

# Morayfield East State School



## 2015 HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

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## **PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE**

Dear Parents, Caregivers and Students,

Morayfield East State School is a P-6 Education Queensland State Primary School which has been providing quality learning for all students in the Morayfield East Community since 1991.

We deliver quality programs to support the educational needs of all children. Our whole school vision is "A school of choice committed to high standards of learning and celebrations of success".

Our school is a large and vibrant campus where we cater for approximately 1000 keen and enthusiastic students who are eager to learn. Our learning environment is based on strong traditional values with a very clear focus on the expectations of Safety, Responsibility, Respect and Learning; these permeate every aspect of school life.

The school has earned an impressive reputation for its commitment to high quality curriculum and an expert teaching team and dedicated, enthusiastic, caring and committed staff recognised by both the school community and the wider educational community. Morayfield East enjoys great community support and has excellent facilities.

A great school is not just built - it is created through the combined dedicated commitment of parents, students and staff all working together to achieve the very best for the students in our school. Communication is very important to us and we strive to promote positive partnerships with parents, caregivers and the community.

We hope that you find this handbook useful as a general introduction to the school and that you can gain some appreciation of the pride we take in our school; our passion for excellence; and the student learning and achievement that is our focus.

Best wishes  
Judy Menary  
(Principal)



**I am respectful, I am a learner and I am safe and responsible.**

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## A. General Information

### Office hours: 8.00am – 4.00pm

The office opens the week before school begins in January from 9.00am – 2.00pm each day.

### School year – 2015

#### Semester 1

First term: Tue 27 January – Thursday 2 April

Second term: Monday 20 April - Friday 26 June

#### Semester 2

Third term: Monday 13 July - Friday 18 September

Fourth term: Tuesday 6 October - Friday 11 December

Student Free Day – Monday 19 October

**Regular attendance** is expected, to make the most of each child's valuable learning opportunities at school. There are 200 school days each year.

### Enrolments and the Enrolment Management Plan

All enrolments are by appointment. Please contact the school office on 5428 8444 to arrange a suitable time. Parents enrolling children for the first time in a state school in Queensland will require a birth certificate to complete enrolment.

Morayfield East State School enrolments are accepted by an Enrolment Management Plan. Students living in the defined area are entitled to enrol, a current lease or rates notice maybe required for proof of residential address. Students living outside the area may be enrolled if spaces exist in requested year levels. Parents may make written submissions to the Principal outlining the reasons for seeking enrolment in this catchment area. Please contact the School Office to be advised of your child's eligibility to enrol.



Morayfield East State School is a **NON- smoking facility**.

## B. Outside School Hours Care

Before and after school care is offered at our school by *Camp Australia*. Direct contact can be made by:

- Phoning Camp Australia toll free: 1300 105 343
- Phoning this centre: 0402 263 063
- Email: [qldmorayeast@oshccampastralia.com.au](mailto:qldmorayeast@oshccampastralia.com.au)

Children who arrive at school before 8.30am or are not collected at 3.00pm should be enrolled in Outside School Hours Care or arrangements should be made with an appropriate centre or day care provider.

Children whose carer is late wait with their class teacher then come to the office for collection. Parents are asked to please phone the office to confirm these arrangements.

## C. Parent/School Communication

Open, respectful and timely communication between parents and the school is the foundation of strong partnerships. Effective communication can be achieved by:

- arranging personal discussions with your child's teacher to clarify details and share concerns. An appointment is usually necessary.
- attending the beginning of year parent/teacher session.
- attending the monthly meetings of the Parents and Citizens' Association held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 3:15pm in the school hall
- reading the fortnightly school e-newsletters.
- reading class newsletters and year level notes.
- responding to school surveys and parent notes.
- using the class communication process in homework books or communication books.
- maintaining accurate home and emergency contact details. Please contact the office as soon as changes occur.
- attending school functions arranged for parent participation and parent education programs. attending parent/teacher interviews which are held twice a year in March and September.
- requesting a parent/teacher interview time.
- arranging personal discussions with a member of the Administration team. An appointment is usually necessary.
- attending school assemblies

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## Parent and Community Engagement

Parents and the broader community play a vital role in supporting successful learning outcomes for our children. Morayfield East State School has developed a Parent and Community Action Plan that is about our school engaging with parents and community to work together to maximise student learning outcomes.

The research tells us that the most meaningful partnerships are those where schools, parents, students and the community work together to focus on student learning. Parent and community engagement that is effectively focused on student learning can deliver powerful outcomes.

This Parent and Community Engagement Action Plan identifies what our school can do to strengthen learning outcomes for all of our students – through effective partnerships between the Principal, teachers, students, parents and the community. It sends a call to action to our school to focus on parents and community engagement as a key part of supporting student learning.

### Raising concerns and addressing issues

From time to time parents have a need to address concerns about their children and aspects of the school in general, with someone from within the school community. The following is a guide to the best way of dealing with these matters:

Are you a “Rescue Parent” or a “Supportive Parent”? Most parents can be identified as either a “Rescue” or “Supportive” parent. Rescue parents are those who look for excuses or reasons to shift blame to others where their child is concerned. They deflect or spread the blame to others to “rescue” their child. Supportive parents however keep an open mind and trust the school. They recognise that the school has no hidden agenda with their child and are willing to listen and do what they can to support the teachers and their child. After considering all the angles, they may still bring an issue to the school’s attention where there is a genuine area of concern. If so, please do this in a respectful way.

### Some suggestions:

- Unnecessary anxiety over an issue can be caused by “suffering in silence”. If an issue is bothering you, please come and speak to your child’s class teacher.
- Please undertake all your dealings in a respectful manner. Rudeness, harassment and bullying of staff may lead to the exclusion of a person from the school. Under the department’s Code of School Behaviour for students, staff, parents and other members of the school community, the Principal has the power to evict and ban violent, bullying, aggressive and stalking parents from the school.
- Never approach another child in the school when trying to sort out disputes between children.
- Never leave a note for a child when trying to sort out disputes between children or parents.
- Parents and children must not enter a classroom without the teacher being present.
- Avoid speculative gossip in the car park or in the school grounds when waiting for children. Gossip undermines confidence in the school, generates unnecessary anxiety and wastes school staff’s time in dismissing nonsense or hearsay.

The school has a complaints process to guide parents regarding complaints and grievances. This process is regularly advertised through the school newsletter.

### Emergency communication

There are times when the school will need to contact parents – when your child is unwell or had an accident. On these occasions, our school will make phone contact with parents, please ensure your details are up to date.

### Break Times

8.50am	First bell rings to start school
8.55am - 11.15am	Session 1
11.15am – 12.00pm	1 <sup>st</sup> Break – 45min (30min play, 15min toilet and eating)
12.00pm – 1.30pm	Session 2
1.30pm – 2.00pm	2 <sup>nd</sup> Break – 30min (20min play, 10min toilet and eating)
2.00pm – 3.00pm	Session 3

### Assembly Times

**Years 4 - 6** Friday 12 noon

**Years Prep - 3** Friday 2:15pm

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## Volunteers

At Morayfield East State School, we are very keen to have parents involved in school programs and activities. The success of our school is aided by the work of volunteers. The Children's Commission sets special requirements for all adults who work with children. Approval through the acquisition of the Working with Children 'blue card' may be required. See the office for details.

All adult volunteers working in the school must wear an identification badge and sign in and out at the office on every visit.

Assistance is always appreciated in the tuckshop and in the classroom and we welcome all volunteers. Please make your offer known.



## E-Newsletters

The school's newsletter is published electronically each fortnight. It will be sent to the email address that has been registered with the school office. Please update this information at the school office when necessary. A printed copy is also available for collection at the office.

Class teachers also provide information to parents. This is usually by class newsletter or note, however email and virtual classrooms may also be used.

## Parent/Teacher Interviews

Formal reports are issued twice yearly in June and December, at the end of Term 2 and Term 4. Formal Parent/Teacher interviews are also offered in March and September, at the end of Term 1 and Term 3. Additional interviews for all students can occur upon request.



Often teachers are asked for child's progress. To enable a

yearly in June and December, at the end of Term 2 and Term 4. Formal Parent/Teacher interviews are also offered in March and September, at the end of Term 1 and Term 3. Additional interviews for all students can occur upon request.

interviews by parents who are seeking information about their focussed discussion, parents are asked to:

- contact the teacher either directly or through the office.
- arrange an interview time which is suitable to both teacher and parents.
- allow two (2) clear working days notice of the intended interview.

Using this process, data can be gathered for a more informed discussion.

## Teacher meetings

All teachers are required to attend Tuesday morning briefings and year level meetings after school. Most teachers also attend team and committee meetings before and after school. Please be mindful of these commitments so as not to delay teachers from their professional commitments.

## Parents and Citizens Association

The P&C meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 3:15pm in the school hall. The P&C plays a vital role in providing advice to the Principal on whole of school planning processes and also contributes financially to enhance the resources and facilities available to the children.

The P&C has a number of volunteers who are involved in a range of activities including tuckshop, and fundraising. The P&C conduct regular school discos, meal deal days through the tuckshop, Mother's and Father's day stalls and a Family and Friends Festival. All parents, families and community members are invited to come along and participate in the activities.

Parents and/or guardians of a student attending the school and any other person over 18 years of age interested in the welfare of the school are eligible to become members of the P&C. Application for membership can be made at any Annual General Meeting or General meeting.

Any correspondence can be addressed to the P&C and left in the school's Administration Office.

## Class visits

Parents are encouraged to visit their child/ren's classroom regularly after making arrangements with the class teacher. Teachers will be happy to see you and use your services as a voluntary helper if you can regularly spare some time.

## School Chaplain

The School Chaplain is available to assist children with general welfare and support. This is done through the activities program or by individual arrangement. The Chaplain is on campus every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Written permission must be given by parents. Parents are more than welcome to make an appointment with the Chaplain.

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## Guidance Officer

The school's Guidance Officer provide specialised testing and assessment; referrals to agencies for counselling and crisis support; parenting programs and advice; and in some cases short-term counselling. Services are prioritised by the school's Student Support Services Team. Please contact your child's teacher to request services. Services are available by appointment only.

## Tuckshop and lunch orders

The tuckshop operates Monday to Friday between 8:00 am and 2:00 pm and supplies a variety of nutritious foods and drinks. We follow the Queensland Smart Choices for healthy tuckshops which includes a breakfast and lunch time menu. Over the counter purchases are offered to students before school; first break and second break. **Hot food is available during first break and ice blocks can only be purchased during second break.**

You are encouraged to place your orders before school. For your convenience we have an online ordering system for tuckshop orders. Please visit the following web site [www.ouronline.com.au](http://www.ouronline.com.au)

When you log on you will need to follow the prompts. Further information is available from the tuckshop.

If you do not use the online ordering system, orders for first break and second break must be written on separate paper bags and handed to the tuckshop by 9.00am daily. Tuckshop is closed on the last two days of each term and the last week of the school year.



Summer and winter menus are distributed through the year. Price and product variations will be advised through the newsletter.

The Tuckshop Convenor is assisted by volunteers and welcomes any help parents can offer. Please note that no foreign coins will be accepted as payment. Students are often disappointed when they cannot order tuckshop because they only have foreign money.

If your child comes to school with no lunch, the tuckshop will make every effort to contact you. If we cannot reach you by phone your child will be supplied with a basic sandwich and a piece of fruit. An account will be sent home for payment.

## Caring for property and lost property

Children should only bring items to school which directly relate to their school program for the day.

All items must be named for simple and safe return. Valuables and precious items should be left at home or given to the teacher for safe keeping.

Under no circumstances is money to be left in schoolbags.

The lost property box is kept in the large under covered area so that the children and their parents may search for missing items. Hats and winter school jumpers are often lost and can be easily returned when clearly named. Valuables are returned to the office. Unclaimed items are recycled three or four times each year.

## D. Organisational Routines

### Mobile phones and electronic devices

It is acknowledged that some children require mobile phones to contact parents after school. All student phones must be signed into the office by the owner upon arrival at school. Phones are then signed out when collected after school.



MP3 players, digital cameras and other electronic devices are not permitted to be brought to school by students.

The school takes no responsibility for lost or damaged mobile phones that are not registered at the office before school.

### Student Attendance

Regular attendance is expected to promote children's learning.

Daily absences are monitored. On the first day of your child's absence, please phone the school explaining the reason and possible duration. If this is not done, then a note is required on his/her return. Verbal notification from brothers or sisters is not acceptable. Doctor's certificates may be required in some instances. Any unexplained absences will be followed up. Unexplained absences also appear on your child's report card.

### Every Day Counts

Did you know that research shows that in Queensland, higher student attendance at school is associated with higher student achievement? Regular school attendance means that your child has a better chance in life. They learn better, they make friends, are happier and have a brighter future. Under Queensland law, you must ensure your child is enrolled and attends school every day. The legislation that relates to this is the *Education (General Provisions) Act*

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2006. The act distinguishes and defines students who are in the compulsory school and compulsory participation stages.

### **Definitions - Compulsory Schooling Stage**

A child is of compulsory schooling stage if they are at least 6 years and 6 months and they have not yet turned 16 or completed Year 10 (whichever comes first).

### **Compulsory Participation State**

A child is of compulsory participation age if they stop being of compulsory school age (turns 16 or completes Year 10 whichever comes first). A student completes compulsory participation stage when:

- They gain a Senior Certificate, Certificate III or Certificate IV.
- They have participated in an eligible option for two years after the person stopped being of compulsory schooling age.
- They turn 17

### **Parent Obligations**

Chapter 9 and 10 in the Act outline the obligations of parents in relation to the attendance of their child. For students in compulsory schooling stage and compulsory participation stage, parents must:

- Ensure the child is enrolled at a state or non-state school.
- Ensure the child attends that state or non-state school each school day for the education program in which the child is enrolled, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse. In addition for students in compulsory participation phase parents can:
- Ensure the young person is participating full time in an eligible option, unless the parent has a reasonable excuse. Principals decide if the reason given for your child's absence is acceptable and prosecution of one or both parents can occur if the parent(s) do not fulfil their legal obligation.

### **Reasons for Student Absence**

Acceptable reasons for a student's absence would be:

- Work experience
- Natural disaster
- Representative sport
- Illness
- Funeral
- Legal Obligations
- Suspension or exclusion

The department would strongly encourage families not to schedule holidays during school time. This minimises the disruption to student learning. If you need to schedule holidays during school time, please contact the College in advance to talk about arrangements. For any absence of longer than 10 school days, an application for exemption needs to be submitted to the College. Application forms are available either on the College's website or at Client Services. Unreasonable reasons for student absence would be:

- Birthdays
- Shopping
- Visiting friends or family
- Minor appointments e.g. haircuts

### **Arriving at school**

Children should not arrive at school before 8.30am unless accompanied by a parent or to attend a school program. All children should move directly to their appropriate under cover area and remain seated until the first bell. Children may visit the tuckshop and breakfast program on their way to their covered area. Children are not permitted in other areas of the school grounds before school as there is no supervision provided by staff during this time. All late arrivals and early departures must go through the school office.

### **Arriving late**

Persistent lateness prevents your child from gaining an overview of the day's learning and adversely affects your child's learning in literacy and numeracy as these lessons are taught at this time. If your child is at school after 8:55am they must go straight to the office upon arrival at school and receive a late arrival slip.

### **Leaving early**

Parents collecting children early from school must report to the office to obtain an early departure slip before collecting children from the classroom. The slip is handed to the teacher who will release the student into the parents' care.

Children can only leave the school grounds during the day with adult supervision.

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## Excursions

Year 6 students have camp in first term. Years 1-4 children have swimming. Years 5-6 children may be involved in winter and summer sports or recreational sport. End of year celebrations for Year 6 include end of year excursion, graduation and separate disco.

Parent helpers may be required for excursions and the teachers organise this for the administration's approval.

## Excursion Payments

We wish to remind parents and care givers the procedure in relation to the payment of school excursions and activities. Without exception it is compulsory that **ALL** payment cut off dates are strictly adhered to. This is not a change, but a very necessary administration requirement. We endeavour to send notes home with a minimum of three weeks' notice for payment cut off (earlier for the more costly excursions). The payment cut off date is always clearly stated in the bottom section of the notices. ALSO in most cases the excursion/activity will appear in the date claimer section of the Newsletter **prior** to individual notes going home which alerts parents that a payment will be required in the near future. It highlights the necessity for parents and care givers to keep up to date with their student's year level activities and will prevent the distress of students 'missing out' on the activity.

Students that have not made payment for the excursion will remain at school and continue with class work supplied by their regular teacher.

If you do not currently receive the newsletter via email please notify the school office and we will subscribe you; or alternatively hard copies are available every second Thursday in the office reception area.

## Insurance cover for students undertaking physical activities

Physical activity and physical education, particularly contact sports, carry inherent risks of injury.

Parents are advised that the Department of Education Training and the Arts does not have Personal Accident Insurance cover for students.

Education Queensland has public liability cover for all approved school activities and provides compensation for students injured at school only when the Department is negligent. If this is not the case, then all costs associated with the injury are the responsibility of the parent or caregiver.

It is a personal decision for parents as to the type and level of private insurance they arrange to cover students for any accidental injury that may occur.

Children who are injured at school, are taken to the school Health Room and emergency procedures are followed.

## Money collection and EFTPOS



Payments can be made to the school office by cash, EFTPOS, credit card or cheque. A transaction minimum of \$10 applies to EFTPOS and credit cards.

All money is collected in envelopes. Please include your child's first name, surname and class. Money is handed to the office at the beginning of the day. Sports money is collected before school by the office. Children should not keep money in their bags during the day.

## Concerns over financial matters including SRS

These can sometimes be resolved by speaking with the office staff. Confidential matters should be raised with the Business Services Manager, Tracey Day.

## Vehicles in school grounds

No unauthorised vehicles are allowed to enter or park in the grounds. This is for the children's safety. Unauthorised vehicle entry also presents legal implications for the driver. Written permission from the Principal must be arranged each year to authorise entry to the school grounds.

Car park areas in school grounds are out of bounds for children's safety.

## Procedures for transfer

Parents must contact the office when their children are transferring to another school. Parents complete a *Request for Transfer form* at least *two (2) days* prior to leaving the school. This ensures that:

- children return all school resources including library books and musical resources.
- personal possessions are taken home.
- refunds can be completed.

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- transfer documentation and children's folios are completed. These are forwarded when requested by the new school.

### **School banking**

The Commonwealth Savings Bank provides a school banking service each Tuesday morning. Children can put money with a completed deposit slip into their banking book and drop it into the money slot in the school office. The bankbook will be returned later that day to the class teacher.

## **E. Health Matters**

The school community values the efforts that families make in ensuring that their children come to school ready to learn. A well rested, well nourished, well behaved child is likely to be ready to learn and more emotionally resilient. Emotionally resilient children are able to manage their emotions, learn new social skills and behaviours to address social conflicts and bounce back when a problem occurs.

### **Hygiene**

Children are encouraged to continue the good hygiene practices taught at home during each school day. These include:

- washing hands before eating, after blowing their nose and after using the bathroom. Soap is replaced in the toilets every morning. Soap and water free antiseptic handwash is available in each classroom block.
- covering all sneezes and coughs.
- putting old tissues in the bin.
- not sharing food and drinks.



### **Healthy lunches**

Healthy lunches are needed to nourish children's bodies and fuel their brains to learn. Low GI foods are encouraged. Children are discouraged from sharing food at school. Parents are asked to support this as children have allergies to foods. Peanut butter is a common cause of allergy in young children. The Healthy Lunchboxes article at the back of this book gives a range of great ideas for children's lunches.

Most classes have a fruit stop around 10.00am. First break eating time is when most children eat their main lunch. Second break eating time is shorter. See school routine.

Bringing a water bottle to school each day is encouraged. It can be refilled during the day. Most classes are able to access their drink bottles during learning time in the summer months.

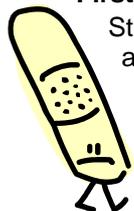
Please do not send your child with food in a ring pull can. These are difficult for children to open and the lids are dangerous.

### **Illness**

It is often difficult for parents to decide if their child is too sick to attend school. The problem is sometimes made more difficult when parents work or have plans for the day. However, parents do need to make the hard decision, remembering that the care of sick children is a parental responsibility.

Children with infectious diseases such as Chicken Pox, Measles and Impetigo (school sores) will need to be treated and/or excluded for a period of time. As a guide, children who have vomited should not attend school. Please contact your doctor and the school office for details.

### **First-aid**



Students who are too ill to continue working in the classroom are taken to the Health room in G block. If it appears that the child will not recover in a reasonable time, every effort is made to contact the parents to collect the child.

In the case of accidents, where attention other than first-aid is required, the child's needs will be attended to before parent contact occurs. Where treatment is urgently required, all necessary action is taken for the benefit of the child. It may result that an ambulance is called.

Dehydration is the main cause of illness at school for children new to Queensland. Symptoms include dry mouth, headaches, sickness in stomach and lips can also be dry. Drinking water during the day prevents this.

For ease of contact, it is imperative that family contact details and emergency contacts are updated at the office when changes occur.

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## Medication

All medication is recorded, stored and administered from the Health room office in G block. Parents are asked to supply prescribed medication in the original packaging, which has the student's name and dose. Please complete a *Permission Form to Administer Medication*. Students are not permitted to have medication in their classroom or school bag.

Medication needed for excursions is collected from and returned to the Health room office prior to departure.

Children who have asthma, allergies or other serious conditions require a student Health Plan. This can be arranged through the Health room office and your doctor.

## Head lice

Throughout the year head lice may become a problem within the school.

Parents are asked to:

- check weekly
- treat quickly
- tell the school if head lice are found

To reduce the spread of head lice:

- long hair must be tied back
- hats should not be shared
- close contact is discouraged

When head lice are identified at school, the child's parent is contacted and a note is sent home.

*Children should receive treatment before coming to school.* Treatment should continue until the every egg has been eliminated.

Sensitivity to people's feelings and persistence on the part of families to eradicate head lice is expected by the school community.

## Dental Van Service



Queensland Health's School Dental Van Service visits the school periodically and stays for extended periods. The service is provided to year level groups in turn. Written permission from parents is required for children to access the service. Emergency dental care can be arranged by phoning 1300 300 850 when the service is not at this school.

## Health plans

Children with medical needs requiring special attention or an emergency plan for treatment need a Health Plan at school. Common conditions include chronic asthma, sugar diabetes and allergies where anti-histamines or epi-pens are prescribed. Parents are asked to contact their doctor for the health plan and bring a copy to the school. Please discuss any needs at enrolment.

## Active families

With all the media coverage about obesity, many parents know that their children need to be more active. However, encouraging increased activity is hard if our children are used to watching TV or playing computer games. Research indicates that children should be involved in more than one hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity a day. Parents are critical in influencing their children's life long habits and choices to support a happy and healthy life.

Young people are growing quickly and they are also dealing with enormous physical, emotional and social change. They are often acutely sensitive to their changing body shape and can feel awkward and uncomfortable about being active. Physical activity helps to combat stress and build emotional resilience.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Cut down screen time for the whole family to one or two hours per day. Allow the children to negotiate which programs are most important to them.
- Try to fit activity into your day, such as walking to and from school whenever possible.
- Plan times for family walks or outings that involve physical activity such as a game of frisbee or rounders in the park or exploring a new area together.
- Choose the stairs rather than the lift.
- Create a list of outside activities to put on the fridge for example going for a ride, playing with the pet, going for a walk, digging the garden, dancing to some music and get everyone to add new ideas as they arise.

- Instead of dinner in front of the TV, have dinner around the table and talk about the day's events or plan a family activity.
- Plan a walk or a ride after dinner.
- Get everyone involved in family jobs; a great way for children to earn pocket money or learn valuable life skills.

## Sleep

Adequate sleep is required by children to ensure that they are prepared for their best learning each day. As a guide, 9 to 12 hours of sleep each night is required depending on the age and activity of the day. Sleep is not only needed during growth spurts but brain researchers have found that it is needed to establish long term memory of the learning of the day. Children who have poor sleep habits often have poor memories. Parents should consult their doctor if they are concerned about sleep patterns.

## Special needs advice for parents

Parents often become concerned about their children's learning at school. In many cases this can be related to a health issue. Parents are asked to check their child's patterns and make adjustments where needed. Parents are then encouraged to monitor and make adjustments where needed. Parents are then encouraged to monitor and make adjustments where needed. Parents are then encouraged to monitor and make adjustments where needed. Here's a list for parents to consider:



concerned about their children's learning at school. In many health issue. Parents are asked to check their child's patterns and make adjustments where needed. Parents are then encouraged to monitor and make adjustments where needed. Parents are then encouraged to monitor and make adjustments where needed. Parents are then encouraged to monitor and make adjustments where needed. Here's a list for parents to consider:

- **eye tests** are recommended if a child has difficulty or is slow with tasks which require both seeing the board and working closely. Eye exercises are often recommended for children to practise tracking along lines of text when reading books.
- **hearing tests** are recommended for children with speech language or articulation problems. Parents are advised to consult your doctor to ensure that the ear-ways are healthy before the hearing test.
- **counselling and support** is recommended for children who are having difficulty managing their emotions. Family breakdown, stress or tragedy affects learning at school. Lifeline, Kids Helpline, and Parents Helpline can be helpful contacts. Please contact the school office should you require further information.

## F. Uniforms

Wearing full school uniform is a very powerful way to create a sense of pride within our community. The school has a uniform code, which has been endorsed by the P&C. This uniform code requires students to dress appropriately for school activities. The uniform meets health and safety, sun-safety, security and appearance needs of the school community.

Students wear a school uniform each day and to participate in school excursions, out of school activities and for school photos.

School uniforms are available through the school's Uniform Shop.

### Boys and Girls School Uniform

Plain maroon unisex shorts or skorts with school polo shirt (the shorts must not display brand names, motifs or logos, or cargo pants with side pockets).

School Dress (ONLY available from uniform shop)

Black lace or buckle vinyl or leather shoes or joggers or runners with laces or Velcro with short or sports socks only. Slip on shoes are not permitted.

Maroon tights only (available from uniform shop)

Plain maroon sweat shirt or jacket OR jacket/jumper in maroon (available from uniform shop). No hoodies; no motifs.

Plain maroon track pants (available from uniform shop). No cargo pants.

School bucket hat for outdoor lessons and play (ONLY available from uniform shop)

### Sports Events Uniform

Students may wear a t-shirt in their house colours when participating in sports day events and the cross country.

Sports house shirts are available from the uniform shop leading up to the official sports carnival.

Only the school bucket hat is to be worn.

School bucket hat is reversible and comes in the 4 house colours red, green, blue and yellow

Only joggers to be worn at any school sports events

District and Regional Representative shirts are not part of the school uniform and are not to be worn to school.

### Senior Shirt

These are available by order only during Term 1 each year through the school office.

Each shirt has on the back, Senior of current year.

These shirts form part of Morayfield East State School Dress Code.

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## Hats

The only headwear that is acceptable is Morayfield East State School Sunsmart Bucket Hat which is consistent with our Sunsmart Policy. Hats must be worn whenever a student is involved in an activity outside. On sports days, students wear their hats inside out to show their house colours. Hats will only be reversed during Sports Day and PE activities under the direction of the teacher.

## Uniform-Free Days

On occasion, the children will be invited to participate in a uniform free day. On these days appropriate clothing is still required to meet functional, safety and sun smart requirements.

During free dress days, it is expected that students wear closed in shoes, school hats and sensible clothing that includes no bare stomachs and shoulders.

Where a child dresses inappropriately the school will endeavour to contact parents for alternate clothing, a uniform will be provided or the child's activities may be restricted.

The Student Council collects gold coin donations for school projects and charitable causes.

The Principal will be responsible for the implementation of the Dress Code in a manner consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.

Parents seeking exemptions to the Dress Code due to religious beliefs, ethnic or cultural background, student disability, health condition or economic hardship must apply in writing to the Principal for consideration.

Consequences for non-compliance:

Morayfield East State School Dress Code allows for consequences to be imposed on a once only basis per episode of non-compliance.

Consequences are reflective of the severity and recency of the non-compliance and are limited to one of the following:

- Preventing student from attending, or participating in, any activity where the student is representing the school; or
- Preventing student from attending, or participating in, any school activity that is not an essential school education program.
- Imposing a detention for a student during lunch



## Jewellery

One set of plain small stud earrings or sleepers may be worn in the ears. All other piercings must be covered for health and safety reasons. Any exemptions (eg Cultural or religious reasons) will require a letter to the Principal asking for permission. Watches, medical alerts and religious symbols tucked under the shirt are acceptable. No signet rings are allowed.

## G. Student Resource Scheme – P&C Approved

Our school manages a Student Resource Scheme (SRS) as a way of providing quality consumables and resources for students, saving parents/caregivers money and the need to shop for school books. The scheme also allows students to have the learning requisites available efficiently and effectively with minimum inconvenience. Participation in the scheme is voluntary. Parents/caregivers either pay the fee or purchase the items on the year level list. The participation fee is economical because the school purchases quality items in bulk and some resource items are recycled, spreading the cost over several years.



**Prep to Year Five** the fee is used to purchase all the stationery needs of your child – exercise books, pencils, rulers, erasers, glue, folders, etc. It also supplies other equipment such as scissors, calculators, dictionaries and atlases. The scheme provides this package for a set fee. It is not available in part. A copy of the equipment list for each year level is available from the office if you choose not to join the scheme and purchase the items yourself.

**Year Six** students have a slightly different package where certain items are included but others must be supplied and replenished by individual students. This is to prepare them for high school and encourage ownership and responsibility for their own equipment.

For any special payment arrangements, please discuss the matter with our Business Services Manager, Tracey Day. Students will not be issued with materials until they have joined the scheme with a 50% payment and any outstanding money from the previous year's scheme has been paid.

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**Parents/caregivers who do not wish to participate in the scheme are expected to provide all necessary stationery, reference books and resources for their children as detailed on the Year level lists.** We also ask that non participants in the SRS scheme pay the \$20 per student towards classroom work sheets and work books and the \$20 per student Voluntary Classroom Enhancement Contribution.

Payments can be made by cash, EFT, credit card, direct deposit or cheque. A receipt will be provided.

**The 2014 amounts were, we anticipate 2015 amounts may increase slightly (excluding voluntary contribution):**

<b>Prep Year</b>	<b>\$120</b>	<b>Year One</b>	<b>\$120</b>
<b>Year Two</b>	<b>\$100</b>	<b>Year Three</b>	<b>\$120</b>
<b>Year Four</b>	<b>\$120</b>	<b>Year Five</b>	<b>\$110</b>
<b>Year Six</b>	<b>\$70</b>	<b>Year Seven</b>	<b>\$70</b>

### **Voluntary Contribution**

Each State school is resourced by the State Government through grant funding to provide a core educational service to students. Voluntary financial contributions are used by schools to provide an enhanced educational service and to enhance resources available for student learning, recreation and comfort.

### **Operating Statement**

1. The costs of providing instruction, administration and facilities for the education of students at the school are met by the State Government for students enrolled at the school who are Australian citizens or permanent residents, or the children of Australian citizens or permanent residents.
2. The school is resourced by the State Government through school grants to provide a core educational service.
3. Section 56 of the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* provides that the Principal may ask the parents of a student of the school to make a voluntary financial contribution to supplement government funding for instruction, administration and facilities for the education of the student at the school. If the student is an adult, the principal may ask the student to make a voluntary financial contribution.
4. Voluntary financial contributions are used by the school to provide an enhanced educational service and to enhance resources available for student learning, recreation and comfort.
5. A voluntary financial contribution is not a fee. Debt recovery action will not be undertaken by the school for non-payment of all or part of a request for a voluntary financial contribution.
6. A voluntary financial contribution is separate from a Student Resource Scheme that might operate in the school.
7. While the request to parents may indicate a nominated amount, the financial contribution to the school is voluntary, and there is no obligation on a parent to make all or part of the contribution.
8. To enable an informed decision to be made by the parent, the request for a voluntary contribution should indicate how the funds will be used by the school.
9. The school and the parents share decision-making and responsibility for the operation of the voluntary financial contribution funds. The amount of the requested contribution and the operation of the voluntary contributions are endorsed by the Parents and Citizens' Association annually.
10. The voluntary financial contribution funds may be managed by the school or the Parents and Citizens' Association, but not by a third party.
11. The voluntary financial contribution is not to be a deterrent for a student enrolling at the school, participating in extra-curricular activities or undertaking a particular subject.
12. Where a parent decides not to make a voluntary financial contribution, instruction, administration and facilities for the education of the student at the school will continue to be provided by the school, and the student will suffer no educational detriment by way of school action as a result of the decision.

For any payment by cash, cheque or credit/debit card, a receipt will be issued.

The amount approved by the P&C for 2014 remains the same at \$20 per student and is not included in the amounts listed above.

## **H. School Curriculum Plan**

### **School programs**

Curriculum at Morayfield East State School is defined by The Australian Curriculum in the core learning areas of English, Mathematics, Science, History and Geography. The Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting

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(QCAR) Framework outlines the curriculum in the remaining learning areas of HPE, the Arts, LOTE (Japanese), and Technology which informs the design of our school based units of work. Our school curriculum is designed to engage students in learning experiences that are relevant, challenging and connected to the world around them.

The Prep Year provides an important first year of schooling. During this year, the foundation is laid for all areas of learning.

A strong emphasis on the use of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) across the curriculum for all students to promote modern and engaging learning environments. Most classes have the use of Interactive Electronic Whiteboards.

### **Assessment and reporting**

Assessment is the purposeful, systematic and ongoing collection of information as evidence for use in making judgements about student learning. Assessment is used to promote learning through timely feedback that informs future teaching and learning and builds students' confidence in their ability to learn. Systems, principals, teachers, students and parents all use assessment information to support improvements in student learning.

Reporting is part of communicating with parents and building the school-parent partnership to improve student learning.

At Morayfield East State School a summative report card is issued twice a year as aligned to the P-12 Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting policy of the Department of Education and Training. Each report card outlines student achievement for each learning area studied in the reporting period. Student effort and behaviour is also reported. Students in Years 3, 5 and 7 also receive a written NAPLAN report in Semester Two, after testing is undertaken in the second week of May.

In addition to providing written reports, at least twice a year Morayfield East State School offers parents opportunities to discuss their child's educational performance via a parent/teacher interview.

### **Use of computers including access to internet and intranet**

Children have access to the school's computer network and to the internet from Prep to Year 7. The use of ICTs is a core element of school curriculum. Responsible use of technology is explicitly taught to students. Children work within the school intranet environment and access internet resources through the safety of Department of Education and Training's Managed Internet Service. Irresponsible use of technology results in loss of access to this resource and possible disciplinary action.



### **Our Policy Development**

In developing this policy we have taken direction from the Education Queensland Policy in partnership, and in consultation with our school community. All school policies and procedures are endorsed through the Morayfield East State Parent's and Citizen's Association.

### **Homework**

#### **Our Homework Policy**

Our school supports homework being regularly set in Prep to year 6. We support the set homework being consistent with the best practice guidelines detailed below. However, in recognition of other demands on our students, we acknowledge that individual circumstances may warrant consultation between the class teacher and parent to modify or alter homework requirements.

#### **Why we set homework?**

Homework provides students with opportunities to consolidate their classroom learning; reinforce behaviour for lifelong learning beyond the classroom and involve family members in their learning. When homework is set, it will take into account the need for students to have a balanced lifestyle. This includes sufficient time for family, recreation, and cultural activities.

*We believe, homework that enhances student learning:*

- *is purposeful and relevant to students' needs*
- *is appropriate to the phase of learning (early and middle)*
- *is appropriate to the capability of the student*
- *develops the student's independence as a learner*
- *is varied, challenging and clearly related to class work*
- *allows for student commitment to recreational, family and cultural activities*

### **Our set homework will be appropriate to particular Phases of Learning**

#### **Home Reading: The importance of regular reading**

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Home Reading at Morayfield East State School is a valued element of homework. All students from Prep to Year 7 are expected to engage in daily reading to, with, and by parents/ caregivers or other family members. This is an organised program that is regularly monitored with opportunities to recognise individual achievements.

In the **Early Phase of Learning (Prep to Year 3)** many activities at home or in play can assist children to develop literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills.

In addition to **Home Reading**, homework tasks in Prep to Year 3 can include:

- spelling words and number facts activities
- linking concepts with familiar activities such as shopping, preparation of food, local environment and family outings
- conversations about what is happening at school
- preparation for oral presentations
- opportunities to write for meaningful purposes

In the Prep Year, students will receive regular Home Reading from the beginning of the year and then the inclusion of sight words from Term 2. Homework for Prep will **not be more than 15 mins in total per day**.

In Years 1, 2 and 3, set homework could be up to but generally **not more than 20 mins in total per day**.

In the **Middle Phase (Year 4 to Year 6)** homework can be completed daily or weekly.

In addition to **Home Reading**, homework tasks can include:

- spelling and number facts activities
- activities coordinated across different subject areas
- extension of class work

Homework in Year 4 – Year 6 could be up to but generally **not more than 45 mins in total per day**.

In the upper grades students are provided with more opportunities to be responsible for their own learning. They may be required to engage in independent learning that complements work undertaken in class and therefore have different timelines to other **set** homework tasks. Such tasks may take the form of projects, assignments or research in which students need to plan and manage their own time and learning (sometimes scheduled over a number of weeks). The suggestions above serve as a guide in determining the amount of set homework that our students might be expected to undertake.

### **We will consider students' other commitments when setting homework**

In determining homework, we believe it is important to acknowledge that some of our students may be engaging in many different and valuable activities outside of school. These may include a range of physical activities, sports, recreational and cultural pursuits. Some students may also have family responsibilities. When individual circumstances warrant on-going modifications or alterations to these expectations, it is expected that this will be documented, signed and dated by both teacher and caregiver.

### **We will use varied and challenging homework appropriate to students' learning needs**

Homework can be an opportunity for students to reflect on and practice skills from their classroom program through:

- revision and critical reflection to consolidate learning (practising for mastery)
- applying knowledge and skills in new contexts (a topic of interest, an authentic local issue)
- pursuing knowledge individually and imaginatively (investigating, researching, writing, designing, making)
- preparing for forthcoming classroom learning (collecting relevant materials, items, information)

### **To support Homework at school**

The rationale and purpose of this policy is focused on work done at home with a level of student independence. However it is understood that not all households have the time, space or resources to best facilitate a homework learning situation. At times in the year the school will provide a school learning environment which will provides time, a learning space and resources (books, computers, etc.) as well as staff supervision and support. In implementing our school's homework policy, teachers are required to check homework regularly and provide timely and useful feedback. They are also required to discuss with parents and carers any developing problems concerning their child's homework and suggest strategies to assist with their homework.

### **Enriched Learning Centre**

Annual Book Fair

- Guest Author
- Celebration of student work with a focus on literacy

Weekly Borrowing

- Scheduled class borrowing time.
- Before school and lunch time borrowing

Focused Lessons to Enhance Student Learning

- Accelerated writing groups - Aligned with classroom curriculum

- 
- Personal Projects - Interest based studies where students design their own project, research and present.

#### Book Club

- Periodically through-out the year.

#### Extra-Curricular Programs

The Instrumental Music program is available as an elective in Years 4-6. Lessons are offered in woodwind, brass and percussion and string instruments.

The school's P&C has provided uniforms for performance presentations. Parents may also incur a small travelling cost for these performances.

#### Sport and Physical Education

Students in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to participate in summer and winter inter-school sporting competitions. Practices are conducted during lunch times. Intra-school and recreational sports are offered to students who are not selected for inter-school teams.

All students are encouraged to participate in school athletics and cross-country competitions. Students participate within their house groups.

The school is organised into four houses:

- Yarrah (red)
- Willunga (green)
- Mangiri (blue)
- Namoi (yellow)

Children are placed in houses according to the first letter of their surname. Children are encouraged to wear house colours for inter-house events. House shirts are available through the uniform shop.

Our school also participates in a number of externally run sporting competitions such as the ARL Development cup, AFL Brisbane Lions cup and Qld cricket T20 competition.

Students also have the chance to trial for Caboolture District teams in a large variety of sports. If good enough this representative pathway can lead all the way to selection in a Queensland team to attend the National Championships.

Physical Education lessons are provided on a weekly basis with all classes receiving 30 minute lessons. The program covers a wide range of skills including ball skills and game strategies, athletics, and gymnastics. To participate fully children require lace up joggers and a school hat.



#### Swimming

Students in Years 1 to 4 attend swimming classes during third or fourth term. The program is designed and implemented by qualified swimming instructors. A parent note will provide details of the program including cost prior to the commencement of the program.

#### Student Support Services

Morayfield East State School has an unwavering commitment to providing students with the best education possible. This is achieved through an expert teaching team, a rigorous and targeted curriculum and a deep understanding of the needs of the learners. In addition to pursuing academic excellence Morayfield East State School is committed to promoting a culture of social, emotional and physical wellbeing amongst its students. Ensuring that the balance of student learning and wellbeing is preserved the Student Support Services Program provides experts and targeted assistance to students that are having significant and ongoing difficulties in one or more areas of their schooling life. The program is conducted as a formal and coordinated approach by specialist staff with expertise in various areas of student needs.

With the goal of ensuring that every day, in every classroom, every student is learning in a safe, supportive, inclusive and disciplined environment the program is committed to the core priorities of:

- Supporting students with complex and specific behavioural needs.
- Identifying and supporting students with disabilities.
- Identifying and supporting students with learning difficulties.
- Providing support for students with complex health needs including conditions affecting their mental health.
- Supporting students in crisis or suffering from the effects of trauma.

The specialist staff responsible for ensuring students success includes the school chaplain, Speech Language Pathologist, Guidance Officer, Special Education Teacher, Support Teacher-Numeracy and Literacy and the Head of

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Student Support Services. Parents who believe that their child has additional needs are encouraged to discuss this with their class teacher who may then refer the student to the Support Services Team.

### **Religious Instruction**

Religious instruction is provided within the school time table. Children undertake lessons in their class groups. Programs are Christian-based and do not serve the interests of any one denomination. Volunteers are approved by the Caboolture Minister's Network.

### **Student leadership**

School Captains are elected by their peers each year. These children represent the school at official and school functions throughout the year and have responsibilities around the school. School Captains are supported by Sports House Captains and Student Councillors who form the Student Council.

## **I. Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students**

The school's Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students is based on the Code of School Behaviour. This policy is contained in the school's enrolment package and available on the school website.

The school community seeks to work together to provide a safe, tolerant and disciplined school environment for all students with a focus on promoting student learning.

All school community members are expected to follow the school rules by showing respect, acting safely and responsibly and co-operating. Children are also expected to accept the consequences of their actions and learn from these experiences.

One of the most important roles parents play in their each day as well nourished, well rested and well appreciate parent efforts in the home and before and after school. Parent contributions in these ways are valued not only by each child but also by the whole school community.



children's education is to send them to school behaved children who are ready to learn. We

## **J. Facilities**

The school grounds are large and well-maintained. There are 20 classroom blocks, a library and resource centre and environmental area. The buildings cluster around three large covered areas. Five adventure playground areas have been established. All classrooms have computers, the computer lab is located in G block and the library has a bank of computers. Interactive whiteboards have been installed into the permanent teaching blocks.

## **K. Transport**

Please note that parents are responsible for ensuring appropriate and safe travel to and from school. Skateboards and scooters are not considered appropriate forms of transport and are not permitted to be brought to school.

### **Morayfield East State School gets active with travel**

Morayfield East State School participates in Moreton Bay Regional Council's Travel Choice Schools Program.

The(TCSP) is a voluntary behaviour change program that encourages students, parents and teachers to make sustainable travel choices such as public transport, walking, cycling, scooting and carpooling rather than simply driving a car program is all about helping students, parents and staff walk, cycle, carpool and use public transport to get to and from school. What better way to get fit, save money and reduce traffic congestion at our school?



Each year there will be a number of fun activities that everyone can get involved in, so get ready to have some fun with your travel choices. One such event each term is a Travel Choice to School day that encourages our school communities' participation in walking to school in a group.

### **Buses**

While travelling on the bus to and from school, children must:

- behave appropriately.
- follow the directions of the bus driver.
- travel directly to school from their stop.
- leave the bus at their own bus stop unless a note from a parent or caregiver is provided to the driver when entering the bus.
- enter the school grounds immediately from the bus in the mornings and wait in the covered areas.
- wait in the appropriate areas at the front of the school in the afternoons and follow any directions from the teachers on duty.

Parents contact Kangaroo Bus Lines on 5498 6466 for bus route information.

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Complaints about inappropriate student behaviour can be made to the bus company which has the authority to refuse travel. Most issues are resolved with the help of the bus driver.

## Bicycles

A fenced bike compound is available for In addition, children are advised to secure



children who ride to school. This area is locked daily. their bike with a good quality chain and lock.

Children riding to school, enter and leave via Due to the amount of traffic around the school, around the school. Bicycles may not be ridden in the school grounds.

the Glenwood Drive personal gate near the crossing. children are strongly advised to walk on the footpaths

Children who do not act appropriately in and around the bike compound will not be permitted to ride to school.

Helmets must be worn to comply with the law and in an attempt to stay safe.

Parents are asked to carefully consider their child's safety before allowing them to ride to school. Scooters and skateboards should not be brought to school.



## Cars

A large parking area is available at the front of the school and street parking is available on most school boundaries. A stop, drop, go zone is available at the Glenwood Drive corner.

Cars are not permitted to enter school grounds for the purpose of dropping off or collecting children. These areas of the school grounds are out of bounds for children's safety.

## Road safety

Parents are asked to teach appropriate road safety behaviours. These include:

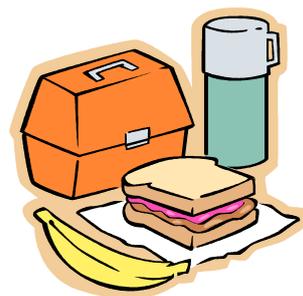
- walking on footpaths, not the edge of roads
- crossing at marked crossings
- stopping behind the curb or marked line
- following the crossing supervisor's instructions
- waiting for the whistle to cross or looking both ways to see that the road is clear before crossing if crossing without a supervisor
- walking across the road, don't run

Pedestrians should take turns with cars in the public car park at the front of the school. This keeps the traffic moving at peak times and frees up car parks.

In the interests of safety, never call a child to cross the road by going between parked cars. Drivers simply cannot see them so cannot stop in time.

## Healthy Lunchboxes!

Healthy lunches and snacks are important for active children. Eating healthy food helps children concentrate and learn. Healthy eating changes are not always easy to make. Try to set a good example with your own lunches. Encourage children to be involved in preparing their own lunch and choosing the foods to include. They might like to make a list of the foods they enjoy.



Praise your child when they choose well. There are limited times for children to eat during the day, especially at school. Children may prefer to play with friends instead of eating.

Encourage your child to sit and eat before heading out to play, or talk to your school about making sure all children get a chance to eat enough before play starts.

## Foods to put in a lunch box

Suggestions include:

- Fresh fruit
- Crunchy vegetables
- A meat or protein food such as slices of lean meat, hardboiled egg or peanut butter (Please be aware of allergy sufferers.)
- A dairy food such as cheese stick or slice, grated cheese, milk or yoghurt
- Starchy food such as bread, a roll, pita or flat bread, fruit bread or crackers
- A frozen drink such as water or milk, an icepack or freezer pack.

## Food suggestions

There are lots of food choices available for lunch boxes. However, it can sometimes be difficult to decide which foods are healthy choices. Suggestions include:



**Fruit** - best choices include fresh or tinned fruit. Dried fruit is sticky and high in sugar, so have it occasionally. Best left out of the lunch box are dried fruit bars and 'straps', which are very high in sugar, low in fibre and stick to children's teeth causing tooth decay.



**Vegetables** - try vegetable sticks with dip, or a small container with mixed vegetables such as cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, peas and cucumber. Chips and packets of crisps are best left for parties and special occasions.

**Milk, yoghurt and custard** - include a small drink of milk (freeze overnight) wrapped in a cloth in the lunch box. Fruit yoghurts should be kept cool in an insulated lunch box. Best left out of the lunch box are 'dairy desserts' and flavoured milks, which are high in sugar.

**Dips, cheese and biscuits** - pre-packaged or your own homemade versions of cheese and crackers are fine. Children enjoy mini packaged cheeses. Avoid sweet dips such as chocolate spreads. 'Oven baked' savoury biscuits are just as high in salt and fat as chips and best avoided.

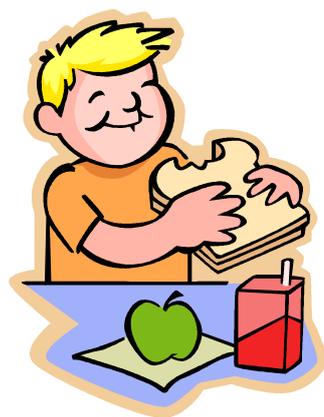


**Different breads add interest** - include a variety of bread, especially if children begin to lose interest in sandwiches. Try bread rolls, pita bread, flat bread, bagels, fruit loaf or buns, foccacias, scones, pikelets, muffins, crumpets, crispbreads, rice cakes or corn thins.

**Vary the fillings** - fillings can include yeast or vegetable spreads like vegemite or promite, peanut butter, cheese (try different types), tuna, egg, sliced cold meats, baked beans, grated carrot and lettuce, chopped roast meat with pickles or chutney, and avocado. Dips like caviar (taramosalata), eggplant, chickpea (hommus), cucumber, yoghurt (tzaziki) or spinach also make good spreads. Avoid chocolate spreads, jams and honey, and fatty meats like salami and strasbourg.

**Muffins and cakes** - try making your own muffins and cakes as a great way to include more fruit and vegetables. Examples include sultana, carrot, zucchini, banana or pumpkin. Offer donuts and creamy cakes at birthdays and special occasions instead of in lunch boxes.

**Muesli and 'breakfast' bars** - almost all 'bars' are too high in sugar to include regularly; however, cereal bars may be better for teeth than chewy sticky muesli bars. Try to avoid muesli bars and chocolate bars in lunch boxes. These are expensive and usually stuck together with fats and sugars.



### Practical issues for busy families

Foods should be simple and easy to prepare, ready to eat, and appetising after several hours storage in the lunch box. Foods such as sandwiches can be prepared the night before or on the weekend, frozen, then taken for each day's lunch box. Suitable foods to freeze include:

- Bread
- Cooked meat
- Cheese
- Peanut butter
- Baked beans
- Mashed eggs
- Yeast or vegetable spreads

### Food safety

In most cases, food is stored in lunch boxes for several hours. Food safety suggestions include:

- choose an insulated lunch box or one with a freezer pack, or
- include a wrapped frozen water bottle to keep the lunch box cool
- two smaller boxes may be more convenient than a single large one
- do not include food in ring pull cans

Follow proper food preparation methods. This is especially important when food will be stored in the lunch box for many hours before eating.

Prepare lunches the night before and store in the fridge or freezer.

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Most breads, sandwiches, fruits, vegetables, dairy products, eggs, meat and protein foods are fine to include in lunch boxes. Perishable foods such as dairy products, eggs and sliced meats should be kept cool and eaten within about four hours of preparation. Don't pack these foods if just cooked. First cool in the refrigerator overnight.

### **Best drinks**

Water and milk are the best drinks for children. They can be frozen to help keep foods in the lunch box cool. Sweet drinks such as fruit juices, juice drinks, cordials, sports drinks, flavoured mineral waters, soft drinks and fizzy drinks are high in sugar and not necessary. These drinks can increase the risk of tooth decay, are filling and may take the place of healthier foods.

### **Find out why they're not eating their lunch**

Many schoolchildren bring their lunch home with them at the end of the day, which can be frustrating. There may be a variety of reasons why your child does not eat all the food in their lunch box. The following suggestions may be helpful:

**The lunch box style** - your child may have an issue with their lunch container. They might prefer a brown paper bag, or want the latest fashion in lunch boxes to be like the other kids. Peer pressure may be the reason why your child's lunch box remains unopened in their school bag. Or they may find it difficult to open.

**Boredom** - try to pack a different lunch every day. For younger children, cut the sandwiches in different ways to add interest: for example triangles, squares or strips. You could even use one slice of white and one slice of brown cut and turned to make a 'zebra' sandwich.

**Too dry** - if they say the filling is too dry, try leaving a sandwich uncut. Some fillings like dips or peanut butter may stay fresher this way. If your child's appetite seems small, offer smaller servings. For example, half a sandwich might be more appropriate than a whole one.

**Fiddly and sticky** - make sure the foods are manageable and easy to eat. Some children are put off by fiddly packaging or don't like getting sticky hands. Fruit can be made easier to eat. For example, remove orange peel or cut a kiwi in half and include a spoon in the lunch box.

**Make other meals count** - if your child hardly eats anything from their lunch box despite your best efforts, try to at least ensure they have a nutritious breakfast and dinner. Trust that your child will eat when hungry.

### **Peer pressure**

Food advertising and their friends' food choices will influence children. Remember that not all children go to school with lunch boxes filled with chips and lollies, despite what your children think and say. It is important to keep offering healthy lunch box choices in a variety of ways, as children learn to eat what is familiar to them. And remember that it may take time to change your child's food preferences to more healthy choices.

### **Where to get help**

- Community health nurse
- Maternal and child health nurse
- An accredited practising dietitian, contact the Dietitians Association of Australia

### **Things to remember**

- It is important to keep offering healthy lunch box choices in a variety of ways, as children learn to eat what is familiar to them.
- Encourage your child to sit and eat before heading out to play. Class teachers supervise their own classes during both eating breaks. You may like to talk to your child's teacher about your child's eating patterns at school.
- Include fruit and vegetables in your child's lunch box.
- Foods such as sandwiches can be prepared the night before or on the weekend, frozen, then taken for each day's lunch box.