

Ringwood Heights Primary School



Parent Handbook 2024

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2 WELCOME TO RINGWOOD HEIGHTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Ringwood Heights Primary School; a school where staff, teachers and parents work together to create a stimulating, supportive and successful learning environment for each student.

The educational opportunities offered at Ringwood Heights Primary School are stimulating and challenging. The individual needs and talents of students are identified and nurtured to support their learning as they move through different stages of development. We commit to understanding each student's needs and providing learning programs that support and enhance their academic and personal needs.

There is an emphasis on literacy, numeracy and thinking skills across the curriculum, so that we develop critical, creative, and reflective thinkers. We endeavour to make learning interesting and relevant and encourage a curiosity and thirst for knowledge in all our students. A comprehensive range of specialist and enrichment programs enables students to discover their areas of interests and expertise.

The school values of Respect, Teamwork, Responsibility, Creativity and Friendship are seen as the core of the school and central to how all members of the community interact with each other. We have many student leadership programs which encourage our students to be proactive and develop their "voice".

Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning as we have a shared belief that education is a partnership between all members of the community.

Regards

Kim Bride

3 PROFILE

Established in 1965, Ringwood Heights Primary School is nestled in a wooded area in the Maroondah district of the Outer Eastern Metropolitan Region. The school is set in extensive grounds that provide a wide variety of active and passive play areas including an oval, shaded hard court areas, playgrounds, a central turf open area and extensive native bushland. The school takes great pride in being a strong community school with consistent and constructive involvement of families in all aspects of our school life.

Students are grouped in four areas relating to Levels of Learning: Learning Team 1 – Foundation; Learning Team 2 - Years 1 and 2; Learning Team 3 - Years 3 and 4 and Learning Team 4 - Years 5 and 6. All class groupings except for Foundation are multi-age.

The school places emphasis on inquiry and this is interpreted through different programs at each level, from play-based learning in the Prep level and Discovery time in Level 2 through to negotiated integrated inquiry learning (iTime) in the senior grades (3 - 6). Specialist instruction is provided in Auslan, Visual Arts, Performing Arts and Physical Education. Student wellbeing is supported through our whole school well-being focus in partnership with the Maroondah Positive Education Network.

Ringwood Heights offers a comprehensive developmental curriculum implemented by a team of dedicated, caring professionals. We are a leading school in the development of integrated units of work, negotiated curriculum through personal inquiry and professional action learning teams. There is a strong emphasis on student voice, action and agency within our units which are delivered over a two-year cycle. Our biennial Artist in Schools program is a celebrated community event with opportunities for participation from all our students.

Ringwood Heights Primary School plays key participatory and leadership roles in the Maroondah Network local cluster of schools. The school has developed a strong partnership with Melbourne University with partnerships in academic research, both in Inquiry learning and in the Arts. We have also been involved in the C+AARP (Child and Adult Arts Research Project) for many years where the Learning Team 3 artists at Ringwood Heights have a conversation through the Arts with the teacher candidates at Melbourne University. This has led to Arts workshops and visits to the studios at the Melbourne University Graduate School of Education. We welcome teacher candidates from Melbourne University to complete their Master of Teaching teacher placements at Ringwood Heights.

We are very proud of our Library Resource Centre which opened in 2019. The Library Resource Centre is the hub of Ringwood Heights. It has flexible learning spaces with classroom clusters, an Art Studio, gathering places, and an extensive library which is managed by our teacher librarian. Within the Library Resource Centre there is flexible seating allowing for whole class, small group, and individual learning.

Students have access to iPads (across the school) and Chromebooks (Levels 3 and 4) that are shared between each classroom. Classrooms are equipped with wide screen TVs and Apple TVs in every level of learning.

4 PURPOSE

Ringwood Heights is a student-centred school, which intentionally aligns practice with three key purposes:

- To continue to promote an ethos where parents, students and teachers collaborate to provide a dynamic learning environment which challenges and engages all learners in an atmosphere of mutual respect, tolerance, and creativity.
- To focus on student learning opportunities in an environment that is rapidly changing in response to complex local and global conditions.
- To develop learners with knowledge, skills, values, self-esteem, and attributes that ensure personal fulfilment, lifelong learning, and active citizenship.

The school's motto "*Little kids thinking big*" reflects our core values of Creativity, Respect, Responsibility, Teamwork and Friendship.

	<i>As a learner...</i>	<i>As a friend...</i>	<i>Around the school yard...</i>	<i>Online...</i>
Creativity	<i>Combine and connect our ideas.</i> <i>Take responsible risks in your learning.</i> <i>Think in different ways.</i>	<i>Encourage others to think differently.</i> <i>Treat each other fairly but differently.</i>	<i>Create new games.</i> <i>Find solutions to problems together.</i> <i>Use our environment to imagine.</i>	<i>Use your own ideas.</i> <i>Try new things.</i> <i>Use technology to show learning and express creativity.</i>
Respect	<i>Listen to other people's ideas.</i> <i>Encourage others.</i> <i>Use a quiet voice.</i>	<i>Show tolerance.</i> <i>Respect personal space.</i> <i>Take turns.</i> <i>Use manners.</i>	<i>Move safely around the school.</i> <i>Look after our natural environment.</i> <i>Respect the belongings of others.</i>	<i>Use appropriate language.</i> <i>Be careful with our equipment.</i> <i>Respect other people's privacy.</i>
Friendship	<i>Give positive feedback.</i> <i>Help and mentor others.</i> <i>Encourage the achievements of others.</i>	<i>Show compassion and consideration.</i> <i>Accept outcomes and move on.</i> <i>Be honest and trustworthy.</i>	<i>Use the friendship tree.</i> <i>Include others.</i> <i>Explain rules before you start to play.</i> <i>Be helpful to others in need.</i>	<i>Look out for your friends online.</i>
Responsibility	<i>Look after your belongings and be organised.</i> <i>Show initiative.</i> <i>Know and follow your class agreement.</i>	<i>Stand up for others.</i> <i>Remind your friends of appropriate behaviour.</i>	<i>Listen for the bell music and go straight to line.</i> <i>Tell a yard duty teacher if something is disrespectful or unsafe.</i>	<i>Follow the ICT agreement.</i> <i>Report anything that does not feel right to an adult.</i> <i>Only do things online that you would show everyone.</i>
Teamwork	<i>Share ideas and resources.</i> <i>Learn together.</i> <i>Offer to help others.</i>	<i>Encourage others to get involved.</i> <i>Look out for others in your group.</i>	<i>Show sportsmanship.</i> <i>Work together to keep our school tidy.</i>	<i>Work collaboratively online.</i> <i>Make positive connections with others online.</i> <i>Use devices collaboratively.</i>

5 TERM DATES

Visit:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/school-term-dates-and-holidays-victoria>

for current and future term dates and holidays for Victorian Government schools.

6 STAFFING 2024

Principal	Kim Bride	
Assistant Principals	Jo Parry James Lumsden	
Business Manager	Kathryn Hands	
Office Assistants	Michelle Stringer/ Carolyn Manning	
Junior School	Georgia Schumann (JS)	Team Leader
	Donna Hey (JH)	
	Stephanie Caccioppoli / Katherine Butcher (JCB)	Team Leader
	Donna Ramage/ Zena Goodman (JRG)	
Learning Team 3	Alex Clark/Steph Eddington (3CE)	Team Leader
	Jude Ridley/James Lumsden (3RL)	
	Michelle Freeman (3F)	
Level 4	Dalal Nehme (4N)	Team Leader
	Robert Bennett (4B)	
	Hayley Davison / Harry Gore (4DG)	
Performing Arts	Harry Gore	
Physical Education	Amanda Dean	
Visual Art	Zena Goodman (P – 2) Katherine Butcher (3 – 6)	
Library	Karen Trease	

Education Support	Mary Clarke Rebecca Hayes Jocelyn Lyon	
Instrumental Teachers	Diana Matthews Damon Goulas	

7 CALENDAR, TIMETABLE, AND IMPORTANT DATES

7.1 DAILY TIMETABLE

Students are welcome in their classrooms *from* 8:45 am, and the music sounds at 8:53 to signal that all students should join their grades in their classrooms.

At 9:00 am a second bell rings to signal the start of the school day. It is an important practice for students to be punctual, providing a smooth start to the day.

Students are encouraged to be at school from 8.45 am. *Students that arrive at school before 8:45 may be sent to our schools Outside School Hours Program to ensure they are properly supervised.*

Students begin arriving in classrooms	From 8.45 am
Music plays	8:53 am
School commences	9:00 am
Morning Recess	10:40 - 11:10 am
Lunch eating time	12:50 - 1:00 pm
Lunch Recess	1:00 - 1:50 pm
Dismissal	3:30 pm

We stress the importance of collecting your child promptly at the end of the school day.

If, however circumstances delay you, please notify the school as staff are on yard duty until 3.45pm only. Students in the yard after 3:45pm who are not supervised will be sent to OSHC.

7.2 DISMISSAL

Students are dismissed at 3:30pm except for the last day of each term.

In Terms 1, 2 and 3 students are dismissed at 2:30pm and in Term 4, at 1:30pm.

7.3 STUDENT FREE DAYS

Each year government schools are provided with four student-free days for professional development, school planning and administration, curriculum development, and student assessment and reporting purposes. A plan developed by the School Leadership Team for the use

of these student free days requires School Council approval. In planning, consideration is given to school strategic priorities.

The first day of Term 1 each year is a student-free day to allow for appropriate planning to take place for the arrival of students. The remaining three student-free days are determined by each individual school. We list these on the school website, in our newsletter and on XUNO.

The school is required to notify parents in writing 24 hours in advance if there is to be any industrial action taken which prevents students attending school.

8 PROCEDURES, POLICIES AND PRACTICES

8.1 ABSENCES

It is a requirement, and it is important, that your child maintains full school attendance during term time unless they are unwell.

All absences must be accounted for through XUNO. Absences will be recorded by teachers electronically and unexplained absences will be detected and the school office will contact families for any unexplained absences.

If your child arrives at school after 9:00am you must report to the school office to sign them in, and they will take a late pass to the class teacher.

Students must be dropped off or picked up at the office if arriving late or leaving early.

If your child is ill due to one of the following: mumps, chicken pox, measles, please notify the school immediately.

8.2 ACCIDENT AND ILLNESS

Medication at school

Should a child require prescription medication at school, a Medication Administration Form is to be completed by the parent/carer and handed into the office along with the medication. The First Aid Officer will administer the medication at the appropriate time. The medication will be stored appropriately throughout the day and will need to be collected at the end of the day by an adult. This policy also applies to medication administered on excursions and school camps.

Some students require medication e.g., antihistamines on a symptomatic basis, or regular medication to be administered at lunchtime. After discussion with the First Aid Officer, these can be stored at the school for administration when required.

Asthma

It is imperative students suffering from Asthma have this condition and treatment detailed on the School Asthma Action Plan form. If your child develops asthma during their school life, please contact the office to ensure our records are updated.

Medication should be provided by families and be available for these students. A spare named treatment kit can be left at the First Aid room for use as required. However, we encourage all asthmatic students to always carry a reliever puffer (e.g., Ventolin) and spacer on them.

If your child is suffering from asthma, further pertinent details (regarding medication to be taken, asthma triggers, physical exertion etc.) should be given to the teacher.

Anaphylaxis

There are several students throughout the school with Anaphylaxis and food and other allergies. Anaphylaxis is a severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. Since 2008, parents are required by law to inform schools of their children's allergies. All schools are legally required to implement strategies to prevent these students' exposure to allergens.

Allergens can include eggs, peanuts, tree nuts (e.g., cashews), cow's milk, fish and shellfish, wheat and other grasses, soy, certain insect stings, animal hair and medications. Shared food and food brought from home can unwittingly pose a severe risk. It is critical that the school community understands that contact with or ingesting these allergens is ***life-threatening*** for some of our students.

Infectious Diseases

Parents are requested to notify the school should your child contract an infectious disease. The Department of Education (DE) has established regulations regarding the exclusion from school for specific diseases.

- **COVID-19:** See [Checklist for COVID-19 cases](#) for the most up to date government advice regarding COVID-19
- **Chicken Pox:** Exclude until all blisters have dried. Contacts are not excluded.
- **Conjunctivitis:** (infectious) Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased. Contacts not excluded.
- **Diarrhoea:** Exclude until there has not been vomiting or a loose bowel motion for 24 hours. Contacts not excluded.
- **Diphtheria:** Until a medical certificate of recovery is produced. Non immunised contacts must be excluded until investigated by Medical Officer of Health. Contacts are excluded until cleared to return by the chief Health Officer
- **Hand, Foot, and Mouth disease:** Exclude until all blisters have dried. Contacts not excluded.
- **Head Lice:** exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Contacts not excluded.
- **Hepatitis A:** Exclude until receipt of medical certificate of recovery from infection. Contacts not excluded.

- **Hepatitis B and C:** Until recovered from acute attack. Contacts 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. Contacts not excluded.
- **Impetigo/School Sores:** Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing. Contacts not excluded.
- **Measles:** Exclude for at least 4 days after rash has appeared. 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 exposure with any infectious case or received Normal Human Immunoglobulin (NHIG) within 144 hours of exposure of any infectious case, they may return.
- **Meningococcal infection:** Exclude until well. Contacts not excluded.
- **Mumps:** Exclude for 5 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner). Contacts not excluded.
- **Polio:** Exclude for at least 14 days from onset. Re admit after receiving medical certificate of recovery. Contacts not excluded.
- **Ring Worm:** Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Contacts not excluded.
- **Rubella (German measles):** Until fully recovered or at least 5 days after onset of rash. Contacts not excluded.
- **Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever):** Until the child has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and the child feels well. Contacts not excluded.
- **Tuberculosis:** Until receipt of a medical certificate from the treating physician stating that the child is not considered to be infectious. Contacts not excluded.
- **Whooping Cough (Pertussis):** Exclude for 21 days after the onset of cough or until they have completed 5 days of a course of antibiotic treatment. Contacts aged less than 7 years in the same room as the case who have not received three effective doses of pertussis vaccine should be excluded for 14 days after the last exposure to the infectious case, or until they have taken 5 days of a course of effective antibiotic treatment.
- **Worms [Intestinal]:** Exclude if diarrhoea present. Contacts not excluded.

Ambulance Cover

It is strongly recommended that families take out Ambulance cover in the event of an accident at school requiring the Ambulance Service. If a child requires urgent care, an ambulance will be called, irrespective of whether they are insured or not.

The Department of Education and Training advises the following:

- Parents/guardians of students, who do not have student accident insurance, are responsible for paying the cost of medical treatment for injured students, including the cost of ambulance attendance/transport and any other transport costs; and
- Parents/guardians can purchase insurance policies from commercial insurers.

8.3 ASSEMBLY

A whole school assembly is held in the Stadium every Monday morning at 9.00 am. Assembly opens with a, Acknowledgement of Country and is followed by the National Anthem, Advance Australia Fair. Our School Captains run our assemblies with assistance from the principal or other staff members and assemblies can include important news items, musical presentations by individuals, classes or choirs, celebration of achievements by students receiving Student of the Week awards, sharing of sporting results and Learning Team presentations. Parents are most welcome to attend.

Advance Australia Fair

Australians all let us rejoice,
For we are one and free,
We've golden soil and wealth for toil;
Our home is girt by sea;
Our land abounds in nature's gifts
Of beauty rich and rare;
In history's page, let every stage
Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing
Advance Australia Fair.

Beneath our radiant Southern Cross
We'll toil with hearts and hands;
To make this Commonwealth of ours
Renowned of all the lands;
For those who've come across the seas
We've boundless plains to share;
With courage let us all combine
To Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing,
Advance Australia Fair.

8.4 CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

Ringwood Heights Primary School offers the opportunity for students to attend camps and excursions.

Excursions and incursions are a valuable way to enhance and extend classroom learning.

- To provide experiences that enhances and support curriculum programs.
- To provide opportunities for students to experience special events as they arise.
- To provide opportunities for teachers to contextualise learning unit key concepts through a shared experience.

A camping program is provided at Year levels 3 and 4, 5 and 6. All students are strongly encouraged to participate in school camps. Assistance can be provided if families are experiencing financial hardship – please refer any concerns to the Principal.

8.5 COMMUNICATION

A variety of communication channels exist between the school and parents/carers:

Between school and home:

- Online newsletters fortnightly on Thursdays
- Notices concerning special events
- XUNO
- Getting to know you chats (February) and three-way conferences (June/July).
- Parents are welcome to make an appointment or request a phone call to chat about their child's academic progress and wellbeing at any point during the school year. And similarly, teachers will contact parents if they have any concerns between the scheduled formal meeting times.

All families are encouraged to sign up to XUNO, which is our main method of communication between school and home, details can be obtained from the school office.

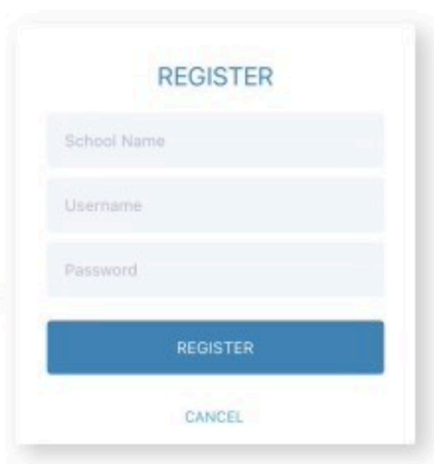
XUNO Family is an app that will help make communication with the school quick and easy - giving you access to a wealth of information, without having to sit at a computer.

To log in, follow these steps:

1. Download XUNO Family from the App store (iOS) or Play store (Android)
2. Open the app
3. If asked, please allow push notifications for the most convenient experience with the app
4. Search for your school by typing the first few letters and then selecting your school from the list that appears.

If you have forgotten your password or Username, you'll need to head to your school's Xuno website to reset it. If you're not sure what the web address is, please contact your school or look for an email from Xuno which may have the address in it. The web address usually includes your school's name.

For example: <https://fakehighschool.xuno.com.au> - or - <https://xuno.fakehs.vic.edu.au>

A screenshot of the XUNO Family app's registration screen. At the top, the word "REGISTER" is displayed in blue. Below it are three light blue input fields labeled "School Name", "Username", and "Password". At the bottom of the form is a solid blue button labeled "REGISTER" in white, and below that is a smaller, lighter blue button labeled "CANCEL" in blue.

8.6 BIKES AND SCOOTERS

Students must walk their bicycles and scooters whilst in the school ground. They must wear a helmet and always abide by road rules. Bicycles and scooters are secured on bike racks found on

the outside of the fenced Prep Garden. Students must have registered their bike or scooter with the office and signed their agreement form. See the Bike Policy and Addendum.

8.7 DOGS IN THE SCHOOL YARD

The school recognises that dogs are an integral part of some families and that a walk to and from school is excellent exercise for the family pet. Please ensure the safety of everyone within the school community by having your dog on a lead, kept outside the school grounds during busy drop off and pickup times, and pick up or clean up any mess they may make.

8.8 LATE ARRIVAL

If your child is late to school for any reason, you must come first to the office with your child and:

- Sign in on the iPad.
- Collect a “Late arrival pass”
- Staff will then assist your child in walking to class

8.9 EARLY DISMISSAL

If your child must leave school early for any reason you must come to the office **first** and:

- Sign out on the iPad.
- Office staff will contact the classroom and your child will be walked up to the office
- Collect an “Early leaver pass”

8.10 EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Emergency information is kept on file for each student. This enables the school to contact parents or the emergency contact in case of an accident or illness. Please ensure the emergency contact lives close by and has transport to pick up your child. **To enable the school to provide this care, parents are requested to advise the school immediately of any change of address or telephone numbers.** Please notify the school of any relevant information regarding custody and access rights which would affect your child's security. Such issues are handled in confidence.

8.11 HOUSE SYSTEM

A ‘House’ system operates throughout the school.

- Waratah (red)
- Hovea (blue)
- Acacia (yellow)
- Hakea (green)

Incoming students are divided evenly into each house. Our policy is for siblings to be in the same house.

8.12 LOST PROPERTY

Please ensure **all items** are clearly labelled with your child's name as this enables the items to be returned if they are lost at school. Unnamed lost property is housed in the Junior School building. Students should be encouraged to check in lost property whenever they lose an article of clothing. Unnamed items are stored until the end of each term before being washed and sold on in the Recycled Uniform Shop or donated to a local Op Shop.

8.13 OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE (SERVICE RUN BY CAMP AUSTRALIA)

The out of school hours program aims to provide affordable quality childcare and recreational activities for primary school age students in a safe, relaxed, caring and well supervised environment. This program operates on school days 7:00 am – 8:45 am and between 3:30 pm – 6:00 pm. The program operates from the multipurpose room situated near the Aurum Crescent entrance.

Our program is provided by Camp Australia. The students enjoy a mixture of supervised free play, within designated areas of the school grounds, and organised inside and outside activities. Breakfast is provided in the mornings, and afternoon tea in the after-school program.

On student free days a curriculum day program operates from 7:45am to 6:00pm, and in the school holidays, Camp Australia run a holiday program at the school.

Registration and enrolment procedures must be completed before students attend the program. Register your child for free today at <https://www.campaustralia.com.au/>

Most families ARE eligible for Child Care Benefit (CCB) and the Child Care Tax Rebate (CCTR). So, it is important that all families register with the Family Assistance Office (FAO). Contact the FAO on 13 61 50 for details on how to register.

8.14 NEWSLETTER

‘Heights Happenings’, the school newsletter, is uploaded to the school website and to XUNO every second Thursday. The newsletter is a great way to stay up to date with school activities, future events and to see what is happening in other year levels. It also advertises opportunities to engage with the wider community.

8.15 PARKING

Please observe all parking restrictions and obey traffic rules when dropping off and picking up your child.

The school car park is restricted to members of staff. For safety and equity reasons, parents are **not permitted** to use the staff car parks for dropping off and picking up children during regular school hours and after school, including OHSC pick-ups.

Parents are reminded that parking on driveways, parking on the nature strip and U-turns in front of the school, are unsafe and illegal.

9 POSSESSIONS, TOYS, MONEY, AND MOBILE PHONES

Please ensure your child does not bring large amounts of money to school. Any money for excursions or special items should be sealed in an envelope on which is written the amount, the child's name and grade and the purpose of the money.

Mobile phones brought to school by students need to be turned off and secured in classrooms first thing in the morning and collected again at the end of the school day. Refer to the mobile phone policy available on the school website for more details. It is preferable that students do not wear smart watches, however if they do, "school mode" must be enabled. If school mode is not used these devices will be treated like a mobile phone as per the Mobile Phone Policy. If "smart watches" and other devices become distracting in the classroom students will be asked to remove them.

The Department of Education advises families that the Department does not hold insurance for personal property brought to schools and it has no capacity to pay for any loss or damage to such property. We therefore regret that we are unable to take any responsibility for lost, damaged or missing items, nor invest time and effort investigating such instances. Please leave all valuables or 'special' items at home.

10 GETTING TO KNOW YOU CHATS, THREE WAY CONFERENCES AND REPORTS

Getting to know you chats (February)

These are held early in the school year to inform parents of current programs and routines, arrangements for the year and to formally introduce specific year level teachers to discuss any specific issues related to the student's wellbeing for the year ahead. These interviews do not report on academic progress.

Mid-Year three-way conferences (June/July)

These interviews offer an opportunity to discuss June reports with classroom teachers and specialist teachers if requested.

An open invitation exists for parents to arrange interviews with teachers at any mutually agreeable time.

Formal student reports are designed to give parents an accurate account of student achievement and a summary of performance. These reports are printed and given to families at the end of Term 2 and Term 4. They show student progress and achievement against the Victorian Curriculum Achievement Standards.

11 SAFETY

The school program endeavours to develop the following safety habits. Please reinforce these at home.

1. Students should know their full name, address, and a parent or carer's phone number.
1. Use the safest, most direct route between home and the school.
2. Stop and look both ways before crossing roads.
3. Never run from behind parked cars.
4. Never accept lifts from strangers.
5. Never leave the school grounds until dismissal.
6. Never go home with friends unless they have been given permission.

Parking around Ringwood Heights can be difficult and illegal parking may incur a fine from parking officers. Parents are requested to refrain from driving into the school. Only staff and authorized vehicles are permitted to enter the school grounds.

12 SCHOOL COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES

Parent involvement at Ringwood Heights is welcomed and encouraged. It is recognised as being natural and desirable in a climate where the partnership between home and school, carers and teachers is positively promoted.

Ringwood Heights is proud of and enjoys a supportive and enthusiastic parent community. There are many ways for you to become involved, which ultimately enrich school programs, improve the environment and facilities, and enhance your child's growth and learning.

The School Council is constituted under law by the Government. It is a legal body representing the Government and is the meeting place where staff and parents jointly, on behalf of the school community, make decisions related to school issues.

Duties of the School Council include:

- (a) Determine the educational policy of the school within issued guidelines.
- (b) Positively stimulate interest in the school.
- (c) Oversee the maintenance of school buildings and grounds and make recommendations with respect to effecting improvements.
- (d) Ensure that all monies coming into the hands of the school are expended for proper purposes.

The Council consists of eight elected parent representatives, four Department of Education (DE) representatives plus the Principal and a co-opted member, who is the Parents' Club representative.

Council positions are for a two-year period, and elections coincide with the Annual General Meeting held in March.

The Council is supported by various committees. These include Finance, Education, Facilities and Grounds, Community Liaison, and the Parents' Club. Parents and carers are very welcome to attend. Dates and venue of meetings will be notified via the newsletter and XUNO.

12.1 FINANCE COMMITTEE

The principal function of this committee is to play a major role in preparing the school's annual budget. It consists of the principal, senior staff and nominated members of the School Council.

12.2 EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The committee consists of parents and teachers and is responsible for making recommendations and developing proposals related to the curriculum, within Government and DE guidelines.

12.3 FACILITIES AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

The committee is responsible for making recommendations for and developing proposals related to the school's buildings, grounds and facilities, as well as coordinate the school's working bees that occur throughout the year.

12.4 COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

This committee consists of parents and teachers and is responsible for making recommendations for strengthening the partnership between the school, parents, and the broader community. They organise whole school events such as the Welcome Picnic and the Christmas Concert, advertising boards for the school and assist in the Prep transition process.

Parents are very welcome to attend. Dates and venue of meetings to be notified via the newsletter and XUNO.

As part of the Community Liaison committee, **Class Contacts** are established. Each Learning Team has one or two parent representatives. As well as welfare, they plan events for parents and families in their level to strengthen relationships within the community.

12.5 PARENTS' CLUB

The aims of the Parents' Club may be outlined as follows:

1. To aid parent/teacher communication
1. To facilitate social contact within the school
2. To support fundraising activities
3. Public Relations
6. To support and promote parent participation at Ringwood Heights.

Parents' Club provides a forum where all parents can participate and develop a shared parent view. The association cooperates closely with the Principal and School Council. All this is achieved in a friendly relaxed atmosphere where parents can gain an understanding of the education system for the benefit of their students, exchange ideas and develop friendships.

13 SCHOOL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

13.1 INTEGRATED INQUIRY

Ringwood Heights offers a comprehensive developmental curriculum implemented by a team of dedicated, caring professionals. We are a leading school in the development of literacy and numeracy profiles and in the planning and development of integrated units of work.

Children's learning experiences occur within an integrated curriculum, with the emphasis on the integration of the 'content' areas of curriculum. These include language, literature, literacy, civics and citizenship, science, information and communications technology (ICT), and health and physical education. The 'process' areas of the curriculum - speaking, listening, reading, viewing, writing, mathematics, performing arts and visual arts are how children express their understandings of the curriculum content. From Year 1 onwards, each level explores at least four big questions throughout the year.

13.2 PLAY BASED INQUIRY

In the Junior School (F-2), our play-based Inquiry sessions play a large role in laying the foundations for students to develop as independent learners.

Stations are set up with a range of learning experiences within the classrooms and outdoor spaces and provide explicit links to support our Literacy, Numeracy, and Integrated Inquiry programs.

Students have freedom of choice in their learning focus, which promotes personalised, meaningful learning.

Examples of learning stations include:

- Writer's workshop
- Numeracy activities
- Sensory activities
- Construction
- Science discovery
- Social games
- Dramatic play
- Reading corner
- Children's interest table

Play-based Inquiry provides a meaningful, non-threatening learning environment where students feel confident to take risks in their learning. They work individually, alongside and collaboratively with their peers during these sessions.

The teachers' role within these sessions is to act as a facilitator of learning by participating in conversations with the students, asking open-ended questions and provoking their thinking by challenging the students to take their learning further.

13.3 ENGLISH

At Ringwood Heights Primary School we have a comprehensive English curriculum, which embraces the key learning strands of Language, Literature and Literacy, through the modes of Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening.

Dedicated literacy teaching time (in daily Readers' and Writers' Workshops) with a focus on small group teaching, caters for personalised, strength and needs based student learning. Students are encouraged to read daily, and we have an extensive range of levelled texts and well-maintained classroom libraries for them to access. They are also able to borrow from the school library during their fortnightly library sessions.

Spelling is a thinking activity, and competent spellers use a range of strategies which we explicitly teach through our Readers' and Writers' Workshop sessions. These include:

- Explicit phonics sessions looking at phonemes and letter patterns used to make different sounds.
- Visual patterns, exploring common letter patterns, graphemes, and words within words.
- Meaning based strategies - investigating base words, prefixes, suffixes, word origins and etymology.
- Being resourceful - using dictionaries, thesauruses, word lists and classroom displays to check spelling patterns.

The successful implementation of the English curriculum is well supported and balanced through the teaching and learning of our Integrated Inquiry units of work.

Literacy across the school is further enhanced through a literature-based library program delivered by our qualified teacher librarian. The students are also welcomed into the library on Tuesday and Wednesday lunchtimes for quiet reading and borrowing alongside their designated library sessions.

We welcome parent helpers to our classrooms in the junior school to listen to students read so that every child reads aloud to an adult at least once a week. In Learning Team 4, the students participate in public speaking or debating lessons. This builds confidence in writing and delivering speeches and debates and the skills learned are evident in the confidence the students show when speaking at their graduation.

13.4 MATHS

Numeracy learning occurs within the framework of a whole school inquiry approach to Maths. At Ringwood Heights Primary School, the curriculum is structured around real-life contexts, which are relevant to the children and thus engaging and meaningful.

Maths tasks are open-ended and differentiated so that all children's learning styles are catered for and so that all children experience success. Rich assessment tasks and investigative problem-solving activities are planned together by teams of teachers at each learning level.

Teachers design sequences of lessons across the strands of

- Number
- Algebra
- Measurement
- Space
- Statistics
- Probability

13.5 LOTE – AUSLAN

Auslan is the language of the Australian Deaf community, and by learning Auslan, students are equipped with the skills to be inclusive while having fun when learning a visual language. Learning a visual language helps students increase memory retention while stimulating brain development and mental flexibility.

Students participate in weekly sessions where they learn finger spelling, vocabulary, sentence structure, facial expressions and about the Auslan culture and community. Lessons are very hands-on, often involve games, videoing each other, role play and lots of practice to build up the students' confidence in communicating with each other.

13.6 VISUAL ART

During Visual Arts sessions the students explore the art elements of line, shape, colour, texture, tone and pattern. Through the creative fields of drawing, painting, printing, collage, modelling, construction and textiles, students develop their skills and explore the creative potential of a wide variety of visual art materials. They study artists' work from classical arts such as Cubism and Impressionism, to local Australian artists, considering the artists' backgrounds, inspiration and techniques.

Each art activity aims to develop children's individual creative and artistic skills, while extending an understanding of materials and techniques. Students are encouraged to reflect upon their own artworks and give constructive feedback on the artworks of their peers.

13.7 PERFORMING ARTS

The Performing Arts curriculum incorporates music, dance and drama. At Ringwood Heights, Performing Arts provides every student with the opportunity to express themselves creatively and to plan, play, create and perform. There is a focus on audience behaviour where students watch each other and give feedback regarding their performances.

The students use both tuned and untuned instruments, as well as body percussion to learn about music elements such as rhythm and beat, dynamics, volume and tempo. They learn simple musical notation.

A variety of dance styles are taught in the program including set routines and creative movement. This develops student confidence and coordination. The elements of dance include body awareness, action, space, time and energy.

In Drama, the children enjoy simple role plays and improvisations using props and costumes to create characters and tell stories.

In addition to the classroom program of Performing Arts we also offer instrumental lessons in keyboard and guitar; and students from Year 1 upwards are welcome to join the school choirs. The choirs perform at school assemblies, the annual carols evening and external concerts as opportunities arise. Previous performances have included Oxfam concerts, the Maroondah Festival, and performances at Eastland Shopping Centre.

13.8 PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education programs at Ringwood Heights Primary School provide students with a variety of physical activities in both indoor and outdoor environments.

In addition to the shaded all-weather court, RHPS has a full-sized basketball court in the stadium, which enables students to take part in active physical education in all weather. With grounds perfect for active movement and sports, we are also able to utilise our oval during appropriate weather.

Foundation to Year 2 student sessions are based on the practise of basic motor skills. They develop control over a range of locomotor activities that require a change of speed, direction and level. These students participate in House Cross Country.

Year 3 and 4 sessions are based on the practise and use of more complex manipulative and locomotor skills such as leaping and dodging, the over-arm throw, dribbling and striking balls, cartwheeling and hand standing, and the students are beginning to connect these skills to game-based activities. These students participate in House Cross Country and Athletics.

Year 5 and 6 sessions are based on refining and expanding the range of skills our students have developed over the years and performing them within a game/match setting. These students participate in Interschool Sports, House Cross Country, House Athletics and other organised sporting programs within the school to provide exposure to a wide variety of major and minor games. Ringwood Heights Primary School is within the Warrandyte South Sport District and the students play against other schools within this district over the summer and winter months. These sports include basketball, cricket, softcrosse, hot shots (tennis), volleybounce, AFL, soccer, softball and netball.

Students who excel in a particular sporting area are given the opportunity to take part in the individual sporting trials conducted by Sporting Schools Victoria (SSV) where they can represent the school at District, Division, Regional and State level.

RHPS run lunchtime sporting clubs, which rotate each term based on students' interests and current school sports or activities. We make available a variety of sporting equipment during break times for students to engage in active play.

13.9 DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

At Ringwood Heights Primary School, Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is embedded in all curriculum areas. We are committed to ensuring our students are fully equipped 21st century learners.

Students at Ringwood Heights are actively engaged in a broad range of ICT tools to enrich learning, these include:

- Wide screen televisions and Apple TVs in all classrooms
- iPads
- Chromebooks

At Ringwood Heights we recognise the need for students to be safe and responsible users of digital technologies and we explicitly teach students about safe and responsible online behaviours. All students are required to agree to an Acceptable Use Agreement for technology.

13.10 ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

These include:

- Swimming
- Hooptime Basketball
- Sports Clinics
- Lunchtime clubs
- Library browsing and borrowing at lunchtime

13.11 EXTRA-CURRICULAR

At RHPS we place a strong emphasis on individualised learning.

Student interest, skills and passion are nurtured through a variety of extra curricula programs including:

- School choir
- Instrumental Music Program – guitar and keyboard lessons
- Lunchtime tennis lessons

14 TRANSITION

14.1 TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

A Prep Transition Program takes place throughout the year with a range of planned activities/school visits.

New students going into Years 1 to 6 at the beginning of a year are invited to spend some time in a class at Ringwood Heights on the whole school Orientation Day.

14.2 TRANSITION TO YEAR 7

The transition from Ringwood Heights to Year 7 is a well-established process.

In May of Year 6, parents are requested to fill out a form for placement of their child into Secondary School. For most students this will be reasonably straightforward as they will be attending their neighbourhood school, have a sibling claim to another school, or have a confirmed place in a non-government school.

In August each child who requested a place at a government school will be notified of the school where they have been accepted.

15 UNIFORM

The school community strongly supports the concept of a school uniform. Its purpose is to promote a sense of pride, equal status and belonging amongst the students of Ringwood Heights.

Whilst school uniform is not compulsory, we strongly encourage students to always wear it. The School Uniform policy outlines a dress code. Effort is made to encourage students to wear school uniforms when on excursions or representing Ringwood Heights at sporting events.

In the past we have been particularly successful with the implementing and enforcing of our Sun Smart policy which is in place from September through until April. (See SunSmart Policy)

Any child without a school hat during terms 1 and 4, must spend their recesses under cover. Just as importantly, children must wear their hats during physical education and sport activities.

15.1 UNIFORM SHOP

The Uniform shop (and the Recycled Uniform Shop) operates from the room adjacent to the outside courts and is open on Monday mornings and Wednesday afternoons, or as advertised in the school newsletter.

Second hand goods may be dropped off at the office anytime or taken directly to the Uniform Shop (all goods are donated).

15.2 HATS

It is **compulsory** for students to wear *SunSmart* hats whilst outdoors from the beginning of September through until the end of April. Please ensure your child has a hat **that is labelled** with their name. Broad brimmed hats (slouch hats) and legionnaires hats are available through the Uniform Shop.

15.3 ART SMOCKS

All students are required to wear a protective smock for Art lessons. Please ensure the front is long and waterproof and that it has long sleeves. It needs to be easily slipped on and off, and clearly labelled.

16 WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK (WWC)

The school has a Working with Children Policy on our website, which outlines the positions at the school that require a WWC check and the process to be followed. This applies to all positions at the school including volunteer, honorary, consultant and contractor positions. It recognises that parents who are volunteering may be working with or assisting on excursions with children who are not their own. Our staff also undertake regular WWC and Police checks.

The Working with Children (WWC) check aims to assist in protecting children. The WWC check verifies a person's history to make sure they do not have any relevant criminal offences or findings from professional disciplinary bodies. The WWC check is valid for 5 years (unless revoked).

The WWC check is easy to obtain and cost-free. More information is available on the website www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au

To ensure parents can participate fully in school activities, we encourage all parents to apply for a WWC Check and provide a copy to the office.

17 FOUNDATION (PREP) ENROLMENT

At Ringwood Heights Primary School we encourage your children to be independent, confident, and resilient. The first year at school is vitally important in setting patterns and attitudes for future

learning. Together we aim to develop positive attitudes which will assist your child throughout their school life.

17.1 INFORMATION SESSIONS

In Term 4, an information session will be held to provide details about the school to parents of prospective prep students for the forthcoming school year. The dates will be advertised in advance at local kindergartens, day care centres, our school website and in the Ringwood Heights newsletter. Additionally, the Principal and Assistant Principal are available to answer any concerns. Appointments are made for mutually convenient times.

17.2 HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD IN THE FIRST YEAR OF SCHOOL

Students become very tired, and perhaps a little irritable, particularly during the first few weeks of adjusting to a new routine. They need extra understanding at this time. It is recommended that families limit after school activities during this time and talk to your child's classroom teacher if you have concerns.

Aim to have your child at school by 8.45 a.m. Running late, and entering school after the day's activities have begun, can be upsetting to a beginner. Also, please make sure that your child is picked up from school on time.

Name **everything** which your child brings to school - all clothing, lunch boxes, bags, plastic bottles, storybooks, toys, balls, etc. Unless articles are named, it is difficult for teachers to find the correct owner - and much valuable time can be spent in attempting to do so.

Show an interest in learning brought home and display it in a special place.

Recognise and praise your child's efforts. Aim at helping your child surpass their own previous achievement rather than competing with others.

Understand the importance of play. Provide materials which stimulate creative play and encourage your child to play with other students.

Teach your child to cope independently with taking clothing on and off, particularly coats, art smocks, shoes, socks, and clothing with buttons or zips. Begin teaching them to do up shoelaces and open and close their own lunch box.

Above all, DON'T WORRY. When students have developed a secure relationship with their teacher, and have made friends, minor problems seem to solve themselves. If a problem persists, don't hesitate to talk to the class teacher and/or Assistant Principal or Principal.

17.3 THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

If you have a positive attitude and look forward to the first day of school, your child will probably do the same.

On day one, arrive on time. Help your child find the classroom locker identified with the name for their bag. Try to leave quickly once your child is in the classroom. Your own happy, confident farewell will help your child settle.

Make sure you have talked to your child about the difference between 'playtime' (recess) and 'lunchtime'. Show your child what food you have packed each morning for these times and say when you expect it to be eaten. Ensure the lunchbox fits easily into their school bag (drinks should not be in glass containers).

Please be prompt in collecting your child at dismissal and share the excitement of starting school.

17.4 BUDDY PROGRAM

To help your child settle into school comfortably, we operate a buddy system whereby each Prep child has an older friend. Our 'buddies' are Year 5 students.

This program promotes a caring relationship which is valued by all. The buddy is someone who mentors the child and may be sought by the Prep child in times of need in the playground.

These students regularly have lunch and work together with the Prep students on appropriate activities.

17.5 SCHOOL REQUISITES

All school supplies are distributed to children throughout the year.

At the start of every year, we ask students to bring in additional items to school. Please clearly label the following items and bring to school on your child's first day:

- Chair bag - Junior school students
- Art smock
- Library bag
- A box of tissues