

AN A-Z Guide to Weetangera Primary School

Absences

Class rolls are kept in accordance with Departmental Policy. A written explanation is required whenever a student has been absent. If a student is going to be late to school or absent it would be appreciated if a phone call could be made to the Office Manager. If a child is likely to be absent from school for a prolonged period please contact the teacher who may suggest activities for the child to complete during the absence. Unexplained absences will be followed up by the school with a letter or phone call to the family. Children are not permitted to leave the school or playground during school hours (9:00am-3:00pm) without permission from the Principal and a note from their parents. Parents/Carers must sign a book at the front office when taking children in or out of the school during school hours. **If children are late to school they must be signed in at the office.**

Appointments

Communication between school and home is highly valued. Parents are asked to make an appointment for any discussion with the Principal, Deputy Principal, School Psychologist or teachers. An appointment will be arranged at the earliest possible time. Attention will be given to urgent issues.

Arrival at School

Please ensure children arrive at school in time to commence lessons at 9:00am. A late arrival is very disruptive and often your child will miss important announcements. Children are encouraged to arrive as close to 8:45am as possible. All children arriving late must be signed in at the front office by a parent/carer. If children arrive prior to this time before school care is provided by the YMCA.

Assembly

Whole school assemblies are held three times a term and on other special occasions. These assemblies feature singing, drama, and reports from students, displays of work, awards and general announcements. Wholeschool gatherings create a cohesive school community and maintain a heightened school spirit. Junior and senior assemblies are held in the week between whole school assemblies. Parents are welcome to attend all assemblies.

Buddies

In Semester 2, Year 5 students are buddied up with our preschool students. Our senior students support their buddies during visits to the school and help them settle into 'big school' when they start Kindergarten. This is an important relationship for our Kindergarten and Year 6 students and they participate in buddies activities throughout the year.

Canteen

The P&C operates a canteen from Wednesday to Friday. The canteen provides over-the-counter sales at recess and lunchtime, and lunch orders. The canteen is staffed by paid employees, and relies on volunteer help from both parent volunteers and Year 6 students.

The canteen provides an excellent seasonal menu, with an emphasis on nutritious and appealing food at an affordable price. Our canteen was the first in the ACT to achieve "Silver" Accreditation. This means that we encourage healthy choices. "Treats" are available less frequently and in restricted amounts, including our

Special Lunch Order Days when the normal menu is replaced by a meal package. Our general aim is to turn everyday ingredients such as meat, fruit and vegetables into something special.

The other component of Silver Accreditation is a commitment that the canteen and school work together to promote good health messages. The canteen is an active partner in many activities that occur within the school to promote healthy lifestyle messages.

Orders can be done on line through flexi-schools and the link can be found on our Web site. Information regarding menu changes and special events can also be found on the Weetangera School canteen Facebook page. Parents are always welcome to call in at any time.

Change of Contact Numbers

It is imperative that contact numbers and addresses are kept up-to-date with the front office staff. Children can be distressed unnecessarily when sickness or illness occurs and the contact numbers are out of date.

Class Groups

The design of the school caters for team teaching with classes currently designated to every learning unit. There are seven learning units across the school. There is considerable interaction between classes at all year levels and throughout the school. Flexible learning areas e.g. Hall, French room, Library and Gym are used to support this interaction. An extensive process is applied and careful consideration is given to the placement of students in classes.

Clothing Pool

A second hand clothing pool is operated by the Uniform Coordinators through the P&C. Second hand uniforms can be purchased at times designated by the coordinator through the front office. These times will be communicated through the school newsletter.

Community Partnership

The school has benefited from the generous support of members of the community making donations to the school of both money, goods, services and time and such contributions reinforce the partnerships on which our school is built. Please contact the Principal if you think your business or organisation could make a contribution.

Environment Program

Weetangera Primary School is a registered 'Sustainable' school. The community is proud of its reputation as an environmentally and socially responsible community. The Environment Program links studies of society, health and environment with a program of community action to improve the physical and social environments of the school and its neighbourhood. The program offers many different opportunities for the whole school community including students, parents, staff and friends of the school to participate. The wonderful grounds at Weetangera are the result of years of enthusiastic community and school involvement.

Equity Funds

The school has an equity fund that is used to assist students attending camps and excursions if needed. Parents who require assistance from this fund should approach the Principal or Business Manager for confidential assistance.

Evacuation Drill and Lockdown

Emergency drills are necessary for the safety of all those within the building and will be conducted at least twice a year to ensure all are familiar with the routine. Please obey all procedures if visiting the school during an evacuation or lockdown.

Excursions and Camps

Educational excursions including camps are regarded as an integral part of the learning process and a fundamental part of children's education. They provide experiences which stimulate curiosity and create springboards for further learning. Children are expected to participate as excursions are not isolated learning experiences. Written advice on excursions will be given to parents. If you have difficulty meeting the cost of an excursion your child will not be disadvantaged. Parents who require assistance should approach the Principal or Business Manager for confidential assistance.

External Validation Report

Weetangera Primary School was reviewed by the Department in 2014 as part of the External Validation Cycle.. The school will be externally validated again in 2018.

Family Court Orders/Parenting Agreements

Please discuss any special circumstances with the Principal and lodge copies of these orders/agreements with the Business Manager. They are treated confidentially in our school.

Fruit and Water Break

All students and staff participate in a fruit and water break at approximately 10:00 am each day. Students are required to bring a water bottle and a piece of fresh fruit or vegetables to school each day to keep the body and brain hydrated and fuelled in support of optimal learning conditions.

Hours

Classes commence at 9:00am and conclude at 3:00pm. Students are asked to assemble in the courtyard outside their unit when the morning bell rings. Recess commences at 11:10am and classes resume at 11:30am. Eating lunch is supervised and commences at 12:50pm. The lunch break commences at 1:00pm and classes resume at 1:40pm. A warning bell rings at 1:35pm so students have time to get a drink and go to the bathroom before they line up outside each unit.

Immunisation

The ACT Department of Health advises that all children attending school in the ACT should be immunised against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, measles, mumps, rubella and HIB (Haemophilus influenza type B). We would ask that you check your child's present immunisation status to see whether it is complete for his/her age. ACT Public Health regulations require schools to request proof of up- to- date immunisation when enrolling. Failure to provide this may result in your child being excluded from school should an outbreak of an infectious disease occur. A copy of exclusion periods for students with infectious diseases is available. Parents are asked to adhere closely to these requirements unless medical advice to the contrary is provided in writing.

Insurance

The school does not carry personal accident insurance for students. Parents are advised to take out their own personal accident insurance for their families.

Leaving the School

Please inform the school in writing when students are moving interstate or transferring to another school in the ACT. Teachers should also be informed with plenty of notice so that they can prepare a written report for the receiving school.

Library

All students participate in one planned session in the library per week in their class group. In library lessons, the children are engaged in a variety of activities either literature-based or research-based depending on the requirements of each individual class' unit of work. The Information Literacy package is implemented throughout all research - based units of work. All students also use their library lesson to return and borrow books for home or class reading. Our library is also open every day for half of each lunch session. The Library is also open between 8:30am and 8:55am for parents to accompany their child for reading.

Lunch Clubs

A variety of lunch clubs are organised throughout the year and usually run for at least one term. As part of their lunchtime activities students can sign up for clubs. Examples of clubs include drama, sporting activities, art, knitting and computers. These special interest clubs are run either by teachers or Year 6 students with teacher supervision.

Medical and Accidents

It is important that sick children are kept at home for their own comfort as well as the comfort of other children and staff. If a child becomes ill or is injured at school appropriate first aid will be given and if necessary parents will be notified and asked to take their child home. If emergency treatment is required parents will be notified immediately and the child will be transferred by ambulance to hospital. In such cases ambulance services and treatment are free. If medicine is to be taken at school it must be given to the first aid officer with WRITTEN instructions and permission to administer. All students who have an ongoing condition (eg asthma, diabetes, epilepsy) must have a treatment plan completed by parents and their GP and lodged at the school. Plan proformas are available from the front office.

If a child is to take a **prescription medicine** while at school, written directions and medicine must be left with office staff. Information on a child's health status eg epilepsy, diabetes, should be given on enrolment or on diagnosis. All children diagnosed with Asthma require an asthma plan from a pediatrician to be kept at the school. Parents of students who have a diagnosed anaphylactic reaction are required to supply EpiPens and replace them within identified expiry periods. If the health problem is serious please provide an up-to-date photograph of the child so it can be placed on our staffroom/canteen Medical Alert board.

A Community Health Nurse based at the Belconnen Health Centre visits the school annually to examine children in Kindergarten. Other children may be examined as required. Following receipt of parental permission, the Department of Health operates an immunisation program (usually Rubella, Hepatitis B).

Headlice are extremely contagious but easily eradicated. Children with either eggs or live lice will be excluded from school until written evidence of treatment is produced. Please report any cases of headlice to the school front office. For more information please ask for a copy of the Departmental Policy on [Headlice](#).

Exclusion periods for infectious diseases such as mumps, german measles, measles and chicken pox are provided on a separate sheet in the enrolment package. An immunisation form is required to be completed for all students enrolling in the ACT system. The appropriate form is included in the enrolment package. For more information please ask for a copy of the Departmental Policy on Infectious Diseases and Exclusion.

Music Program

The Weetangera Music Program provides individual professional tuition in a range of instruments including keyboard and violin. From time to time, depending on demand, lessons are also offered in saxophone, clarinet and flute. Lessons are conducted at the school during class time. More information is available through the front office.

Newsletter

The school newsletter is distributed to each family weekly. Please ask the children on Thursday evening to ensure you are kept up-to-date with newsletters or notes. The newsletter is a valuable form of communication. Information includes school happenings and calendar dates and educational research on current issues. Newsletters can be sent to families via email. Please contact the front office if you would like to access this service. The current newsletter and the previous newsletters can also be viewed on the website.

Parents and Citizens Association (P&C)

The P&C promotes community participation in the activities of the school. All parents and guardians of students at the school are members and other interested individuals may become members. The P&C has a number of objectives including:

- promotion of the interests of the school;
- encouraging close collaboration between staff, parents and other citizens; and
- provision of a forum where members can contribute to the development of the goals and policies of the school.

The P&C also conducts social functions and fundraising activities and organises the election of parent members to the School Board. All community members are welcome to attend monthly P&C meetings. The P&C organises the canteen, assists with school discos and operates a second-hand clothing pool. The P&C also regularly assists with school functions and organises social and fundraising activities including the very popular annual fete.

Parking

Weetangera School has limited safe parking areas in the front of the school. A space in front of the school is reserved for pick-up and drop-off purposes only. Parents are encouraged to park safely along our surrounding streets as it is only a short walk across the oval to reach the courtyard outside the units, the doors through which the students enter and leave the building. ACT road rules apply to the roads surrounding our school and a number of No Parking zones exist.

Permission Notes

All permission notes for activities outside the school must be returned to the school signed by a parent/carer at least 2 days before the activity. Students cannot attend an excursion without a signed permission note.

Personal Belongings

Please mark clearly your child's name on all personal belongings including clothing. Unclaimed belongings are kept near the stage area in the original hall and may be checked at any time. Items remaining at the end of each term are sorted - named items are returned to the children concerned and the remainder donated to second-hand uniforms or charity. To avoid disappointment due to loss or damage we require all students to leave personal items and toys at home except by special arrangement.

Playground Supervision

Students are expected to know and remain in specific playground areas. Students should arrive at school ready for 9:00 classes. YMCA provides before and after school care in the hall to cater for families who need to leave students at the school earlier than this. Staff are on site from 8:30am in rooms preparing for lessons. A staff member is on duty on the playground from 8:50am to 9:00am. The playground is supervised by the teaching staff each recess and lunch. Staff supervise the playground and bus stop area from 3:00pm to 3:10pm. During wet weather students are supervised within the school buildings.

Photographs

Individual and class photographs are taken each year. Family photographs are taken of children in the one family who attend Weetangera Primary School.

Reporting to Parents

Weetangera Primary School believes that communicating student achievement in the most effective way possible is essential. Our aim is to develop a partnership between teachers, parents and students to ensure reporting is timely, accessible and informative. We report in a variety of ways that including written reports, Parent/Teacher Interviews and Learning Journeys.

Safety

Developing school and class rules is a collaborative effort and they are designed for safety and security of the whole community. These are regularly discussed during class meetings, SRC meetings and assemblies and should be clear to all students. They are:

- bullying and harassment, physical violence or verbal abuse is unacceptable
- building passes are required to enter school buildings during recess and lunch
- appropriate hats (brimmed school hats) must be worn on the playground
- bicycle racks, the hall and front of the main school building are "no play areas"

School Board

The School Board embodies the principle of collaboration between parents and staff, and community partnership in decision-making processes. Its members include three parents (one being the Chairperson), two teachers, a community representative and the Principal. Staggered two-year terms ensure continuity in the Board's work. The Weetangera School Board encourages communication between the school and its community in determining the school's budget, curriculum and education policies as well as its many needs in relation to buildings, facilities, equipment, funds and staff. Elected community members of the School Board can be contacted about school matters. The minutes of the Board Meetings are available from the front office.

Security

Outside school hours the school buildings are under the protection of a security system. However, any suspicious behaviour on school property should be reported to Police immediately. All visitors to the school are required to sign in and out at the front office.

Student Management

The school promotes socially acceptable behaviour based on the fundamental principles of respect, care and responsibility. Parents are assured the school will contact them if their child's progress or behaviour indicates that this is necessary. The school requests that parents inform the teacher or Principal when their child's school progress or behaviour might be affected in some way by circumstances not known to the school (serious illness in family, altered family circumstances).

Special Days

The school holds a variety of other special days through the year. Days such as 'Doing Things Together Day' promote friendships across the year levels and provide our senior students with leadership and peer support opportunities. These may include charity and school fundraising days or be linked to significant community events such as Clean up Canberra Day, World Environment Day as well as Learning Journeys and Literacy and Numeracy Week where students and parents share learning experiences.

Sunsmart

Weetangera Primary School follows the [Sun Protection Policy Guidelines for ACT Schools](#), 'No Hat-No Play'. A key requirement of the Sun Protection Policy is for students to wear hats which protect the face, neck and ears whenever the students are outside. Students without suitable hats are not permitted to play outside at recess and lunchtime. The school has provided additional outdoor seating to support the policy.

Term Dates

The school operates on a four term system with holidays set by the ACT Department of Education and Training. Term dates can be found on the school website, www.weetangeraps.act.edu.au

Transfers

Children moving to another school should advise the class teacher and school Business Manager at least one week prior to the move. If you are aware that you will not be returning to Weetangera Primary School following the Christmas holidays please notify the school in writing as soon as possible.

Toys

Children's toys, unless specifically asked for by a teacher, should be kept at home. It is difficult sometimes for children to care for these properly at school.

Uniform

The wearing of school uniform is strongly recommended and students should be encouraged to wear it to promote school identity and school pride. The school colours are blue and yellow. The uniform can be purchased from MacDonalds Kids Wear at Jamison Shopping Centre, Macquarie, ACT. The school uniform coordinator has a number of second-hand uniform items for sale and advertises sale times through our school newsletter. The uniform coordinator can be contacted through the front office.

Volunteers

Volunteers must sign in and wear a volunteer badge each time they attend school. **All regular volunteers must have a current Working with Vulnerable People card.**

From time to time parents are asked to assist with the transportation of students to special events. Your assistance is appreciated, however the owner and/or driver is responsible for ensuring they carry the required driver's licence, that the vehicle is appropriately registered and insured, is roadworthy, and that loading does not exceed the seat belt provision of the vehicle. Copies of all licences and insurances of each volunteer driver and vehicle must be made and held at the school for the duration of the excursion. For more information please ask for a copy of the Departmental Policy on Volunteers in Schools.

Water

Drinking water is essential for keeping the brain and body hydrated for learning. Students are asked to bring a plastic water bottle to school daily. Students are reminded to have regular drinks of water during the day. Students may drink water inside the classroom.

Website

The school's website, www.weetangeraps.act.edu.au is updated regularly. The newsletter, class contact details, community news, permission notes and information on special events are all posted on the website.

Wheeled Devices

If students ride bicycles to school they must wear a helmet. Bicycles must be placed in the bicycle compound which is out-of-bounds during the day. **For the safety of all students no wheeled devices (including skateboards, in-line skates and scooters) are to be ridden in the school playground at any time.** Skateboards and in-line skates are not considered to be safe transport to and from school for primary-aged children. The school will not accept the responsibility for the care of any wheeled device or associated equipment.

Year 6 Farewell

At the end of each the year we farewell our graduating Year 6 students. The students and their teachers plan and organise special events of celebration. On the last day of Term 4 a more formal Graduation Ceremony is held in the school hall and the whole school attends.