

Dear Parents,

Welcome to The Patch Primary School. We are looking forward to our partnership with you as your child begins their first school experience. Our team of dedicated teachers, support staff and students will all endeavour to make your child feel welcome and eager to continue their growth as learners.

We encourage you to take as many opportunities as you are able, to involve yourself in our school community and your child's school experiences. We recognise that building a relationship of trust and confidence with your family will benefit your child's feeling of connection to our school and allow them to feel confident and happy.

Our aim is to ensure your child's transition to our school is a very smooth one. This booklet is just one part of this process. We believe that it will provide answers to many questions you may have. At the same time however please feel free to contact the school if you have other questions, or concerns, in regard to any aspects of your child's schooling. Right from the start open and positive communication plays an important role in ensuring your child's success at school.

To be effective, and constantly improving, schools require the participation of parents. At The Patch Primary School we pride ourselves on the extent of community involvement in the school. Numerous opportunities are provided for parents to assist in their own way through all areas of the curriculum as well as participating in such areas as the school fair, working bees or School Council. Opportunities to be involved in these and other ways will be presented throughout your child's time at our school.

Whether this year's prep child is your first, second or third child at The Patch, we know that you are as excited as we are at this important step into school life. Please see your class teacher, Assistant Principal Lynne Pearce, or myself about any concerns that may affect your child or your family. We are always keen to deal with small problems before they develop into issues.

A pre-requisite to a smooth start to school is positive cooperation between the home and the school. We look forward to working with you and all members of our school community to ensure that we provide your child with the best possible education.

Welcome once again to The Patch Primary School.

Regards,

Debra Herrmann

Principal

School Purpose

To work with our community to provide innovative learning that encourages excellence, strengthens self-belief, supports deep creative thinking, recognises diversity, develops compassion, respects the environment and gives all students the choices to fully participate in a sustainable global future.

School Values

The values which sustain our school community and provide us with an ideal for our interactions with each other are:-

- a sense of identity based on understanding ourselves, our community, our own past and the story of our unique land and its people.
- a sense of integrity based on an ethical system that includes consistently treating others in a truthful, compassionate and cooperative way;
- a sense of community based on connecting with others, understanding diversity, respecting the rights and views of others and living sustainably in an interconnected world;
- a sense of determination based on being challenged, thinking creatively and critically, believing in our ability to achieve our best and being resilient and persistent enough to take risks and learn from both mistakes and successes;
- a sense of humour.

Underlying The Patch Primary School Codes of Practice is the belief that as a community we are united by our common desire to provide a learning environment that meets the needs of all students. In recognizing this all members of our school will respect the rights and views of others.

Codes of Practice

Principal

The role of the principal at The Patch Primary school is complex, challenging and central to the achievement of our school's mission. The position requires an innovative leader who has vision, imagination, determination, dedication, management skills and the ability to interact effectively and sensitively with all members of the school community. The Principal's responsibilities to the school include:

School Community

- Foster unity of purpose in the school by highlighting partnerships and the shared achievements of the students, parents, staff and the local community.
- Provide enthusiastic leadership by articulating and developing the educational vision for the school and involving the school community in achieving that vision.
- Provide organisational leadership that works through change processes, builds teams, empowers the community and boosts morale.

Students

- Be accessible to students and build a personal, empathetic relationship with them through regular contact in the classroom and playground.
- Treat all students fairly and without prejudice regardless of their abilities, disabilities, culture, gender or social background and implement policies to support this throughout the school community.
- Ensure that students have access to comprehensive, purposeful and structured teaching and learning strategies which encourage risk taking and problem solving, recognise and reward achievement and develop each student's potential and confidence.

Parents

- Welcome parents to the school, seek their views on the school and its educational policies, build effective lines of communication, and acknowledge their contribution to the classroom and school activities.
- Encourage the relationship between home and school recognising that this relationship is critical for students to achieve to the best of their ability. This involves encouraging parents to participate in their child's education and ensuring that the school keeps parents informed of their child's needs and successes.

Staff

- Promote staff welfare by building a cooperative team in a friendly, successful work environment and where effective lines of communication are established between all members of staff and the administration.
- Lead staff in the development of a sound knowledge of contemporary teaching and learning practices and provide regular feedback on performance and achievement.
- Provide clear and equitable job descriptions; ensure that the principles of merit, equity and an appreciation of diversity are applied and that workloads are allocated fairly.
- Consult with staff to implement a professional development plan that meets the needs of both staff members and the school.

School Council

- Provide vision, enthusiastic leadership and accurate advice to the School Council so that appropriate policies and programs are developed.
- Ensure that the decisions of School Council are implemented in an appropriate, efficient and timely manner.
- Lead and manage the implementation of the school charter and the evaluation of school performance.

Community

- Actively promote the school and its vision in the community and encourage and facilitate community involvement in all aspects of the school.
- Build and maintain networks of support between local schools, principals, communities, support services and agencies.
- Act in accordance with the relevant sections of the Education Act, DE&ECD policies and contractual agreements.

Staff

The vision we have for our students relies on the professionalism and dedication of staff at our school. All members of staff should strive to: -

- treat all students fairly and without prejudice regardless of their abilities, disabilities, culture, gender or social background and not tolerate bullying or discrimination in the school
- ♦ work collaboratively with other staff including dealing with educational specialists, sharing resources and ideas, and supporting each other as part of our learning community
- ♦ take an active role in the life of the school community and local community.

Teachers

Teachers are in a unique position to assist parents in developing children's ability to reason, analyse, create, experience and understand their world. It is a challenging and rewarding task that involves a passion for knowledge, a commitment to children and a desire to join with them in a community of learning. While recognising that teaching is a complex task and that teachers are responsible for a group of students who each have their own talents and needs. As well as following the above practices that apply to all staff teachers should also strive to:-

- ensure that all students are made aware of their potential to learn, that their teaching makes learning accessible to each child, and that students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning
- have a sound and up to date knowledge of how children learn and develop, and a commitment to professional development to improve their practice
- recognise that children have different learning styles and plan activities and assessment that reflect these. As well they should recognise in assessment that students do not always learn the same things, and do not always learn at the same pace
- build good relationships with parents based on a mutual desire for students to achieve to the best of their ability. This involves reporting to parents in a clear, meaningful and accurate manner, respecting parent's views, encouraging their participation in their child's education and ensuring that they are informed of their child's needs and successes.
- ♦ provide a friendly, secure, structured and purposeful environment encouraging respect for other members of the school community and good learning habits
- ♦ recognise that students' motivation, identity, integrity and a sense of community are essential to intellectual growth and the development of responsible, determined and ethical people

This code also acknowledges the *Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001* which supports racial and religious tolerance and prohibits vilification on the ground of race or religion.

School Council

School Council acknowledges that it operates within the Education Act, DE&ECD regulations and government directives. School Council should endeavour to:

- Show commitment and loyalty to the students, staff, administration and the School Charter
- Promote a positive image of the school.
- Learning needs, personal safety and educational outcomes will be the primary consideration in decision-making.
- Establish policy which is consistent with Charter goals and priorities.
- Ensure regular evaluation of school policies.
- Support the Principal in the implementation of school policy and the charter.
- Monitor the achievement of Charter goals and priorities.
- Seek, canvas and consider school community views.
- Support School Council decisions.
- Monitor the budget and financial plan.
- Promote community involvement in the school through regular reporting and dissemination of information.
- Sub-committees will be formed on an annual basis to reflect the responsibilities of School Council.
- School Council will display loyalty to the school, its Charter, the administration and staff.
- Develop and approve policy directions, and recognise the Principal's right to implement policy in the most appropriate way.
- Public comment on School Council matters will be the responsibility of the School Council President and the Principal.
- Enable broader community input into School Council decision-making through the membership of sub-committees.
- Commit to the principles of merit and equity.
- Maintain confidentiality on issues affecting the school and members of its community.
- Adhere to the Privacy Law.
- Declare conflict of interest where necessary
- Build an educational culture that recognises the achievements and contributions of school community members.
- Articulate a vision for our school that is both shared and translated into action.

School Community

With Our Families

Parents and families are the major influence on how academically and socially successful students are.

Our vision of students who are developing into reflective, self-directed, ethical and responsible people will only be achieved when parents are also committed to these values.

While recognizing and celebrating the diversity of our school community, underlying the relationship between home and school there must be trust, honesty, respect and the understanding that we are all determined to achieve the best outcome for our children.

In dealing with our school, parents can expect that: -

- you will be welcome at school and your contribution to classroom and school activities will be acknowledged and appreciated
- you will be listened to with courtesy and an open mind
- your unique knowledge of your child will be valued
- your privacy will be respected
- you will be informed of your child's progress and the school's activities and achievements
- your views on the running of the school and its educational policies will be sought and there will be opportunities to become part of the School Council and its committees.

In dealing with parents, the school can expect that: -

- staff will be treated with courtesy and an open mind
- our knowledge of your child at school will be valued
- you will reinforce the values of the school and support class and school activities
- you will encourage children's school education by recognizing achievements, building on successes, sharing their learning and by ensuring that they are at school prepared and on time.

With Our Community

Our relationship with the local community is based on both the assistance that we receive for our programs and activities, and the responsibility we have to encourage students towards active and responsible citizenship. In our dealings with local residents, businesses, community groups and other schools we will:

- acknowledge their support and encourage our school community to support their work
- foster good relationships through formal and informal networks
- keep them informed of our school and its achievements
- encourage community participation by our students.

Students

At The Patch Primary School we think that our school should be a safe and joyful place where thinking, learning and creating is valued. This can only happen when everyone at school

- Takes responsibility for their own learning and what they say and do
- Treats students, teachers and others with respect, care and understanding
- Looks after their own and other peoples belongings, our school and our environment.

Most people at our school already know how to treat other people well. They get to school on time, work hard in class, and enjoy their friends. A few people need to learn how to do these:

1. Treat others well.

Everyone at school is an individual with their own ideas, plans, history and strengths. We have a right to be ourselves without others putting us down.

- *Bullying, hitting or using mean language does not solve problems with other students and this behaviour will not be tolerated at our school. Think about the consequences of what you do and say.*
- *Dealing well with others means treating them with respect, care and understanding. It means recognizing that others have feelings and rights, just as you do. Where problems cannot be sorted out by talking, discuss them with a teacher.*
- *Be positive about our school and the people who are here.*

2. Be responsible for your learning

Everyone is at school to learn. You learn about the world, about yourself, about others and the skills and knowledge you will need to live well. Teachers can make your schoolwork interesting and at your level. How much you learn is up to you.

- *You should do the work that is expected of you as well as you can.*
- *You should do your work without bothering others and use your time well.*
- *You should come to school on time and with homework completed.*
- *You should let the teacher know when work is too difficult or too easy.*
- *Be the best you can be.*

3. Be safe

Everyone at school has a right to feel safe both in the classroom and in the playground. The school makes sure that our classrooms, equipment and grounds are in good condition so you will not be hurt. We have rules about where you can play so you can be properly supervised. Your responsibility is to follow these rules, to use equipment properly and to act in a way that keeps everyone safe.

- *Do not go out of bounds. Areas are out of bounds because they are unsafe, or are not able to be supervised by teachers. Being safe means playing in the right parts of the school.*
- *Look after the school and its equipment. In this way our playgrounds, buildings and equipment will be safe for everyone to use.*
- *Play games that are safe for the people playing and others on the playground.*

4. Be responsible for your actions

Most people behave well because they feel good about doing the right thing, enjoy treating their friends well and are happy doing their best at school. Some people need to be reminded to behave well. You will have the chance to explain what happened. If your behaviour was inappropriate then, depending on what you did, how often you did it and why, you will need to face the consequences of your actions.

- *You may be asked to do playground duty.*
- *You may be asked to sit out of the playground.*
- *You may be asked to write a letter of apology.*
- *Your parents may be contacted and an appointment made to discuss the problems with them.*
- *You may be suspended from school.*

The aim of these consequences is to encourage you to change your behaviour so that our school is a safe and happy place.

2012 Term Dates

- Term 1: Wednesday, 1st February (Children commence on Monday 6th of Feb), to Friday 30th March
- Term 2: Monday, 16th April to Friday, 29th June
- Term 3: Monday, 16th July to Friday, 21st September
- Term 4: Monday, 8th October to Friday, 21st December

School Hours

8:50 am	-start
11.00am 11.30am	-recess
1.45pm 2.25pm	-lunch break (includes eating lunch between 1.30pm & 1.45pm)
3.30pm	-dismissal

All Prep students are dismissed at 3.20pm. This will assist in easing traffic congestion at the end of the school day. A notice will be sent home early in the year, and a short information session will be held, to explain normal pick up procedures from our "drop off/pick up" zones, we will inform you of these dates when you come for interview.

2012 PREP ARRANGEMENTS

In 2012 we are continuing with our Step into Prep transition program. Children will be asked to come to school on Monday February 6th, Tuesday February 7th or Wednesday February 8th to attend an interview with you, to establish an entry level in Literacy and Numeracy. On Thursday February 9th and Friday February 10th all Prep children will attend a morning session finishing at 1.30pm. We will ask you to come and join us for lunch and a chat. This will enable us to get to know you and your child more fully and ensure the smoothest possible start to the beginning to their Prep year. You will receive your interview/session time via letter by the end of 2011.

From Monday 13th February onwards children will attend school from 9.00 am – 3.30pm. Children will have each Wednesday off during the first 5 weeks of Term One, resuming 'full time' school as of Monday 12th of March 2012.

Please farewell your child at the door of the room and leave when the teacher takes your child into the room. Please attach your child's name tag that you are given to his/her shirt or dress for the first two weeks.

All children must be collected by an adult each day. Children need to know who this will be.

For the first two days please collect your child from the deck, outside the Prep classrooms.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students

Our school values our Indigenous heritage, therefore in addition to all services offered to all students, we have a liaison officer, Debra Herrmann, to ensure our Indigenous students and their families are aware of and offered any additional services and assistance available.

Computers

At The Patch Primary School we make extensive use of current computer technology. All pupils have regular access to the latest in multi-media computers and software as well as the Internet. Computer literacy is seen as an important part of our curriculum.

Early Years Literacy Program

During 2012 the school will continue with the Early Years Literacy Program and CAFÉ menu structure. This structure has been designed as a resource for schools to plan for and implement a strategic and comprehensive approach to successful early literacy achievement. It is based on the recognition that all children should succeed in literacy by the end of their third year of schooling.

The strengths of the Early Literacy Program lie in its essential features:

- strategically planned home-school liaison
- the management of the program by the Literacy Coordinator
- whole school commitment

Early Year Mathematics Program

Our study of number is related to understanding basic number concepts and developing the appropriate mathematical language from a wide range of experiences.

During this year your child will be presented with the opportunity to:

- Learn to count in sequence and develop an understanding of pattern and order in number (emphasis will be on the numbers 1 - 20).
- Gain an understanding of the concept of grouping.
- Gain an understanding of equality, addition and "take away".
- Understand the meanings of such terms as between, before, after, under, over, first, last.
- Recognise what is consistent or inconsistent and correct any inconsistencies (eg in a pattern).
- Choose an appropriate way to respond to a mathematical situation (eg. use materials to solve a problem).
- Make and draw reasonable representations of simple shapes and patterns.
-

Early Years - Reading and Writing

Teaching our children to read and write is a responsibility shared by teachers, parents and the community.

Parents have an important role to play.

- Reading together with young children actually helps them learn to read and write.
- Reading together requires no special training or skills - it always works.
- It isn't only for parents - everyone can join in and help.

- It is important for children to learn the basic reading and writing skills before they finish year three at school.
- Reading time should be happy - not a chore. Reading stories at bedtime is a good way to end a day.
- Give books for presents, join the library, and encourage borrowing from the School Library. Children take great pride in reading their own published books and those of other children.
- The world is full of words. Read street signs, food packets, advertising notices, etc.

Take Home Books

In the first term your child will bring home a book in a cover. Please take the time to share this book with the child each night or morning and return promptly the next day.

A sheet is included for your comments on your child/children's enjoyment.

Do not expect the child to know words and sentences yet. They are "reading" for enjoyment and familiarisation with print and language.

Reading at School

At school we try to develop an interest in print and books by:

- (i) The child recognising his own name in print.
- (ii) Recognising print in familiar situations.
- (iii) Teaching the handling of books in the library corner.
- (iv) Encouraging the regular reading of experience and picture books.
- (v) Stimulating his enjoyment when the teacher reads stories.
- (vi) As well as developing an interest in print and a desire to read, a major proportion of the Prep reading program (especially first term) is aimed at developing the necessary physical skills, for example, for left-right eye movement.

Stimulating the Desire to Read

Researchers have found that children who read early come from families where:

- The parents and children have high regard for reading.
- The children have been read to regularly at home from an early age.
- Someone in the family took the time not only to read, but to talk to the child, to answer questions about words and about reading.
- The children composed their own stories, stimulated by pictures in books.

Handwriting

Children in Prep will be taught the writing style called "the Victorian Modern Infant Cursive".

A sample of this script is available as a separate hand-out to familiarise your child and yourself with this style and the correct formation and starting points.

Education Maintenance Allowance

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) provides assistance to some families receiving a Centrelink benefit to help with the costs associated with sending their children to school.

If your child is under 16 years of age and you hold a Health Care Card, Veteran Affairs Gold Card or pension card valid on 27th January 2012 or are a foster parent, you may be entitled to an Education Maintenance Allowance from the Victorian Government.

The allowance is split evenly between you and your child's school. In 2012 the total allowance for a primary school student is \$245 and \$470 for a secondary school student.

The school's portion of the allowance is usually spent on stationery and text books for your child. The parent portion can be used to help with meeting other costs such as school charges and contributions and excursions. You can get an application form and details about deadlines from the office.

You have the option to receive your EMA payments directly into your bank account or by cheque collected from the school office.

Emergency Management

The school hall has been purpose built as a safer place and will be used by the school and kindergarten in the case of an emergency. School staff will supervise children in this building. If the emergency extends beyond school hours students will not be allowed to leave without being collected by a parent or guardian.

Relocation drills are practiced on a regular basis and children are informed that the hall is a safer refuge containing water for drinking and cooling as well as a limited food supply. Through the school newsletter the community will be informed of our emergency arrangements during the fire season.

Environmental Education

Environmental Education is given a strong focus at The Patch School. The school has two large "outdoor classrooms" (our beautiful wetlands and our sustainable living gardens) and an Eco-Centre where formal and informal experiential learning takes place.

The environmental program aims to provide students with an understanding of issues including environmental education, ecological education and education for sustainable development.

All areas integrate concepts and principles of the sciences (biological, physical, chemical and social) within an interdisciplinary framework. Activities such as preparing and planting a food garden, collecting seed from indigenous plants, building a worm farm or compost bin, constructing a trellis for climbing plants, revegetating the natural bush corridor, incubating eggs and raising chickens, identifying and harvesting bush foods from the Koori garden and creating an interpretive tree trail around the school provide processes and skills that involve observation, communication, classification, interpretation, questioning, measuring, reporting, predicting, designing, experimenting, testing, problem solving and hypothesizing.

Throughout the program it is hoped that the students acquire a knowledge and understanding of the living world and their place in it that enables them to live sustainably and responsibly. Environmental classes are taken every week for one to one and a half hours.

Excursions

Excursions form an integral part of the learning experience of pupils at The Patch Primary School. It is expected that all children will attend excursions. Costs are kept to a minimum both in regard to each individual excursion and the number of excursions held each year.

Information will be provided for all excursions. Please ensure that all details are completed before returning to the school with payment by the due date.

Extension Activities

As well as providing an open-ended approach in many classroom activities, students have access to a wide range of extension activities over their years of primary schooling, including those offered by the Art, Music and Environmental areas.

Guest Speaker Program

Students in senior classes are involved in our Guest Speaker Program. Each student has to personally arrange for a guest speaker to visit the classroom and talk to the children. Whilst the program provides an outstanding opportunity for the students to meet people from all walks of life, it is equally as valuable for the development of each student's communication skills as they organise their own speaker.

Health and Attendance

Medical Services

The School nurse visits the school and examines all children in Preps, together with any referrals from other grades.

Absences/Illnesses

It is unfair to your child, other children and teachers, to send to school a child who is obviously not well or not fully recovered from illness. Such children are not receptive to learning or school routine, and our facilities for caring for them are limited.

The best place for a sick child is home, under full time care.

If your child is unable to attend school for a day or two, e.g. due to illness, it is preferable to notify the teacher in writing or by email on the day or when he/she returns. Alternatively, you may wish to speak to their teacher personally, but we ask you to please refrain from telephoning the school office with this information. For longer absences please notify the teacher as soon as possible via a note from a sibling or you may phone the school in this instance.

There are occasions when parents need teachers to give prescribed medicine to their children. The appropriate quote from the School Information Manual is:

"To assist teachers, parents should supply such tablets in a container which gives the name of the child, the dose, and the time the tablet is to be given. The name of the tablets should be clearly marked on the container, particularly when the tablets are kept at school."

Please hand all such medication to the office and fill out the medication book.

School exclusion table

Schedule 6: Minimum period of exclusion from schools and children's services centres for infectious diseases cases and contacts.

The following table lists all the excludable conditions for cases and contacts, from schools and children's services centres, under Regulation 13 and 14 of the *Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 2001*.

Disease or Condition	Exclusion of Cases	Exclusion of Contacts
Amoebiasis (<i>Entamoeba histolytica</i>)	Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased.	Not excluded.
Campylobacter	Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased.	Not excluded.
Chickenpox	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least 5 days after the eruption first appears. Note that some remaining scabs are not a reason for continued exclusion.	Any child with an immune deficiency (for example, leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy should be excluded for their own protection. Otherwise not excluded.
Conjunctivitis (<i>Acute infectious</i>)	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased.	Not excluded.
Diarrhoea	Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased or until medical certificate of recovery is produced.	Not excluded.
Diphtheria	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received following at least two negative throat swabs, the first not less than 24 hours after finishing a course of antibiotics and the other 48 hours later.	Exclude family/household contacts until cleared to return by the Secretary.
Haemophilus type b (Hib)	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received.	Not excluded.
Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Until all blisters have dried	Not excluded.
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness.	Not excluded.
Herpes ("cold sores")	Young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices should be excluded while the lesion is weeping. Lesions to be covered by dressing, where possible.	Not excluded.
Human immuno-deficiency virus infection (HIV/AIDS)	Exclusion is not necessary unless the child has a secondary infection	Not excluded.
Impetigo	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing.	Not excluded.
Influenza and influenza like illnesses	Exclude until well.	Not excluded.
Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary	Not excluded.
Measles	Exclude until at least 4 days after the onset of rash.	Immunised contacts not excluded. Unimmunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after the first day of appearance of rash in the last case. If unimmunised contacts are vaccinated within 72 hours of their first contact with the first case they may return to school.

Meningitis (bacteria)	Exclude until well.	Not excluded.
Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has been completed.	Not excluded if receiving carrier eradication therapy.
Mumps	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).	Not excluded.
Poliomyelitis	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re-admit after receiving medical certificate of recovery.	Not excluded.
Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (head lice)	Re-admit the day after appropriate treatment has commenced.	Not excluded.
Rubella (german measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash.	Not excluded.
Salmonella, Shigella	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded.
Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is produced.	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary.
Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well.	Not excluded.
Trachoma	Re-admit the day after appropriate treatment has commenced.	Not excluded.
Tuberculosis	Exclude until receipt of a medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious.	Not excluded.
Typhoid (including paratyphoid fever)	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Secretary.	Not excluded unless considered necessary by the Secretary.
Verotoxin producing <i>Escherichia coli</i> (VTEC)	Exclude if required by the Secretary and only for the period specified by the Secretary.	Not excluded.
Whooping cough	Exclude the child for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment.	Exclude unimmunised household contacts aged less than 7 years and close child care contacts for 14 days after the last exposure to infection or until they have taken 5 days of a 10 day course of antibiotics.
Worms (Intestinal)	Exclude if diarrhoea present.	Not excluded.

Exclusion of cases and contacts is **not** required for Cytomegalovirus Infection, Glandular fever (mononucleosis), Hepatitis B or C, Hookworm, Cytomegalovirus Infection, Molluscum contagiosum, or, Parvovirus (erythema infectiosum fifth disease).

The Patch Early Learning Centre Program

The school works very closely with The Patch Early Learning Centre to ensure that we are able to provide the best possible pre-school and school experience, promote and celebrate our successes and ensure a smooth introduction to school.

Library Program

The Library program provides instruction for students on how to use a library effectively, how to access resources and how to borrow selectively and responsibly. It also offers opportunities to promote literature through book discussions, reviews, clubs, open times and shared reading.

Lost Property

Unfortunately children tend to misplace windcheaters, jumpers, coats and even socks. With the school uniform being compulsory at The Patch Primary School it is a difficult task to find owners for these items unless they are **clearly** named.

Names on the inside of shoes help greatly.

Any lost property that is collected can be found in the corridor near the children's toilets and sick bay shower area.

Personal Possessions

Please discourage your child from bringing valuable toys, games and other such personal possessions to school as there is always the possibility of accidental damage or loss.

LOTE Japanese

Our 'Language Other Than English' Japanese program operates with a qualified teacher of Japanese who provides classroom lessons where students learn about Japanese culture and language.

We work closely with a number of other local schools who also run Japanese LOTE.

Music

Students at The Patch Primary School participate in a very extensive music program. The school is fortunate to have a large well equipped music room. All classes have music lessons based on the Orff approach. This integrates singing, movement/dance, speech and playing a variety of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Extension activities including choirs, percussion ensembles, recorder club and rock band are offered throughout the year.

Children have the opportunity to perform at our end of term concerts, at school assemblies and at many community events during the year. Tuition is provided on an elective fee for service basis for violin, voice, guitar, piano, keyboard, brass and woodwind instruments. Information on these is available from the school.

Outside School Hours Care Program

The school operates an Outside School Hours Care Program providing Before and After School Care. The program is designed to meet the needs of working parents as well as providing for emergencies. The program can be used on a permanent or casual basis. As this is a very popular program bookings are essential and may not always be available. The program runs between 7.30am and 8.45am in the morning and 3.30pm and 6.00pm every school day. On Curriculum Days the program operates between 7.30am and 6.00pm. We also run a Holiday Program for care of children during the school holidays. All details on the programs can be obtained from the school. During the program operating times, OSHC can be contacted on 9752 0164 or 0419 515 494.

Parent Assistance

Parents are encouraged to assist the school in many ways. The following are just some of the ways you may assist your child and their school:

Classroom assistance	Excursion assistance
Assisting with Swimming	Involvement in Wetlands Activities
School Fete assistance	Assisting on school camps
School Council Membership	Working Bee Involvement

Parent/Teacher Information

The Patch Primary School uses the Victorian schools reporting program. Parent/Teacher Interviews and information evenings will be held during the year where teachers and parents will have the opportunity to exchange and share information regarding your child's progress.

Play Lunch/ Lunch Order Arrangements

The daily procedure is for all children to eat their lunches under teacher supervision.

You will need to ensure that your child brings a prepared lunch to school **daily**, commencing on the first day.

Play Lunch

As the morning session of two hours is a long time for beginners we have a fruit/vegetable snack at 10.00am and another snack, eg. sultanas, cheese stick, or another piece of fruit just before recess at 11.00am.

Make sure that your child knows the difference between the food for these snacks and lunch, by wrapping them separately.

Other Points to Remember about Lunch

- Your child's lunch should be in a clearly named lunch box.
- Drinks should be in a clearly named unbreakable container.
- Do not give your child too much lunch.
- We aim for a rubbish free [environmentally friendly] lunch as far as possible.
- Please note that if your child has a lunch order, he/she will also require a separate snack at morning recess.
- Children are expected to remain at school for lunch unless the teacher is otherwise notified.
- Children are encouraged to have water bottles in the classroom.

Lunch Orders

Lunch orders are available on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

A lunch order price list will be provided to all families at the start of the school year.

Lunch order money should be in an envelope which clearly lists the items ordered, the child's name and grade and the amount enclosed. These are collected in the classroom early in the morning.

Parking/Collecting Children

As most children are collected by car at the end of the day parking is at a premium. Please follow the system in place for collecting children. This involves dropping off and collecting children only in the designated area. This will ensure the safest and most efficient collection of children. Children are not permitted to place bags in car boots when being collected from the pick up as this poses an extremely high risk to personal safety. *Please do not park in the drop off/pick up area.* During the day parking at the school is also tight. Please respect designated car-parking places.

Children who walk home should be made aware of the need to go straight home after school unless other firm arrangements have been made. Children should also be discouraged from remaining and playing at the school after hours.

If parents are delayed and unable to collect their child/children at dismissal time, please remember that After School Care is available.

Parents need to be aware of the 40 KPH zone on Kallista-Emerald Rd at the start and end of the school day and the 10 KPH limit within the school grounds.

Parents are discouraged from collecting their children outside The Patch Store as this area is unsupervised.

Philosophy

This program run by teachers and other staff trained in philosophy encourages students to speak up without fear of being wrong. Students develop their reasoning skills as they think through and support their opinions. At the same time equally important listening skills are developed.

Preparing Your Child for School

Together, parents and teachers can provide the support and encouragement needed to make your child's introduction to school a positive and enjoyable experience.

Encourage your child to do as many of the following as possible:

- Know their full name, address and, if able, their telephone number, and be able to state these clearly when asked.
 - Be able to take off and put on outer clothing unaided and to manage zips, buttons and ties, and to put these items away. Shoelace tying requires perseverance - Velcro or buckles are easier to manage.
 - Be able to visit the toilet independently, to flush after use and then to wash hands and to adjust clothing.
 - Be able to use tissues or handkerchiefs and importance of covering mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.
 - Be able to pack away playthings, books and materials neatly and tidily after use.
 - Recognise their own name on possessions, clothing, lunch boxes, etc.
 - To be able to eat from a lunch box, without surrounding themselves with scraps.
 - Be able to share things, take turns and co-operate with others. This includes listening to others, instructions and stories.
- Carry their schoolbag into school.
Be aware of notices etc. for parents.

Starting school is an enormous and exhausting experience for small children. Try to assist your child to meet this situation by ensuring that regular and suitable sleeping hours are observed. A quiet time on return home from school is also beneficial.

School Camps

Children from grades 3 to 6 attend school camps. The school has a range of venues that are used to provide appropriate experiences at each year level.

School Communication

Every second Thursday the school sends out our newsletter, Patchwork News, via the youngest child in the family. Please check your child's bag for this in their communication folder. The newsletter highlights coming events, celebrates success at the school, displays students' work and promotes fundraising activities. Parents are welcome to advertise their business or inform the community of such matters as garage sales through the newsletter. We offer you the choice of your newsletter in hardcopy or via email so please advise the school office of your email address if you would prefer an electronic copy.

You will have received an orange SMS sheet requesting your mobile phone numbers. This is to assist us to contact you at any stage, but particularly to keep you informed during an emergency.

School Requirements

There are three categories of educational items or services that school councils can request payments from parents and guardians for students in Victorian government schools:

- essential educational items which parents and guardians are required to provide or pay the school to provide for their child (for example, stationery, text books and school uniforms where required)
- optional educational items which are offered on a user-pays basis and which parents and guardians may choose whether their child accesses or participates in (for example, for school magazines or extracurricular programs or activities), and
- voluntary financial contributions which parents and guardians may be invited to donate to the school.

School councils are responsible for developing and approving a policy for their school. This school-level policy must reflect the Department's policy and be made available to parents and guardians.

All books and stationery requirements for your child are purchased by the school and supplied to students at the start of the school year. Families will be asked for a payment for personal educational items early in the year.

Your child will also need to supply the following articles on the first day.

- Cloth Bag (approximately 40 cm x 40 cm) for library books.
- School bag - preferably a shoulder bag or back pack.
- An art smock - full covering with sleeves with elastic cuffs or an unwanted shirt.
- A school "communication folder" (in navy blue with the school logo on it) to protect your child's take home books and notes throughout their time at school.

Please note that each of these items except for the cloth library bag can be purchased from the school Uniform Shop.

School Start Bonus

The School Start Bonus provides financial assistance for families with Health Care cards of Prep and Year 7 students to help them meet the costs of sending their child to school.

The initiative was introduced by the Victorian Government in 2006. The Bonus is a one-off payment of \$300 for each student starting Prep or Year 7 to assist in purchasing items such as school uniforms, school bags and books.

The Patch Valley Fair

Each year the school and kindergarten holds The Patch Valley Fair. This year it will be held in mid-October. This is a major fundraiser and involves extensive planning and the hard work of many people on the day. The Fair works best when everyone helps.

Uniform Policy

The Patch Primary School has a **compulsory** uniform as set out below.

Guidelines

The uniform should be comfortable, high quality and affordable.

The uniform must be suitable for the activities undertaken at school.

The uniform policy should not discriminate, either directly or indirectly against students on the basis of their gender, race, ethnic group religious beliefs or disability.

The school uniform policy will be provided to all new families and published in the school newsletter at the beginning of each term.

School Council will review the school uniform policy as the need arises.

Uniform items will be sold through the school uniform shop.

Uniform Items

Dresses

Summer dress (material code 8:38:8065)

Polo Shirts

Long or short sleeves

Light blue with a navy collar with light blue stripes.

Navy with a navy collar with light blue stripes.

All with navy or light blue school logo.

Windcheater.

Plain navy with light blue school logo

Bomber Jacket

Plain navy with light blue school logo

Bottoms

All plain navy

[No denim]

Hats

All navy

Wide brimmed Slouch or bucket-style

Shoes

All shoes flat heeled with enclosed toe. Preferably water resistant.

Personal Education Items Payment

Every student at The Patch Primary School is supplied with the materials they require to start off the school year. These items include exercise books, diaries, folders, pens pencils etc. depending on the student's year level, and replacements items are also supplied throughout the year. In addition to covering the costs of books, stationery and classroom resources i.e dictionaries and atlases, we also need to ensure that the materials used by students in the library, music and art program are readily available and of a standard that we would expect.

In 2012 the payment for these necessities is \$260.00 per student. This figure also covers all initial items. These items are often an additional charge in schools. A letter requesting payment will be available at the Prep Information Night or posted to you.

We also seek \$50 Grounds Levy per family to cover the cost of lawn mowing and maintenance at the school and an ICT Levy of \$30.00 to support our information technology program.

Visual Arts

Creative learning experiences in the visual arts during schooling provide individuals with necessary skills, understandings and confidence to participate fully in the arts throughout their lives.

Learning in the visual arts at The Patch Primary School takes several forms. Through arts practice students learn to develop ideas by drawing upon experience, exploring feelings, observing and researching. In order to communicate ideas, students learn the elements, principles, processes and techniques as well as the cultural and aesthetic values associated with specific art forms.

In responding to the visual arts, students learn to analyse and interpret art works. They learn how the visual arts are practised and valued in different societies and cultures, past and present. They form personal judgements of their own and those of others. They understand the skills and intentions of artists and the social or cultural contexts in which their works were produced.