



PARENTS HANDBOOK

ST ANDREWS PRIMARY SCHOOL

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About Us

Welcome to the St Andrews Primary School Parent Handbook.

This is an ever-changing document – *the latest version is available on the school website.*

If you don't find the information you need, please don't hesitate to talk to a member of staff.

Staff

Co-Principals:

Carolynne Chandler (Acting Principal)

Carolynne.Chandler@education.vic.gov.au

Hayley Styles (currently on leave)

Principals have a significant responsibility in the delivery of a high-quality school education, and to strategically manage people, financial and physical resources within a strong accountability framework.

Teachers:

Junior Group: (F-2): Sandra Hoskin

Sandra.Hoskin@education.vic.gov.au

Senior Group: (3-6): Peter Merrick

Peter.Merrick@education.vic.gov.au

STEM: Chanaka Ruwandeniya

Chanaka.Ruwandeniya@education.vic.gov.au

Japanese: Kerry Barrett

Kerry.Barrett@education.vic.gov.au

Visual Arts: Carolynne Chandler

PE: Kerry Barrett

Sustainability/Gardening: Chanaka Ruwandeniya

Intervention Support & Extension: Kerry Barrett and Carolynne Chandler

Music: Jayden Wilson

jwilson@ripplesidemusic.com

Business Manager: Michelle Commerford

Michelle.Commerford@education.vic.gov.au

Business Managers support the management of administration and business tasks for the school.

Michelle is on our school office on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesdays.

Education Support: Carissa Kinder and Shellee Wade

Education Support staff are employed to assist the learning and development of students identified with additional learning needs or specialist needs within the school. The staff have specific funding and work under the direction of the principal and classroom teacher.

Wellbeing Support: Tracey Jones

Tracey Jones is employed at STAPS for 2 days per week – working on Wednesdays and Fridays to care for, help and support the students, staff, parents and the whole school community. She is someone who students may talk to if they have any worries or concerns, or even if they just want to share their successes!

Support Dog: Angus

We are a dog friendly school and as you enter our office, you may be greeted by Angus, our principal's Maltese Cross Jack Russell. When dogs are on school grounds, we do have a few guidelines for owners to follow as per our Dogs in Schools policy, which is located on our website.

Out of School Hours Care: Tracey Jones

Our Values and Characteristics

Caring | Responsible | Courageous

Our school community's purpose is to provide students with the knowledge, skills and passion they need to be caring, responsible and courageous learners who will contribute positively to our community. Following a school wide positive behaviour support framework, our values are embedded throughout our teaching and learning practices and our community is encouraged to reflect positive behaviours that demonstrate these values.

Some of our key characteristics:

- Child-centred learning; with a focus on the whole student as an individual
- Supportive environment
- Real learning as the basis of teaching
- Inclusive and accepting of all
- Community driven
- Welcoming and friendly atmosphere
- Arts integration: Visual arts, music program
- Bush setting

Class Learning and Structure

In 2024 our two Learning Communities are the Junior Class (Years Foundation (Prep)-2) and the Senior Class (Years 3 – 6). *Our class groups meet in the morning after our whole school morning circle, to take the roll, check in with each other and have an overview of the day.*

Differentiated Learning Program

In order to best cater for our students, students work in **small Learning Groups within their class groups**. These groups are fluid, and are revised regularly, based on student needs.

Differentiated learning is the current best teaching practise to ensure that we are catering to all our students' individual learning needs and gives them opportunities to become successful, confident learners. We understand each child learns differently, and at a different pace. This flexible learning environment is responsive to the students' skills, abilities, stages of development, interests and personalities - not just their age.

"The small group targeted teaching is a favourite of mine - it allows my kids to excel in areas that they are confident in and gives them more support when they are behind in some areas. I think this is only possible and successful because we are a small school."

Literacy and Numeracy

Our **Literacy** program starts with the teaching of phonics to scaffold their progress in all areas of Literacy. Students engage in authentic reading and writing tasks to develop themselves as readers and writers, and use tools such as a personal Writers Notebook to build both skills and engagement in Literacy based experiences. **Numeracy** has a strong emphasis on real-life hands-on learning, and students use open-ended maths games and investigations to allow them to learn numeracy concepts at their own level.

Inquiry/Integrated

Our **Integrated and Inquiry** topics are derived from the Humanities, History, Geography and Science areas of the curriculum. They are delivered in a manner that allows our students to develop their own unique areas of interest and skills with the aim of challenging and extending their knowledge and enthusiasm for the wider world.

Library

One of the targeted focus areas is STAPS is Reading. One area of this is students learning to identify a 'just right' book which fits and encourages their reading level and helps them create their own class libraries and book boxes.

Students have **weekly library sessions** where they choose books to read in the classroom and are encouraged to take books home to read. Students receive a STAPS book bag at the beginning of the year in order to take books home for home reading.

On Wednesdays the Yarra Plenty Regional **Library Truck** stops out the front of the St Andrews Wadambuk Community Centre from 9 am – 11am. Throughout the year we visit the Library Truck to access this resource and learn more about libraries.

Information and Communication Technology

STAPS values the use of technology as learning tools. Teachers use Interactive Screens and Televisions to provide shared access to visual and digital resources, and the school has banks of iPads, Laptops and Chromebooks for student use in learning tasks across the curriculum. During STEM and within the class Learning Communities, students learn about cyber safety and safe practices for e-learning and use a range of resources, including the Google suite (including Google classroom) to both learn and share their learning with others. In conjunction with our STEM program, students explore robotics, digital microscopes and programming, and using technology across all areas of learning and life.

Reports

Over the last couple of years, we have moved to the implementation of focused learning cycles. This has meant that **continuous reporting through Learning Tasks** on how your child is learning can be communicated to parents throughout the term - rather than only twice per year - so you are kept informed of your child's group focus, learning needs and progress towards goals.

Formal reports on student progress are sent out electronically to parents/carers twice per school year through the Compass App, however printed reports are available on request. Reports are based against the Victorian Curriculum F-10 achievement standards. Student achievement and progress are included in the report using a teacher-based assessment against the Victorian standards, assigned as a score that accurately reflects where each student is along the relevant learning continuum for all curriculum areas taught during the reporting period.

Learning Assistance Programs

Through our continuous reporting teachers can identify students in need of learning intervention working with parents to cater for educational support. These include:

Individual Learning Improvement Plans: provided for identified students in consultation with parents and the grade teacher. This plan outlines specific learning goals and how both school and home will support the learning of each student. It focuses on identified students at risk as well as gifted students to ensure that disengagement from learning does not occur. This can include the learning which occurs in whole group, small group and independent work time.

Small Focus Group, differentiated teaching and targeted intervention support and extension:

which provides for targeted learning at the point of need for students to take them to the next step on their learning journey. This is led by classroom teachers, targeted intervention teachers and supported by our Education Support and Wellbeing staff.

Home Reading and Homework

Daily reading is proven to assist your child in becoming a confident reader. At STAPS, all students are expected to read at home each school night. In the early years of school, this involves children reading with their parents and parents reading to their children each evening, and in the upper years, it can involve more independent reading and comprehension conversations before, during and after reading. Each student is supplied with a **STAPS Reading Bag**, which comes to school for changing at the beginning of each week.

Feedback from our families indicate that some want **homework** for their children and others do not. You can indicate to your class teacher if you would like some additional work sent home to supplement class learning – either to assist with identified areas or to challenge your child. Tasks are generally sent out weekly using the Reading Bag, and involve a mixture of Reading, Writing, Spelling and/or Maths.

Specialist Programs

STEM

We are fortunate to have an amazing **STEM teacher, Chan Ruwadeniya**, who teaches Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths to our students each week. During these sessions, students develop their critical and creative thinking skills, explore new concepts in a hands-on, exploratory manner. Our STEM program challenges and extends students existing knowledge to explore broad topics around the themes of Sustainability, Environment, Change and Current Events.

Japanese

Konnichiwa! Genki desu ka? Our talented **Japanese teacher, Kerry Barrett**, takes all students for two lessons each week with a focus on communication, understanding the links between language and culture and learning through song, story and arts. Our students enjoy taking part in many Japanese cultural events and activities as well as learning the language, both verbal and written, through a wide variety of engaging means.

Art

One of the first things you may notice at STAPS is **our incredible Art Room**. Reflective of the strong art culture of St Andrews, students are given regular opportunities to express themselves creatively through a variety of visual art forms. The well-stocked art room allows students to explore a broad range of art forms including clay work, printing, painting, fine art and more. With so many local artists, we regularly enjoy working with community members to create unique art projects and learn new skills. Students have one weekly art lesson with **Carolyn Chandler**, as well as accessing and using the art room other times during the week.

Physical Education

Our **PE program** is based on the Victorian Curriculum, led by **Kerry Barrett**, our teaching team and the School Captains. Students also take part in a wide range of sporting activities throughout the year. Throughout the year we have regular visiting specialist teachers who takes sessions in sports such as football, gymnastics, tennis and netball. In Term 4 all students participate in **swimming** lessons at Eltham Leisure Centre.

In addition, students also participate in special events such as Hooptime, **Interschool sports** and a range of other sporting opportunities through the Sporting Schools Grants.

Sustainability/Gardening

We are excited this year to have dedicated time each week exploring **Sustainability and working and learning about our amazing Kitchen Garden and Native Flora**. St Andrews wonderful bush setting is something we value as a community, and caring for our environment is highly valued by our school and wider community. Working with **Chan Ruwadeniya** we will learn about digging, planting, exploring, understanding and caring for our school gardens and the wider environment.

Puggles

Each week we will spend time as a whole school working together to build relationships and to explore connections with our wider community – and this is **Puggles**. *A Puggle is the name for a baby/young echidna, and our school logo is an echidna!* In Puggles we will explore our school values together – **Being Courageous, Responsible and Caring** – and we will have fun exploring and learning about how we live these out as a school community and in connecting with our wider community. We will investigate our interests and passions – and there will be talking, connecting, creating and investigating as a whole school community.

Wellbeing

Our school acknowledges that **student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked**. STAPS is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We know that students reach their full potential when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture helps to engage students and support them in their learning. We have dedicated **Wellbeing lessons** each week, including topics such as *Respectful Relationships* and *URStrong Friendology* as well as different aspects of encouraging positive and inclusive behaviour and organising wellbeing experiences which encourage empathy and awareness.

Brain Breaks

Attention spans can vary and kids need to move. Teachers give our students '**brain breaks**' as needed (5-10 min breaks during a lesson), often involving movement such as yoga, dance or a game. This release allows students to come back to their learning with fresh energy.

Wellbeing Support

We are lucky to have **Tracey Jones** employed at STAPS whose aim is to care for, help and support the students, staff, parents and the whole school community. Tracey works at STAPS on Wednesdays and Fridays. Tracey commenced at STAPS through the funded School Chaplaincy Program, but despite what this might suggest, she is not teaching religious education, but rather acts as someone who students may talk to if they have any worries or concerns, or even if they just want to share their successes! For more information on the support Tracey can offer you child please speak to the Principal.

School-wide Positive Behaviour and Berry Street Education Model

We have implemented the **School-wide positive behaviour support** (SWPBS), which is an evidence-based framework that helps to develop positive, safe, and supportive learning cultures. One aspect of this is Echidna Spike Cards/Stamps, which are given to students in recognition of behaviour that exemplifies our school values (***caring, courageous and responsible***). With an emphasis on positive re-enforcement rather than punishment SWPBS is a fantastic framework that has been shown to improve social, emotional, behavioural and academic outcomes for children and young people.

To complement other wellbeing initiatives and our School-wide Positive Behaviour Framework, the STAPS team have begun training in the **Berry Street Model**. This two-year process supports us with practical, classroom-based strategies to increase the engagement of all students, including those with complex, unmet learning needs. The education model enables schools to support students' self-regulation, relationships and wellbeing to increase student engagement and significantly improve academic achievement.

Extra-Curricular and Other Programs

Music Tuition and Band Program

Throughout the year all students will take part in a general music program exploring rhythm and sound. In addition, we have **Jayden Wilson from Rippleside Music offering instrumental tuition** for students in guitar, drums, bass, ukulele, mandolin, banjo, piano and singing. These lessons are an additional charge directly from Jayden; carried out during the school day in a staggered timetable so that student learning is uninterrupted. To enquire about individual music lessons please contact the School Office or Jayden.

Music tuition students have the option of being part of the highly popular **Band Program** (generally run from Year 3 and above). Current fees for the band program can be found by contacting the School Office, and the cost of the Band Program is subsidised by PFA fundraising. The band teacher, Jayden, makes decisions about which students should be in which bands and works with them to make decisions on their song choices. Bands practise each week and play at school events and the end of year Band Night is always a highlight!

School Camps, Excursions and Incursions

STAPS aims to run an annual camp program that consists of:

- *Foundation-Year 2 School dinner*
- *Years 3 - 6 three-day camp*

We aim to provide students with a range of **camp experiences** linked with their classroom learning, social and emotional skills, environmental and cultural experiences. The school aims to have all camps planned and priced at the commencement of the school year and details will be communicated to parents as soon as practicable. Camps may change depending on year level configuration and costing. Previous camps have included Sovereign Hill, Surf Camp and Camp Woorabinda.

Excursions and Incursions play a vital part in cementing learning through first-hand experience. Excursions are related to the learning and inquiry unit currently undertaken by the students. Transport for excursions will be in seat belted buses, by parent/staff car - with suitable child car seats, or by train. A Valid Working with Children's Check, and other paperwork is required for any parents who assist with driving.

Breakfast Club

Each Friday morning from 8.30 am – 8.50 am during the school term STAPS offers **Breakfast Club**. All students, their parents and special persons are welcome to join together and enjoy cereal and/ or toast, sitting together before school starts. This breakfast is at no cost to our STAPS families.

Little Puggles Playgroup

Each Thursday morning from 9:00am – 10:30am families are invited to join in our **Little Puggles Playgroup** for children from birth to starting school age and their carers. Facilitator led (by Carolyne Chandler), it is open to both members of the STAPS and wider local community and is an opportunity to play, socialise and relax together with other families with young children. *Little Puggles Playgroup* runs in our OSHC Room, next door to our Junior Learning Community.

Jujitsu

At various times after school Eltham Martial Arts Academy runs a user-pays one-hour **Jujitsu class** for students and community members aged 5 and up in our Multipurpose Room on site. For current class information and costing please contact Leo - leonardous.vander@gmail.com.

Out of School Hours Care (OSHC)

Educators: Tracey Jones

Operating Hours:

Before School Care Program: Tuesday to Friday 7.00 – 8.45 am

After School Care Program: Tuesday to Friday 3.30 – 6.00 pm

(Mondays may be available if sufficient need arises.)

School Holidays and Curriculum Day (Vacation Care) operates for some days over each holidays – information is provided coming up to each Curriculum Day or towards the end of term.

We run our own **OSHC program** from a dedicated room. Our program is a safe, nurturing and fun place for students who need before or after school care. Students engage in a range of indoor and outdoor activities. Children can be enrolled in OSHC on a fulltime, casual or emergency basis. All children using the OSHC Program must have a current enrolment form. Fee information, Child Care Subsidy (CCS) information and enrolment forms can be collected from the office.

Starting School

Foundation (Prep) and Beginning School Assessments

At the beginning of each year new **Foundation (Prep) students may not attend school on Wednesdays for the first weeks of the year** (usually 4-6 weeks). Foundation students are often exhausted starting school, and it gives them some down time in the middle of each week. On one of these Wednesdays your child will be assigned an individual time to come in and take part in Literacy and Numeracy assessments with their teacher. This allows your teacher to understand your child better and where to begin their learning journey.

Working Together Across the School (including Buddies)

Upon commencement at STAPS, new students are introduced to **our Senior students**, with the aim of a smooth transition to school. Through Puggles and whole school activities sessions, we encourage a healthy connection between year levels in our school community. “Buddies” activities (where Year 5/6 students work with our students in their first years at school) are incorporated within our whole school activities. Our School Leaders take very seriously the responsibility to care for and support our young students, and STAPS students describe STAPS “*like a big family together*”.

Uniform

At St Andrews Primary School students are **strongly encouraged to wear their uniform every day**. However, we understand that for some student’s individual expression or sensory issues make it difficult for them to wear the uniform. We would rather a child enjoys coming to school than force this issue. ***Please note however that it is a requirement that uniforms are worn on excursions and for class photos.***

Uniforms can be purchased from the school office. We also have a selection of second-hand uniform items for purchase. Please label all items clearly with your child’s name.

Shoes

Children should be encouraged to wear **sneakers and/or school shoes** which allow for movement. Open toed shoes, sandals, or thongs are not permitted.

Hats

STAPS is a Sunsmart School. This means it is compulsory for students to wear hats when outside in Terms 1 and 4; and for some parts of Terms 2 and 3 depending on advice from Sunsmart regarding UV levels. Hats need to be wide brimmed; our school hats are available from our uniform store.

Lost and Found

It is inevitable that at some stage your child’s jumper or hat will not come home. There is a lost and found corner in the hallway next to the library. Ask at the office if you are unsure where this is. Also check around the classroom entrance as sometimes these get hung on the incorrect peg.

Please **label clothes worn to school** so we can return items to their owners.

Food and Drink

Water Bottles

Students are requested to bring **clearly named water bottles** to school to keep on their tables/in their classroom and take with them to sporting activities. There are drinking fountains around the school which can be used to fill these as needed during the day.

Lunchboxes and Food Allergies

Our **eating breaks** throughout the day consist of Fruit Snack (10am), Recess (11am) and Lunch (1.30pm). Please pack a lunch box for your child accordingly. We encourage “nude food” as we value sustainability and wish to minimise rubbish.

Please be aware that we may have students or staff with **food allergies** we need to be aware of. Information will be shared to inform the school community so we can be aware not to bring those foods to school. Currently we have a staff member with a severe allergy to mushrooms. **Please do not send any food to school containing mushrooms.**

Lunch Orders

We offer **Lunch Orders through Smiths Gully Café on Fridays**. Orders must be placed online by 11:00am on the Friday, and a range of lovely and delicious main foods, drink choices and special treats are available to order.

Special Canteen days run “in-house” including Pancake Day, Sushi Day and BBQ Day.

Our senior students also run canteen sales from the window on occasions. This includes icy poles (\$1) in summer and hot chocolates (\$1.50) in colder months.

Birthdays

Students may bring in a small treat to share with classmates to **celebrate their birthday**. This treat does not have to be food based. Due to various allergies, food intolerances and personal choice we encourage parents to think creatively and consult the classroom teachers regarding specific issues for each class.

Toys and Fidget Items

Students are permitted to use fidget items (**fidget tools**) in the classroom. These are to help focus, not to be a distraction. The classroom teacher will make the call whether or not the item is beneficial to focus and learning. STAPS has a range of fidget tool items at the school which can be utilised by students should they be needed.

Students are discouraged from bringing toys to school, especially from bringing expensive toys to school. If on the rare occasion that one of these items needs to be brought to school, then it must be given to the classroom teacher for safe storage. Students sometimes bring a soft toy to school for comfort. **Only one toy is recommended**, and there will be times in the learning day where it will need to go into their school bag, or a designated space in the classroom. The school accepts no responsibility for items damaged, broken or lost at school.

School Day – What Goes On

Timetable (and example school day)

At the start of the school year your teacher will provide you with a specific **timetable** for their classroom. Timetables may change each term, guided by subjects and specialist timetables.

8:45 am	Students play outside
8:55 am	Students line up in their homeroom groups and prepare for the school day, ready to gather for our Morning Circle
9:00 am	The whole school gathers for Morning Circle (where we greet each other, share announcements and participate in a <i>Positive Primer</i> to get us ready for the day of learning) then Students move inside and generally undertake Reading and Writing sessions At approximately 10:00 am students stop work for a fruit snack break/brain break
11:00 am	Morning Recess Time: Students play in the front <i>or</i> the back of the school grounds
11:30 am	Students return to class for Maths and other learning areas including; STEM, Japanese, Art, Inquiry, PE/Sport, Wellbeing (Social and Emotional Learning), Sustainability/Gardening.
1:30 pm	Eating Time for lunch
1:40 pm	Lunch Recess Time outside
2:25 pm	Last hourly lesson (focus as above)
3:25 pm	Students are dismissed to the front of the school to be picked up

Brain Breaks occur during most learning blocks, dependent on the class and student needs

On the final day of each Term school will finish early at 2:25pm, with a special 1:25pm finish on the very last day of each year.

Term Dates

Please refer to our website for information about term and other important dates:

www.standrews.ps.com.au

Assemblies

Our **assemblies** are student lead, engaging and unique to STAPS. Assemblies are held fortnightly on Fridays at 3:00pm. Please see the newsletter for the specific dates. Parents and guests are very welcome.

Attendance

Attendance at primary school is compulsory. All children should attend school every day unless ill.

Attendance rolls are marked first thing in the morning. Parents/caregivers are required to use the Compass app to notify of absences. As per DET requirements, parents/carers will be contacted if no absence notification has been received.

Lateness/Late Arrivals

Punctuality at school is very important. Children are expected to be at school prior to the bell at 9am. Parents are required to sign in their children at the front office when they are late. Students who are late repeatedly will have a statement in their report highlighting this issue.

Leaving the School Grounds

Children are not permitted to leave the school prior to dismissal time unless accompanied by a parent or an approved adult as per parental instructions. **Parents/approved adults must sign children out at the office.**

Early Leavers and Student Pick Up (by someone other than a parent)

Parents who wish to collect their children from school prior to the normal dismissal time must **call at the Office and have them signed out on Compass or via the sign out book.** A staff member will retrieve your child. We ask that you notify staff as early as practicable so that we can make this transition as simple as possible.

If you are unable to pick up your child from school, we ask that you communicate this to your child's teacher or the school office. If they are new to the school, and have not picked up your child before, we ask that they also introduce him or herself to your child's teacher at pick up.

Extended Family Holidays

Please notify the school of intended leave with the dates students will be away.

Curriculum Days

Each year School Council may schedule up to 4 student-free days (when student instruction does not occur) for professional development, school planning and administration, curriculum development and student assessment and reporting. These dates are planned and approved at the School Council meetings. The first day of Term 1 each year must be a student-free day in all government schools; and one student-free day is to be nominated for assessment and reporting. Additionally, the principal may hold a professional practice day (PPD) for teachers at the school, meaning an additional, fifth student-free day. **Curriculum days** will be scheduled well in advance and parents notified.

Mobile Phones and Personal Mobile Devices (including Smart Watches)

St Andrews Primary School understands that students may bring a personal mobile phone or other device to school, particularly if they are travelling independently to and from school.

At STAPS, students who choose to bring mobile phones/personal mobile devices to school must have them switched off and securely stored during school hours, in accordance with Department of Education policy and guidelines. Exceptions to this policy may be applied if certain conditions are met (see the relevant policy or speak with the principal for further information). When emergencies occur, parents or carers should reach their child by calling the school's office.

At STAPS students who have a mobile phone or other personal mobile device are to hand them in to the office at the beginning of the day, where they will be securely stored, and they can then be collected at the end of the school day.

Fire Ratings and Bushfire Information

Situated in the township of St Andrews as we are, **STAPS is a BARR (Bushfire at Risk Register) Level 1 School**, and as such we have a fire safety plan which dictates what happens on **EXTREME** and **CATASTROPHIC** fire rating days. On these days, in summary, on days of *Extreme Rating* the school is closed and we relocate to Hurstbridge Primary School, and on days of *Catastrophic Rating* we are closed.

In more detail, enacting these processes actually depends on the **Fire Danger Rating for the Nillumbik Local Government Area (LGA)**. Please note that this can be different to the state or region Fire Danger Rating.

Generally, if either RELOCATION or CLOSURE is required, the school will be contacted by the Department of Education on the day prior and informed of the rating and the effect on our school. **This is then communicated with the school community via Compass and social media.** There is always the off chance that our LGA rating could change to *Extreme/Catastrophic* overnight. If this is the case, **we will also inform you on Compass and Facebook.**

We highly recommend, whatever the school's plan, that you always follow your own family Fire Danger Safety plans. If you choose for your children to be absent from school on these occasions of fire danger we are in full support of this, and just ask that you mark your children's absence as per usual on Compass.

In the Event of a Relocation (EXTREME Fire Rating in the Nillumbik LGA):

- You will be notified of relocation via Compass and Facebook.
- **No-one is to attend the school site.**
- School operates as per usual at **Hurstbridge Primary School.**
- If you need OSHC (Before or After School Care), you can access the service at Hurstbridge PS.
- For students who will attend, parents are to bring their students directly to Hurstbridge Primary School. A STAPS teacher will be stationed at the front of school to greet you. If you cannot see us, please take your child directly to the office, where we will also have a staff member stationed.
- The STAPS students will work with STAPS teachers and staff on learning tasks and learning experiences as a STAPS group at Hurstbridge PS.

In the event of a Closure (CATASTROPHIC Fire Rating in the Nillumbik LGA):

- You will be notified of closure via Compass and Facebook.
- No-one is to attend the school site.
- School learning is not expected on this day.

We understand that all this may be a new situation for many parents and may also raise questions or feelings of unease about different parts of the process. Please, do not hesitate to get in contact with the principal and they will be very happy to answer any questions, and clarify any parts of this process.



Financial and Administrative information

Office Hours/ Contact Details

Our **Business Manager, Michelle**, is in attendance from **Monday to Wednesday**. The school office is open from 8.45 am to 4.00pm on these days for questions, payments and school uniform orders.

Phone: 9710 1255 Email: Michelle.Commerford@education.vic.gov.au; st.andrews.ps@education.vic.gov.au

On days when Michelle is not in attendance, please see the principal.

Fees – Voluntary Contributions

Information about Parent Voluntary Contributions will be sent home at the end and beginning of each year. The contribution amounts are approved by School Council annually and consist of Key Student Learning Items, Optional Items and other Voluntary Financial Contributions. Families may make a once off payment or pay in instalments. Additional school charges will arise throughout the year on a term-by-term basis for camps, excursions and special events.

Conveyance Allowance

Families in rural and regional Victoria can get help with the cost of transporting their children to their nearest school or campus. This is known as the **conveyance allowance**. It is a contribution towards transport costs and is not intended to cover the full cost of transporting children to and from school. To see if you are eligible and learn how to apply please see Michelle in the office or visit <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/>

Communication and the Compass App

At St Andrews Primary School the door is always open! We encourage you to come in and chat with us about any questions or concerns you may have. We can always arrange a meeting time to allow the appropriate time to discuss your matter if required.

We use **Compass** as our Parent Portal. This system is accessible via an app on mobile devices, or via a computer.

Using Compass, you will be able to:

- Access information regarding announcements, upcoming events and news (including newsletters)
- Access your child's Student Progress (Learning Tasks) and Semester Reports
- Book your Parent/Student/Teacher conferences
- View up-to-date class and school attendance information
- Approve or enter upcoming or past absences for your son/daughter
- Approve upcoming excursions (or download and print forms if you prefer)
- Pay voluntary financial contributions and charges (please arrange this with the office if you would like to use this option)
- Update your registered email and mobile number (used for SMS alerts) details

STAPS Community - Facebook

St Andrews Primary School uses a Private Group on Facebook – **STAPS Community** to share information and communicate with the community. If you are on Facebook, please join us when you join our STAPS community.

Bank Details

St Andrews PS

BSB: 063 222

Acc: 009 011 82

Medical Needs

Accidents or Illness at School

If a student becomes **sick or injured** in the classroom, they will be monitored in by staff and if necessary, office staff will contact parents to collect their child. If a child suffers a minor injury during yard duty, the yard duty teacher is responsible for administering first aid using the resources in the yard duty bag. Staff will record details of all children who are injured or unwell in the folder supplied. In the case of a serious injury and all head injuries, the staff member on duty will complete the accident register form as applicable, and parents will be notified.

Please note, sick children should not be at school.

Allergies/ Anaphylaxis

If your child suffers from **allergies and/or anaphylaxis** please inform the office so we can implement the relevant *action plan*. Our school is not a nut free school and we work closely with parents to ensure the safest environment possible. The anaphylaxis policy is available on the school website.

Food Allergies

Please be aware that we may have students or staff with **food allergies** we need to be aware of. Information will be shared to inform the school community so we can be aware not to bring those foods to school. Currently we have a staff member with a severe allergy to mushrooms. **Please do not send any food to school containing mushrooms.**

Asthma

All students with **asthma** require an *Asthma Management Plan*. Please contact the office if your child has asthma. First aid trained staff can apply the administering of Asthma inhalers. The medication for asthma sufferers will be kept in the office, or with the student. These plans are required to be updated each year.

Medication

All medication should be handed in at the office for administration by staff. Staff generally are not permitted to **administer medication** to students, unless in an emergency (e.g. use of EpiPen for severe allergic reactions) or unless you have completed the *medication pro-forma*. This medication is then stored appropriately, and staff will be responsible for administering such medication. It is the responsibility of the parent/s to ensure that all medicines are in date.

School Grounds

Nestled in a **bush setting**, our students have **spacious grounds** to play and learn in, including: a full-size football oval, tennis and basketball courts, two fantastic playgrounds, cubby village (*thanks to the wonderful St Andrews Men's Shed*) a gaga pit, swings (coming soon) and sand and water play areas.

Car Park and monitored School Crossing

Parking is available at the front of the school and at the tennis court car park. Please obey any *no standing* signs at the front of the school. There is a **monitored school crossing** at the top entry of the school on Hurstbridge-Kinglake Road. *Do not allow children to cross roads or enter car parking areas unsupervised.*

Kitchen Garden

Through the dedication of our parent and community members we have thriving **kitchen garden** with seasonal veggies and herbs (using water wise wicking beds). The produce is used in school cooking classes, sold by the students at the St Andrews Market and enjoyed by our community visitors. We also save seeds for next season.

Cubbyland

During Terms 2 and 3, students are invited into **Cubbyland** during recess and lunch to play. Students play in groups, negotiate for sticks and build spaces within this natural, bush like environment. At the beginning of Term 2, a whole school meeting is held to establish the rules for Cubbyland to ensure all students have a safe and enjoyable time together. It is always a hub of activity with self-pointed teams gathering materials, building their masterpieces as well as negotiating a whole host of aspects such as roles and common rules of use and behaviour. This is not only a source of joy and excitement, but also a valuable learning and development experience for all involved.

Working Bees

To keep our school neat, tidy and safe, we invite parents to attend four **Working Bees** per year. Working Bees are generally held on weekends. Dates will be provided in advance. Jobs to be undertaken will be advertised prior to the date so that those that cannot attend can still assist our school. On the day, we ask that you bring along suitable tools and safety equipment. The school will provide some refreshments and sausages for the workers.

Parental Involvement

We welcome **parent involvement**. The skills, talent and energy brought to the school by parents is a vital and valued resource for the school. Being involved is an enjoyable and rewarding way to enrich your child's educational experience and build friendships in our friendly and welcoming school community.

There are a variety of ways in which parents can be involved in the school including:

- Parents and Friends Group (PFA)
- School Council membership
- Parent helpers (classroom reading/library/gardening)
- Puggles Guest Educator
- Working bees

Parents should feel welcome in the school and understand the important role they play in their child's education. If you have a particular interest or strength, such as gardening, cooking, sport or math and would like volunteer your time, ***please see your classroom teacher. We love having the community join us!***

Parents and Community Members helping in the school during school hours must have a current valid *Working with Children Check* on file at the school office.

Parents entering the school during class time must enter via the office, sign the visitor's book, and obtain a visitor's pass from a member of staff.