scrub Learning Community (12 small schools), providing students with a vast array of experiences, environments and learning opportunities. Students are able to branch out and further develop their social skills at Big Scrub events such as Environmental days, cultural days and sporting events. The Big Scrub also offers students opportunities to further develop skills and explore talents. The Big Scrub Community is a treasured part of our school and we strive to incorporate our sister schools as often as possible.

We hope while browsing our handbook you feel the sense of family and pride that is the foundation of our school.

What we have to offer you and your family...

- Small class sizes
- Individualised attention
- Beautiful surroundings
- Happy, caring children
- Positive rewards and fair, consistent discipline
- Highly trained, enthusiastic staff
- Teaching programs catering to a range of learning styles
- Strong literacy and numeracy programs
- Focus on environment, health and creativity
- Well developed computer and technology programs
- Emphasis on good manners and respect for people, property and the environment
- Opportunities for children to be exposed to many forms of creative expression





OUR SCHOOL RULES

Our school rules were developed by the students. They incorporate the virtues the students deem to be most important at school. Virtues are a strong part of our school and we encourage the students to beware of their actions and act in a virtuous manner. in and out of school.

Be Safe Be Kind

Be Clean Respect other people

Be Polite Respect living things

Be Honest Respect property

Be Fair Respect the environment

OUR FRIENDLY STAFF

PRINCIPAL:

Mr. Stephen Clough - Dip of Teaching

TEACHING STAFF:

Mrs Deanna Spackman - Bachelor of Education

Mrs Sandi Benson - Bachelor of Education

Ms Maria Moy - Bachelor of Education

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT STAFF:

Mrs Linda Ryan - Administrative Manager (SAM)

Mr Daniel Clifford - General Assistant (GA)

Mrs Sam Brown - Learning Support Officer (LSO)

CLEANING STAFF:

Mr Carl Lovett

FIRST AID OFFICERS:

All Teachers

Services available to our school...

The School has access to the services of a School Counsellor, the District Learning Difficulties Support Team, and educational consultants based at Lismore School Education Area (Lismore SEA).



STARTING SCHOOL

Kindergarten pupils commence school on the second pupil day of Term 1. To avoid new kindergarten pupils becoming overtired in the early weeks of school you may wish for your child to take a rest one day a week during the first five weeks or so, until you feel that your child is able to cope with the new routine of school. So that programs are not disrupted, we suggest that this be taken on Wednesday. This is also a good opportunity for parents to take their child for health screening etc.

Make lunches easy for your child by using re-usable containers with the child's name clearly written on them and please check that your child has eaten his/her lunch and recess. It may take a little while to establish what is a reasonable amount for your child to eat daily at school.

Regularly check your child's bag for school notes as we try to communicate school happenings on a regular basis. Fortnightly newsletters are sent home on alternate Thursdays.

Don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher or Principal if you need help with anything. It is important to have regular communication about your child's progress.

Let us know if there are specific issues concerning your child or family – such as health needs or custody and access issues. For legal purposes-we need such issues in writing.

Children entering school for the first time need to be able to..

- Take themselves to the toilet (having been fully toilet-trained before starting school.)
- Have an understanding of personal hygiene e.g. washing hands properly after using the toilet.
- Dress themselves properly.
- Understand what recess and lunchtime means e.g. children need to be able to choose food for recess and lunch, and not eat everything at once! They also need to know how important eating lunch is. Please ensure you provide ample nutritious food for your child's daily needs.

It is an advantage if your child is able to..

- Tie their shoelaces
- Blow their nose properly
- Hold a pencil correctly
- Write their name
- Take turns and share
- Say their full name and address/phone number



HELP GET READY FOR SCHOOL

- Send them to school each day.
- Ensure that your child gets enough sleep, food and exercise.
- Talk to your child to enrich his/her vocabulary. The task of reading will be a lot easier if the child has a strong literacy background.
- Listen to what your child has to say and be patient with him/her. Without an adequate vocabulary it is extremely difficult for a child to learn to read.
- Read to your child every day.
- Play word games such as "I spy" to increase a child's vocabulary.
- Turn off the TV at dinnertime and eat 'as a family'. This is a great opportunity to talk with your children and discuss family plans and experiences.
- Select your child's games carefully. Many simple inexpensive games are available to develop important reading skills eg. likeness and differences, matching pictures and words.
- Point out common signs in the community – 'stop', 'walk', 'danger'.
- Praise your child regularly, particularly when he/she exhibits any positive attitudes towards reading.
- Have your child read to you or have him/her tell you a story by looking at the pictures in a book.
- Find out about some of the better children's books available and give them to your children as presents.
- Join the local library and have a family outing every week when the whole family borrows books together.
- Start a family reading hour. The whole family can do some reading aloud (except the very young child) and discuss their books.
- Let your children see you reading and getting pleasure from printed material.
- Ask your child's teacher what themes or units of work they are doing and obtain books that are related to the topic.
- Write a story yourself in which your child is the main character. Get them to illustrate it with drawings and magazine pictures.
- Build or buy a bookshelf for your child's bedroom in which he/she can keep his/her books.
- Teach your child rhymes, songs and stories. Small children love to hear familiar stories over and over again.





- Be enthusiastic about your child's development. Praise and recognition by a child's parent is a significant motivator.
- CD's and e-books of children's stories are readily available for listening and enjoyment.
- Involve your young child in household chores. Helping to wash up, hang out the washing or cleaning the car can be advantageous to his/her language development and sense of belonging.
- Select radio and TV programs carefully and allow a time for talk and discussion on the topic heard or viewed afterwards.
- Encourage your child to use his/her hands and develop his/her fine motor skills. Modelling, pasting, drawing, painting and cutting are all activities that prepare a child for formal schooling.
- Encourage your child to play to develop his/her co-ordination skills and exercise his/her larger muscles, climbing, running, sliding etc.
- Go for walks with your child around the neighbourhood and point out places of interest in his/her environment. Show him/her the fire brigade, the shopping centre, the park, the train station.
- Visit places of interest at the weekends so that your child will be able to visualise a particular thing when it comes up in discussion in the classroom.
- Keep a family diary and write down in simple language all the trips, holidays and experiences the child has experienced with you. Encourage him/her to read it back, and refer to it regularly.
- See that your child attends school regularly – unnecessary absences will affect his/her progress at school.
- Accept your child as he/she is, not what you would like him/her to be. He/she is an individual with his/her own particular strengths and weaknesses. Don't compare him/her adversely with his/her sister, playmates or school friends. Never let your child think that in any way he/she is stupid or backward. Help, support and encourage your child and his/her progress will not be impeded by feelings of failure and inferiority.
- Praise loudly, blame quietly.



SCHOOL ROUTINE

- School commences at 9:10am
- Afternoon dismissal time is 3:10pm
- Recess: 11:10am to 11:30am
- Lunch: 1:00pm to 1:45pm
- Family and friends are invited to attend school assemblies which are usually held at least once a term. This is a wonderful opportunity to see the children display their talents, and to help celebrate achievement.
- The Library has a Teacher/Librarian. Borrowing of books is on Mondays and Tuesdays. Waterproof Library Bags are ESSENTIAL for the protection of the books borrowed by the children.
- The playground is unsupervised before 8:30am and after 3:50pm. Children for their own safety, should not be in the school grounds whilst unsupervised.
- Chocolate, strawberry milk are on sale everyday - \$1.50

BUS TIMETABLE

Most pupils travel to and from school by Bus. A conveyance form is to be filled in at the time of enrolment for travel from home to bus pick-up. On the front of this form there is a "Code of Conduct" which should be read by all parents/guardians prior to signing the form. Also ensure your children are aware of the "Code of Conduct".

Bruce's Bus Service is our bus provider, phone 6621 6559. Written advice needs to be provided to the bus driver and the school if there is any variation to normal routine.

Morning service

Leave depot Snow Street Lismore 7.55am
Tuncester Turnoff 8.09am
Moras Road 8.13am
Rock Valley Post Office 8.16am
Quilty Road (top end) 8.21am
Chelmsford Road 8.23am
Olley Road 8.28am
Mulvena Road 8.30am
Larnook School 8.35am
Cawongla 8.40am
Billen Cliffs turnoff (Martin's Road) 8.50am
Turn around point 9.00am
Larnook School 9.10am
Return to Depot 9.50am

Afternoon Service

Leave Lismore Depot 2.30pm
Spinks Park Bus Bay 2.35pm
Depart Larnook School 3.15pm
Cawongla 3.30pm
Billen turn around point 3.40pm
Larnook School 3.50pm
Mulvena Road 3.55pm
Olley Road 3.58pm
Chelmsford Road 4.00pm
Quilty Road (top end) 4.02pm
Rock Valley Post Office 4.07pm
Moras Road 4.10pm
Tuncester Turnoff 4.15pm
Return Depot Snow Street Lismore 4.30pm

KEY LEARNING AREAS

We present educational programs covering the 6 mandatory Key Learning Areas, incorporating perspectives of Aboriginality, Gender Equity, Multiculturalism and Environment, in accordance with NSW syllabus requirements.

The areas of learning for students in Kindergarten to Year 6 are:

English - students learn about, and learn to use written language.

Mathematics - students develop the ability to investigate and solve non-routine problems.

Science and Technology - students learn about natural and man-made environments.

Human Society and its Environment (HSIE) - this area deals with peoples' interactions with one another and with their social, cultural and physical environments.

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) - aims to develop knowledge and understanding, skills, values and attitudes that will help students to adopt active, healthy and fulfilling lifestyles.

Creative Arts - students explore and experience different art forms including Dance, Drama, Music and Visual Arts.

Information Technology - Developing knowledge and understanding of the use of the internet, computers and their programs.

The Board of Studies develops a syllabus for each of the learning areas. Along with a defined aim, each syllabus has a set of objectives and outcomes, expressed in terms of knowledge and understandings, skills, values and attitudes.

Student Welfare is of the highest priority, being basic to the success of all educational programs. Students are encouraged and helped to take responsibility for their own learning and well-being, and for the well-being of the groups of which they are members.

Students at Larnook School also experience a variety of special programs such as Dance Festival and Performing Arts Festival, Inter-school activities (Sporting events, Spelling Bee, Public speaking, Cultural Days), Live Life Well program, Student Council, School Sports program, Music programs, Fundraising and Community events.

In addition to, and in support of, this crowded agenda, our school focuses on several developmental issues each year, in a process of continuous school improvement. These issues form the basis of our School Management Plan.



SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Please ensure that your child/children wear correct school uniform at all times. All clothing worn by your child/children must be clearly labelled with their name.

Royal blue shorts \$15 with light blue polo shirt \$17.00 each or royal blue skirt \$ 22.00 each.

Sports shirt - Larnook Maroon and light blue Ezydry shirts are now available for children to wear. \$25.00 each.

During the colder months the children wear maroon tracksuits. These are available from most clothing stores.

Shoes can either be sandals (closed in), school shoes or joggers.

Hats are essential at Larnook and children will be provided a hat from the school. If the hat is lost parents will need to reimburse the school for its replacement. If a student loses their hat then they will miss out on play as we are a "No hat, No play" school. We care for your child's sun safety.

Unless otherwise notified, school uniforms should be worn on all excursions if your child does not own a sports shirt the school will provide one for the event. Please bring this back to school washed ready for our next excursion.

School shirts are all available for order through the school.



REWARDS AND DISCIPLINE

Thumbs Up Sticker Program

Each year the children undertake a sticker rewards program. They receive stickers, certificates and prizes as the year progresses.

Yellow (Academic) Stickers – for class work, homework, reading, academic improvements, outstanding effort etc.

Red/Orange (Social) Stickers – for helping others, eye contact, using manners, listening, cleaning up.

Green Stickers (Homework) – children receive a green sticker for bringing in homework.

The children must receive 5 yellow, 5 orange, 7 green stickers before they achieve the LEVELS of BRONZE, SILVER and GOLD. Students receive rewards with each level including ice blocks, dip box and a hot lunch.



Black book - Negative discipline

Negative Behaviour is recorded in a BLACK BOOK, monitored closely by the staff. For behaviours involving – physical violence, verbal abuse or inappropriate behaviour towards students, staff or volunteers; the incidences are recorded, dated and consequences in the form of 'Community Service', set out. The children are also at risk of losing "Thumbs Up Stickers" as a result of negative behaviour. Parents are notified of the offence via a Black Book Notification Slip which must be returned to school signed and dated by the parent. Three black book offences in one semester will result in a compulsory parent interview and more severe consequences for the child will be discussed.

RUNNING OF OUR SCHOOL

Management plan

The school has prepared an Annual Report, Management Plan, policy statements and curricula statements. These documents are available to parents at any time. We welcome parents' input in the development, implementation and evaluation of policies and curricula.

Pupil progress

Parents are invited to school for a three-way interview and to peruse their child's Portfolio and progress report twice a year at the end of Terms 2 & 4. The portfolios are collections of students work samples over a six month period. Assessment of student progress involves a methodical collection of work samples, anecdotal records, teacher made tests and standardised tests, relevant to the individual child's development and progress.

Newsletters

A school newsletter is sent home fortnightly, usually every 2nd Thursday, advising parents of coming events and school happenings. Community news such as Bush dances, Fetes etc. are also included when applicable. Any colour paper attachments are to be returned to the school. Electronic newsletters are available on our web site.

Excursions

Parents will be advised of all excursions and you will be asked to return a consent form before your child will be allowed to attend. If payment is involved this should be forwarded with the consent note. Special funds are available to assist with the cost of excursions if a family cannot afford to pay. No child should miss out on an excursion because of financial problems. Excursions are part of the educational process at our school, and every child deserves to take part.

When excursions/performances are organised, every item has a cost – transport, venue, etc. This total cost is then divided by the number of children attending this excursion/performance. On occasions there are unforeseen circumstances that may prevent your child from attending this event. If for any reason it is through a school error that you child cannot attend, your money will be refunded. If the fault does not lie with the school, it cannot be responsible for covering the loss of funds if your child does not attend, therefore there will be no refunds. All excursion money and notes need to be in two days before the excursion date.

Book club

The school distributes Book Club information approximately once a month. Money and order forms should be returned to Mrs Ryan by the due date. This is a great way to encourage your children to enjoy reading!

School counsellor

The School Counsellor is a person with teaching experience and additional qualifications in psychology and counselling. A Counsellor is on call to provide assistance, in conjunction with staff and parents, in matters of educational and psychological assessment and the social and emotional development of pupils. The Counsellor will also aid, where required, in referrals to other community based agencies. These services are available free to all children attending the school and to parents upon request.



Pupil absences

Parents/Carers or Guardians have a legal responsibility to ensure that any child over six years of age attend school every day that the school is open. The child also benefits from an unbroken continuity of lessons and learning experiences. If your child is absent from school you need to send a note to their teacher or speak to their teacher to explain the absence. If your child is likely to be absent for an extended period (holidays, sickness, visiting a separated parents etc) it would be appreciated if you could contact the teacher concerned.

Parent interviews

The staff welcomes and encourages interested parents/carers to come and discuss the progress of their child/children at any time. It is easier for the teacher if it is done during a break or arranged by appointment so that planned lessons aren't disrupted.

Parent assistance

The staff occasionally appeal to the parents at large for help with some aspect of school life. This may involve:

- Assistance with Creative and Practical Arts.
- Transporting children (a current driver's licence and comprehensive insurance policy will need to be sighted by the Principal).
- Participating in a teacher/parent interview.
- Participating in special activity days like Environment Day, NAIDOC (National Aboriginal Indigenous Peoples' Day of Conciliation) week, Children's Book Week.
- The School Music Program, Dance Performances.
- Joining our P&C.
- Volunteers need to sign a "Prohibited Employment Declaration" form, which declares that the signatory has no record of child-related offences.

School repetition policy

All children are different, therefore academic and social development will be at an individual rate of progress. In the event of concern over the progression of a child to the next grade the parents/carers will be informed. As soon as it is evident that repetition may be necessary parents/carers will be involved in the process. The final decision on repetition remains that of the parents/carers.

Physical education

- The children have a sports afternoon each week and Physical Education activities, emphasising gross motor skills, dance and fitness each morning.
- The school participates in the Terania District Small School Carnivals annually, Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country.
- The children are encouraged to play actively during their lesson breaks.
- The School Sports program is run over seven weeks each term. The children complete individual and small group activities supervised by trained teachers and parents. The sessions are usually conducted after school on a Tuesday and during the school day on Friday afternoon. Those children heading home on a Tuesday afternoon catch the high school bus. Sports undertaken include tennis, basketball, cricket, softball and golf.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Our school has a tradition of co-operative efforts between parents/ carers and staff working together to provide the best, most pleasurable and interesting ways in which the children can learn. If you are interested this can be done in many ways. We do understand that busy lives and commitments prevent direct involvement for some people. Support can be as simple as supervising homework and encouraging positive attitudes to school and learning.

In the classroom

The teaching staff welcomes and encourages parents who wish to be involved on a regular basis within classrooms or the library. Just contact the principal or the teacher involved.

In our sport

- Specialist training of athletics for Carnival representation.
- Transportation to sporting activities.
- Intensive Swimming School.
- Sport coaching.
- School Sports Program

Around the school

- School Development Days. Come and observe or take part in the planning of curriculum or teaching programs.
- Class meetings to organize an excursion or special event.
- Special Events
- Fun Days
- Education Week – Open Days
- Concerts
- Book Week

Parents and Citizens Association

Meetings are held at school, times will be set early in the year to suit as many families as possible. Dates and times will be notified in the school newsletters. We urge ALL parents to take an active part in the Association as it benefits YOUR child. Monies raised by the P & C Association go towards benefiting our school.

Membership of Larnook P & C Association is \$2.00. This fee enables you to vote on motions put forward at the monthly meetings. An Annual General Meeting is held in term 1, usually a couple of weeks after the first general meeting where elections are held for the positions of President, Secretary and Treasurer.

