

2015 Prep Information

GUIDED INQUIRY:

At HPS the Guided Inquiry perspective is reflected in all aspects of our teaching.

Guided Inquiry is a perspective on learning rather than a formula for teaching. This approach informs and clarifies all of our teaching and reflects our beliefs about student learning. It is not prescriptive, however it acknowledges the significance of the fundamentals of high quality teaching such as explicit teaching, student voice, provision of choice and personalised learning.

Literacy:

The Early Years Literacy Model is followed at this level. Literacy includes reading, writing, oral language and speaking and listening.

Reading:

- Whole class instruction – modelled and shared reading.
- Guided reading – small instruction group, grouped according to individual needs.
- Home reading – children are encouraged to read at home every night. Children will bring home take home books that are intended to be slightly easier than the texts read in class. This allows the child to enjoy home reading time and demonstrate their skills and fluency to parents as they listen to their child's oral reading. This gives children a feeling and sense of accomplishment and pride in their reading. After listening to your child read aloud, please ensure you or your child make a comment/sign their reading journal.
- Children will have the Magic 100 Words in their reading journal, which they need to practise reading regularly. We encourage you to practise the words on flash cards or by using technology to make it more engaging and to ensure your child can read these words in any situation.
- Library – Children enjoy all types of literature, learn about authors, fiction and non-fiction texts and how the library is organised. Please note children are required to bring a library bag to borrow any books. They are allowed to borrow 2 books each week. Our Library day is Wednesday and will commence in March.

Writing:

- Studies of a variety Text Types such as repetitive, narratives, descriptions, greeting cards and recounts.
- Students participate in modelled writing, shared writing, independent writing, guided writing, free choice writing and writer's notebook activities.
- Word Study – During Term 1 and 2, weekly word study will focus on the phonics and high frequency words. Personalised spelling lists (*Forever Words*) will commence in Term 3.
- Handwriting – focusing on formation, size and spacing, following Victorian Modern Cursive.

Oral Language/Speaking and Listening:

- Speaking in both formal and informal situations during our daily program.
- Engaging in discussion on a variety of class topics – all children are encouraged to contribute their ideas – every response is valued.
- Circles – whole class circles to get to know each other and feel connected in the classroom.
- Author’s Chair – each child is encouraged to participate in Author’s Chair where they are given the opportunity to read and share their writing with the rest of the class. This takes place at the end of every writing session.
- Show and Tell –Children will commence fortnightly Show and Tell in Week 6. A timetable will be sent home in the coming weeks so that you know which day/week your child’s show and tell is. Please help them prepare what they will bring and a few sentences describing their item.
- Formal presentations are usually based on C.B.L topics throughout the year. Students will follow guidelines set out on a scoring rubric to assist them to present a more formal talk to the class. This will commence in Term 2.

MATHEMATICS:

The Early Years Numeracy Model is followed at our school.

As students work towards the achievement of the standards in Mathematics, they begin to use mathematical symbols and language to describe their mathematical explorations of daily life. Specific areas for learning include Number & Algebra, Geometry & Measurement and Statistics & Probability.

Features of the structured classroom program include:

- Daily one hour Mathematics block
- Whole class instruction and small group teaching
- Continuous monitoring and assessment
- Developmental stages of Mathematics
- Guided, Shared and Modelled Mathematics
- Whole school planning and organisation
- Open Ended tasks
- Hands on tasks
- Rich Assessment Tasks
- Children will often be divided into fluid groups based on individual needs.

CHALLENGED BASED LEARNING (C.B.L.):

Challenge Based Learning (CBL) is a multidisciplinary form of guided inquiry where students are taught to work collaboratively, pose questions, learn about compelling issues, propose creative and innovative solutions to real problems and importantly, take action. The approach asks students to reflect on their learning and the impact of their actions as well as publish their solutions to an audience. A technology rich environment enhances CBL and contributes to active engagement of students.

Our C.B.L program incorporates the Domains of Science, Humanities, Civics & Citizenship, Health & Technology. Our whole school concepts this year are *Identity*,

Sustainability, Strength & Discovery.

In Prep the big focus for Term 1 is, '*events in my life*' and the essential question is '*Who Am I?*'

SPECIALIST LESSONS:

All students take part in a lesson of the following specialist subjects:

- Visual Arts with Miss Lauren McKenna
- Physical Education with Mrs. Pereena Sinclair
- Performing Arts with Miss Lauren McKenna
- Languages – Mandarin with Mrs. Qing Liu and Mr. Robin Miao.
or German with Frau Helena Salles
- Library with the classroom teacher in the Information Resource Centre
- Special Religious Instruction (S.R.I.) – Christian RE might be offered to those families wanting their children to attend, depending on church volunteers.

INFORMATION and COMMUNICATION

TECHNOLOGY:

At Highvale PS students learn to utilise a variety of learning technologies to enhance their learning.

- All children will utilise Interactive Whiteboards, iPads & computers within their classroom as a tool to enhance their learning.
- Our 2 main resources, which can be accessed both at school and home are Mathletics & Reading Eggs. Passwords and Logins will be sent home shortly.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES:

'Restorative Practices' shifts from the traditional punitive approach to behaviour management to an approach which focuses on building relationships and repairing harm when something goes wrong. This involves, engaging students in relationship building activities such as 'Circles' or when something goes wrong, understanding what happened, who has been hurt and what needs to happen to repair the harm.

Restorative Practices are underpinned by the following concepts:

- Misbehaviour is viewed as harming the relationship between people
- Where harm has occurred there is a responsibility for the person or persons who caused the harm to 'fix it'
- Problem-solving focuses on healing and making things right

These practices require a shift in philosophy from traditional punitive models of behaviour management to those relational models which, as well as holding wrong doers accountable for their behaviour, provides support for the community affected by the wrong doing.

Restorative Practices:

- enhance social skills
- build effective relationships
- develop interpersonal and problem solving skills
- build empathy and understanding of others
- reward positive behaviours.

Transition:

Kinder – Prep is not the only transition program your child will be involved in. We support the children to transition smoothly each year with the following:

- Better Buddies Day (Held 1 x Term)
- Orientation Mornings
- Year 6/Prep Buddy program
- Activities involving their whole year level
- Activities involving working across different year levels

HOMEWORK:

Students in Prep – 2 are expected to read with an adult on a nightly basis, learn the Magic 100 words and their weekly Forever Words (Term 3 and 4) at home.

This year, as part of our policy and review process, the School Leadership Team and School Council will lead an evaluation of our current Homework policy and practices. Due to the incredibly diverse range of beliefs and practices regarding homework, an inquiry into approaches to homework in Victorian schools, focusing on the impact on student learning was completed by the Victorian Parliament's Education and Training Committee in August last year. The final report can be accessed at <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/etc/article/2169> .

In reviewing our Homework Policy, we will draw upon the key findings and recommendations in this report as well as Department of Education and Training guidelines. When considering the committee findings it is also important to acknowledge that each school community is different. We will therefore also seek input from our school families, staff and students to create a HPS Homework Policy which best reflects the latest research, but also acknowledges the diverse views of our school community.

There will be opportunity for all families to have some input into an updated Highvale Homework Policy. Make sure you stay up to date by reading the newsletter and notices if you would like to be involved.

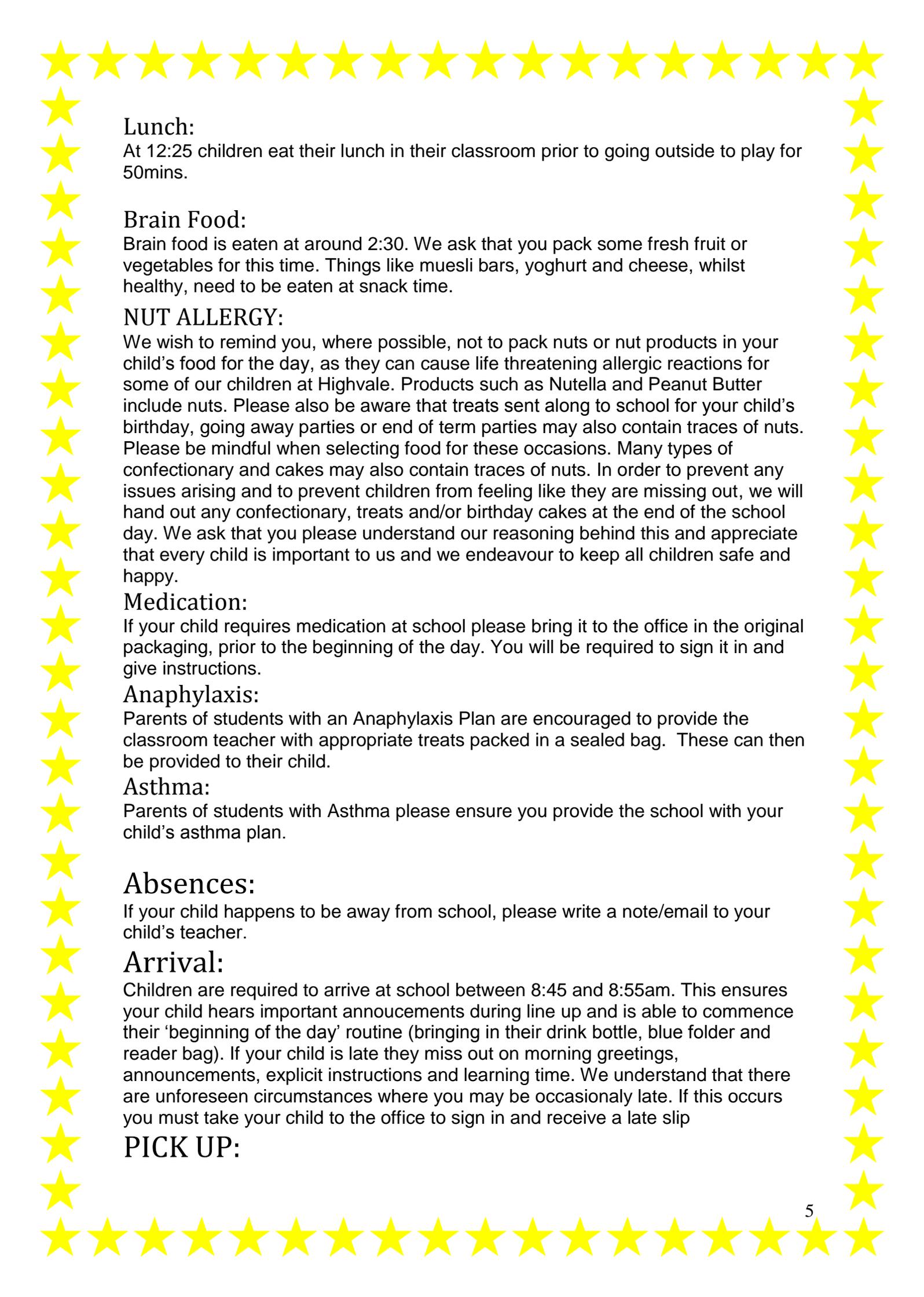
REPORTING:

- Parent teacher meet & greets and interviews are held in Term 1 & Term 3 respectively.
- The meet and greet is held so that parents have the opportunity to tell the classroom teacher about their child's strengths, weaknesses or any areas of concern.
- There is an interim report at the end of Term 1.
- Formal written reports are issued at the end of Term 2 and Term 4.
- Student Assessment Portfolios will be sent home at the end of each term, providing a snap shot of your child's learning.

FOOD AT SCHOOL:

Snack/Playlunch:

Children eat a small snack at 10:50 each day prior to going outside to play for 30 mins. We encourage your child's snack to be healthy, limiting the amount of sugar content to help sustain their energy until the lunch break.



Lunch:

At 12:25 children eat their lunch in their classroom prior to going outside to play for 50mins.

Brain Food:

Brain food is eaten at around 2:30. We ask that you pack some fresh fruit or vegetables for this time. Things like muesli bars, yoghurt and cheese, whilst healthy, need to be eaten at snack time.

NUT ALLERGY:

We wish to remind you, where possible, not to pack nuts or nut products in your child's food for the day, as they can cause life threatening allergic reactions for some of our children at Highvale. Products such as Nutella and Peanut Butter include nuts. Please also be aware that treats sent along to school for your child's birthday, going away parties or end of term parties may also contain traces of nuts. Please be mindful when selecting food for these occasions. Many types of confectionary and cakes may also contain traces of nuts. In order to prevent any issues arising and to prevent children from feeling like they are missing out, we will hand out any confectionary, treats and/or birthday cakes at the end of the school day. We ask that you please understand our reasoning behind this and appreciate that every child is important to us and we endeavour to keep all children safe and happy.

Medication:

If your child requires medication at school please bring it to the office in the original packaging, prior to the beginning of the day. You will be required to sign it in and give instructions.

Anaphylaxis:

Parents of students with an Anaphylaxis Plan are encouraged to provide the classroom teacher with appropriate treats packed in a sealed bag. These can then be provided to their child.

Asthma:

Parents of students with Asthma please ensure you provide the school with your child's asthma plan.

Absences:

If your child happens to be away from school, please write a note/email to your child's teacher.

Arrival:

Children are required to arrive at school between 8:45 and 8:55am. This ensures your child hears important announcements during line up and is able to commence their 'beginning of the day' routine (bringing in their drink bottle, blue folder and reader bag). If your child is late they miss out on morning greetings, announcements, explicit instructions and learning time. We understand that there are unforeseen circumstances where you may be occasionally late. If this occurs you must take your child to the office to sign in and receive a late slip

PICK UP:

School ends at 3:30pm, if you are unable to pick up your child by 3.45pm they must be enrolled at Academy for Kids.

Before School Care: 7:00am – 8:45am

After School Care: 3:30pm – 6:00pm

For costs and bookings please call **0405 323 357**

Payments:

When bringing money to school for special events please put the money in a clearly labelled envelope in your child's blue folder.

For excursions and incursion where the levy hasn't been paid upfront, please use the school money envelopes which will be sent home with the permission forms.

Alternatively Bpay is available.

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support

The **School-Wide Positive Behaviour (SWPB)** framework aims to create a positive school climate, a culture of student competence, and an open, responsive management system for school leaders, staff, students, and parents.

The purpose of implementing School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support at Highvale P.S is to:

Embed a common language and behavioural expectations for the whole school community.

To provide a safe and orderly environment to enhance learning.

To use evidence based decision making using PBS data.

To provide a common teaching base in the form of a behavioural matrix.

To embed a culture of positive behaviour through explicit teaching

The internationally-renowned positive behaviour support program is currently underway in many Victorian schools. Our first goal this year will be for the students', staff, and parents to be involved in developing our school wide expected behaviours, which will be visible in all classrooms and areas around the school. A parent information evening will be held to enable parents to be introduced to SWPB in more depth, as well as involve them in developing parent specific expectations. Here is an example of the work we have done already as we begin 'phase one' of the implementation of the framework.

Highvale P.S. Behaviour Purpose Statement (2014)- *At Highvale Primary School, we aim to develop students who are resilient, caring and connected to each other. Our goal is to establish and maintain a positive and supportive community, where we are inclusive and mindful of others. Within this safe environment students are encouraged to fulfil their academic potential.*

	Always	Learning Areas	Play Areas	Walkways	eLearning	Grounds	Toilets
EXPECTATION	We are Responsible We are Respectful We are Honest and show Integrity We are Committed We are Safe						

Matrix of expectations (2015) - This makes it clear, for staff and students, exactly what behaviour is expected in all settings, both in and out of the classroom.

TIQBIZ – SCHOOL – PARENT COMMUNICATION APP

Good communication between the school and parents is essential if we are to achieve the best for our students. This is why we have joined Tiqbiz to support us with this.

Tiqbiz is an app which will allow the school to push announcements, notices and newsletters to smartphones, tablet devices and computers with ease. Rather than receiving a paper copy or by email you can now receive your newsletter wherever you are. This app will also allow us to send messages to a particular group of parents e.g. to let them know about a bus that is running late or a reminder about an excursion. A message can even be sent to the whole community with the push of a button.

This is a free app and is easily downloaded. We have a copy for everyone here with the instructions for how to download the app. Please take one on your way out if you have not already been given

one. We encourage you all to take advantage of this FREE service. We will continue sending the Newsletter as a hard copy home this term, though will be working towards utilising Tiqbiz as our preferred form of communication as the year progresses.

TESTING ON WEDNESDAYS

On Wednesdays in February, no prep children come to school. Instead, they are allocated 2 half hour interview times with their teacher. Times were provided on the first day of school. These tests are a Department of Education requirement, which all prep children in the state complete. No results are given to the school; however it is a nice way for us to get to know the children better during this one-on-one session.

CAR PARK and TURNING CIRCLE SAFETY

PICK UP and DROP OFF ZONE

This is an important notice for all parents outlining the rules and safety procedures **everyone** is expected to follow with regard to using the school driveway, turning circle and car park.

The safety of our students is paramount. Your support is essential.

The rules are:

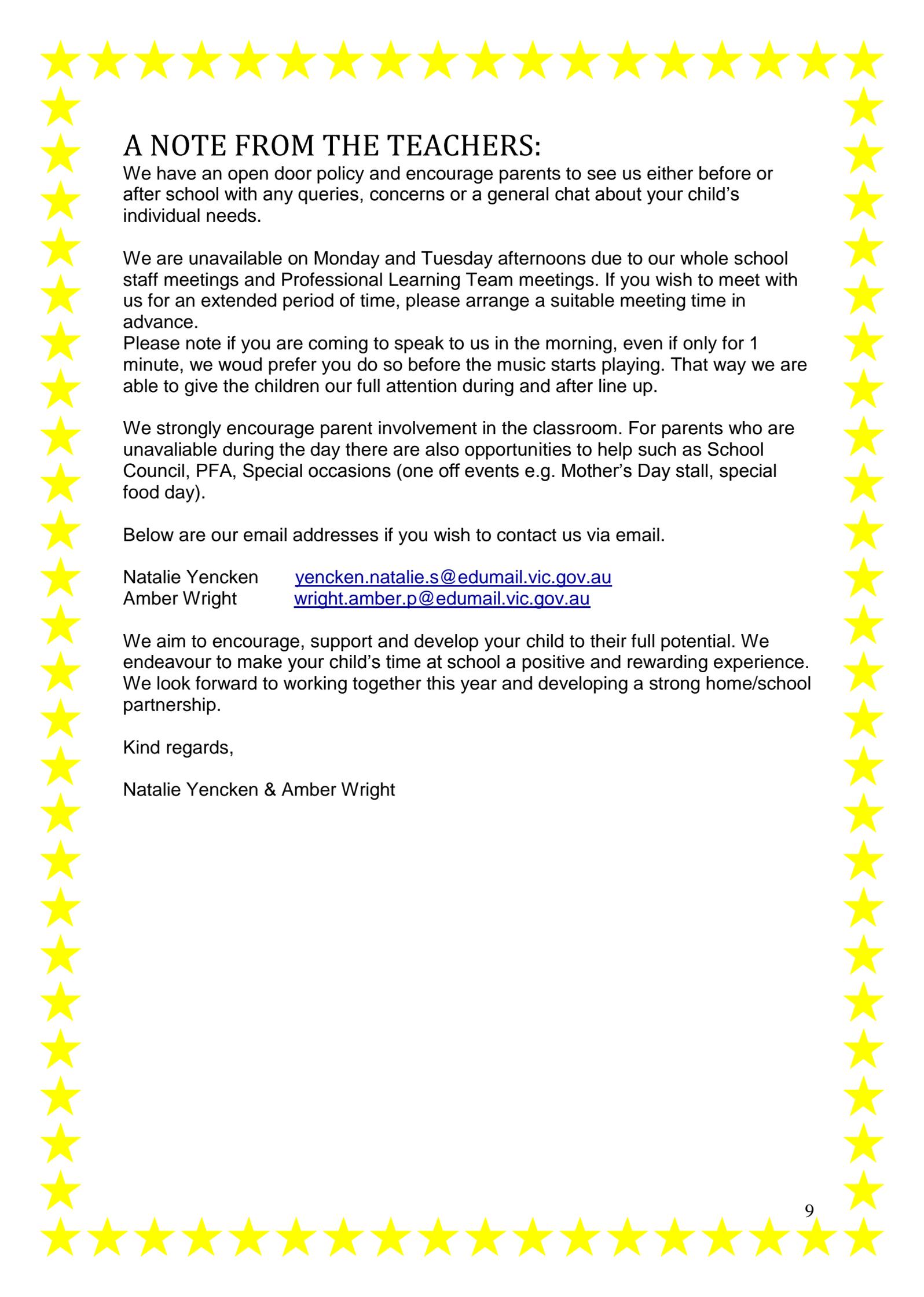
- The car park is for STAFF use only between the hours of 8.20am – 4.00pm.
- During these hours parents may only use the staff car park when it is for official School business. Official School business means an official appointment such as a School Council or sub-committee meeting, PFA meeting or an appointment with a staff member made directly with a teacher or booked through the School Office.
- The car park is not permitted to be used by parents/guardians for the purpose of dropping off or picking up students except if parents have been called by the school due to student illness.
- Students are not permitted in the car park between 8.20am – 4.00pm except if being collected by a parent/guardian due to illness.
- Drop off and pick up of students on School grounds, occurs in the turning circle next to the **yellow curb ONLY**.
- If your child is not there waiting for you please exit the driveway safely and drive back in. Do not park next to the yellow curb.
- Drive carefully and slowly at all times.
- Please model our School values. Be patient with cars entering and exiting the driveway.
- If the driveway is crowded, parking is available in the designated street areas.

Turning Circle Parking:

- Parking is not permitted in the turning circle alongside the red curb at any time.
- Parking is not permitted in the turning circle alongside the yellow curb between 8.40am – 9.00am and 3.20pm - 4.00pm
- Parking is not permitted along the driveway or on grassed areas at any time.

New signs are currently being arranged to assist parents and visitors to abide by our safety rules.

Your support and patience in addressing this matter is greatly appreciated.



A NOTE FROM THE TEACHERS:

We have an open door policy and encourage parents to see us either before or after school with any queries, concerns or a general chat about your child's individual needs.

We are unavailable on Monday and Tuesday afternoons due to our whole school staff meetings and Professional Learning Team meetings. If you wish to meet with us for an extended period of time, please arrange a suitable meeting time in advance.

Please note if you are coming to speak to us in the morning, even if only for 1 minute, we would prefer you do so before the music starts playing. That way we are able to give the children our full attention during and after line up.

We strongly encourage parent involvement in the classroom. For parents who are unavailable during the day there are also opportunities to help such as School Council, PFA, Special occasions (one off events e.g. Mother's Day stall, special food day).

Below are our email addresses if you wish to contact us via email.

Natalie Yencken yencken.natalie.s@edumail.vic.gov.au
Amber Wright wright.amber.p@edumail.vic.gov.au

We aim to encourage, support and develop your child to their full potential. We endeavour to make your child's time at school a positive and rewarding experience. We look forward to working together this year and developing a strong home/school partnership.

Kind regards,

Natalie Yencken & Amber Wright