



EPPALOCK
PRIMARY SCHOOL

No. 1788

*Quality Education in a
Rural Environment*

2026 Information Handbook



Situated: Corner of Axe Creek Road and Patons Road, Axe Creek

Postal Address: 149 Patons Road, AXE CREEK VIC 3551

Telephone: 03 5439 6366

Email: eppalock.ps@education.vic.gov.au

Website: www.eppalockps.vic.edu.au

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/eppalockps>

Principal - Mr Andrew King



WELCOME TO EPPALOCK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Thank you for choosing Eppalock Primary School for the very important task of educating your child/children.

We encourage your involvement in your child's education and look forward to developing a strong relationship with your family. The importance of the family's contribution to a student's overall growth cannot be underestimated and as partners in their learning, we know there will be many memorable moments, as your child grows with us.

SCHOOL VISION

Our school's vision is to prepare young people to become active, engaged and responsible citizens. We aim to foster creativity, cooperative work, connectedness to the world and adaptability. The school aspires to provide a contemporary approach to teaching and learning in its purposeful learning environment.

Teaching & Learning Environment – We will provide a safe, calm and welcoming learning environment where every child is treated as an individual. Staff and children will be supported to be creative and innovative, and we will encourage hands-on experiential learning opportunities.

Personal Environment – We will develop children who have a strong relationship with school and their community. The children will have a sense of self, understand how they learn, know their likes and strengths and appreciate that they have the talent and skills to play a constructive and positive role in the community around them.

Community Environment – We will build and support an open, healthy and welcoming community that is visible in its practical support for the learning and wellbeing of each child. Children are encouraged to embrace and celebrate differences and they will experience positive interactions with adults.

Natural Environment - We aim to foster a love of and for our natural environment and nurture a strong sense of stewardship within our students. Caring for our environment is a lifelong journey and we do it in our school as well as inspiring our students to reach further to effect global change for sustainability. We know that it's vital for a child to experience and playfully enjoy the natural environment and aim to involve them in authentic activities which enable them to touch, smell, see and hear it. Eppalock PS prioritises environmental sustainability.



SCHOOL VALUES & SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS

Be Kind -Be Respectful -Be Responsible -Be Resilient

Our current school values were chosen in consultation with students, staff and community back in 2019. When considering these values, we always think about how our actions affect self, others and the environment.

We use *School Wide Positive Behaviours* as a framework for student and classroom management across the school. The framework allows consistency in how staff interact with students and value support from home when managing any issues that arise.

When SWPBS is implemented well, students benefit from,

- Increased respectful and positive behaviour,
- Increased time focused on instruction,
- Improved social-emotional wellbeing,
- Positive and respectful relationships among students and staff,
- Increased adoption of evidence-based instructional practices,
- A predictable learning environment with improved perceptions of safety and increased attendance.



MULTI-AGE CLASSROOMS

Research indicates that children in their early years of schooling are exposed to more learning opportunities in a multi-age grouping.

This is because:

- Multi-age groupings model the family group in which the initial learning takes place, for example, with parents and older siblings.
- Younger children quickly adopt the independent work habits, skills and practices of older ones.
- Staying with a familiar group for 2 to 3 years develops closer relationships among the group. In this secure environment children are more likely to take risks and experiment in their learning
- Multi-aging encourages acceptance of differences and takes advantage of opportunities for children to work at their own level.
- It provides greater potential for developing leadership qualities, independence, mutual support and co-operative approaches to learning.
- Multi-age groupings encourage developmental learning.

At Eppalock PS we currently run 3 multi-age classrooms (F/1, 2/3/4 & 4/5/6).



2026 SCHOOL TERM DATES

Term 1: January 28th to April 2nd

Term 2: April 20th to June 26th

Term 3: July 13th to September 18th

Term 4: October 5th until December 18th

IMPORTANT Foundation and Prep Students

Foundation (Prep) children will attend school for the month of February on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Wednesday will be a rest day; however, our Foundation teacher will arrange individual appointments during these days to enable Foundation assessments to be conducted. From the first Monday in March normal school days will apply. Be aware that the children do get tired and may be teary as they adjust to school life. This is quite normal and understandable.



SCHOOL COUNCIL

School Council consists of parents, interested community members, the Principal and teaching staff. It represents the school community and makes decisions on school policies according to Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines.

School Council has the financial responsibility in the areas of planning, auditing and overseeing of work contracts. Meetings are held once a month in the evenings. Please enquire at school about School Council or watch for notices in the school Newsletter.

All new members are more than welcome, and children do appreciate their parents being part of the school. Various sub-committees operate within the School Council, of which you may become a member and take an active part in the school's development. All parents are welcome to attend meetings as observers.

CURRENT SCHOOL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

| | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| Alicia Martin | President |
| Tim Arnold | Vice President |
| Ben Phillips | Secretary |
| Andrew King | Executive Officer |

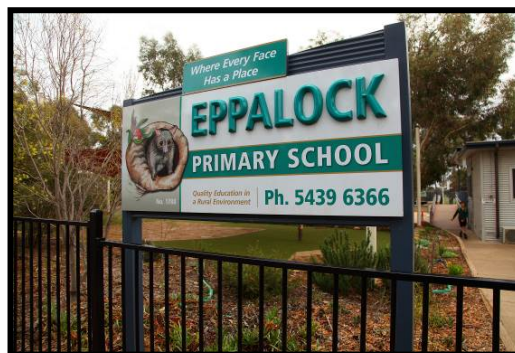
PARENTS' CLUB

Everyone is welcome to join, and it is a great way to meet other parents. There is normally a meeting quite early in first term which advertised in the newsletter.

The Parents' Club also undertake fund-raising efforts during the year as well as organising special events for the wellbeing of students.

SCHOOL TIMES

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Commences | 9.00 am. |
| Morning Recess | 11.00 am - 11.30 am. |
| Lunch | 1.30 pm – 2.15 pm |
| Dismissal | 3.15 pm |



Staff are on yard duty to supervise the children before school from 8.45 am, at recess and lunchtime. On wet days children are supervised in their classrooms and the project area. Children cannot be dropped off at school until a teacher is present. The school does have a morning breakfast club and afternoon After School Care program to allow working families an earlier drop off and later pick up each day.

Lunches are eaten from 1.30 pm – 1.40 pm and the children are supervised during this time. It is extremely important that children are punctual and ready to commence school activities at 9.00 am. Being at school on time is vital. If your child arrives at school after 9.00 am, there is an iPad at the front office that requires the student to be signed in.

ASSEMBLY

Whole school assembly takes place each Friday morning inside the main building. Assembly is a time to celebrate achievements and come together as a school community. We also present Awards and Birthday certificates to students at assembly. Our senior students usually host the assembly.

ATTENDANCE & ILLNESS

Attendance is very important. All students are expected to come to school every day on time unless they are too ill to do so. There is a direct correlation between attendance and success at school. If your child is away, please let the school know. The provision of an absence note remains a legal requirement of parents. For each absence, parents are asked to provide a short note simply to confirm a reason for absence. This could be done via our online uEducateUs system, phone, email or note in the school diary.

uEducateUs is EPS primary contact and information sharing platform. We will arrange information sessions about how to use it at the beginning of 2025 for new families.

Phone notification of an absence: 03 5439 6366



If your child becomes ill at school, we will attempt to contact either yourself or your designated emergency contact. Medication cannot be given at school unless there is personal contact by the parents and written authorisation with detailed instruction provided (form is available at the office).

Please be sure that you tell the teacher of allergies or any other medical problems of which they need to be aware. Ensure all relevant information is updated on your enrolment form. Many things can upset young children and teachers can be more understanding and helpful if they know what is worrying or upsetting your child. Also ensure that current contact numbers are available at school.

CURRICULUM

The school offers a comprehensive curriculum covering all key learning areas. Literacy and Numeracy are priority areas (maths has a minimum time commitment of one hour per day and the literacy program two hours per day). The afternoon sessions are dedicated to areas such as sciences, arts and humanities through an integrated approach.

The school offers Mandarin (Chinese) as the Language other than English.

The school also offers a Living Green Sustainability Program and STEM program both for one day a week with an experienced environmental sustainability teacher. Students also have a Music teacher for one semester, Art for the year and a MARC van library teacher once a fortnight. One of our regular classroom teachers provide PE while the school readily accesses Sporting Schools Grants to enhance student participation in PE.



ENROLMENT

- An Enrolment Form is required for entry to Primary School, together with a copy of your child's birth certificate.
- The provision of a School entry Immunization Certificate is a DET requirement when children are enrolled to commence their primary school education. These certificates can be obtained from the 'Australian Childhood Immunisation Register' (phone 1800 653 809) or from any Medicare office.



COMMUNICATION & REPORTS

Parents are encouraged to visit the school and consult with the class teacher on any matter throughout the year relating to school management or pupil progress. Remember that as partners in your child's education, we need to work together closely to deal with any problems that may arise. The most important consideration is communication. The staff at Eppalock Primary School pride themselves on their genuine care and concern for all students. We encourage open and constructive communication to ensure the best results for your child and a happy school experience.

Teachers are more than happy to discuss your child's needs but would prefer that formal appointments are made if a longer time is required.

- Whole school and individual class information sessions are held early in the school year in Term 1.
- Parent teacher conferences are scheduled at the end of Term 2 to review student reports; help set goals and discuss the progress of students.
- Written reports are completed at half year and end of year. Families have the opportunity to discuss reports with classroom teachers by individual appointment at these times.
- Students in Grade 3 & 5 who participate in NAPLAN assessments can make individual appointments after results are sent home to discuss student achievement.



NEWSLETTER

It is the policy of this school to send one Newsletter home per week on **Mondays**. This newsletter is an online e-newsletter and will be posted on the uEducateUs system each week as part of our paper-free newsletter program. We urge parents to keep this document for reference as this will keep you up to date with current and future happenings at the school. Current & past newsletters may also be found on the school website at www.eppalockps.vic.edu.au

PAYMENTS

EPS utilises an app, My Schools Connect, to make payments. If you need support using the app their website has lots of helpful how-to videos in the FAQ section ([FAQs \(myschoolconnect.com.au\)](http://FAQs(myschoolconnect.com.au))). Alternatively, please contact Nikki at the front office.

CHILDREN LEAVING SCHOOL

We are very aware of the dangers associated with children leaving the school grounds especially at dismissal time and therefore expect and encourage children to:

- Report to teachers if you have not arrived to collect them on time.
- **NEVER** leave the school grounds during school time.
- Report to a teacher if children are to be collected during school hours or if child/ren are not returning to school after the lunch break.
- There is a 'Sign In' / 'Sign Out' register in the office that **must be** completed if you arrive after the morning bell (9.00 am) or collect your child prior to the afternoon dismissal (3.15 pm).
- Always stop and look before crossing Patons Road; it can be very busy, especially at collection time.

We strongly recommend that you explain these rules to your child regularly.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Classroom teachers will require parent helpers from time to time. Your assistance at these times would be very much appreciated. All volunteers at Eppalock PS are expected to provide copies of Working with Children documents if they are working in the school.

JUNIOR SCHOOL COUNCIL & LEADERSHIP

Students have the opportunity to be involved in the Junior School Council or take on student leadership positions in the school such as School Captain. The Junior School Council is responsible for a range of initiatives including fundraising special days and active leadership. Our School Captains host our assemblies, help out around the school and meet with the Principal once a fortnight to discuss what is happening in the school.



COMMUNITY SERVICE

The school supports several community activities each year which are nominated and supported through the Junior School Council initiatives.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Eppalock Primary School is very fortunate in that we have very strong community support. The community joins together on many occasions both within and outside the school. You will enjoy social gatherings and opportunities to discuss issues in a very supportive environment. This indeed would be one of the strengths of the school.



PLAY LUNCH / LUNCH

- **Play lunch** - most children are fairly hungry by this time. Ideas for play lunch include dry biscuits, cheese, fruit, fruit / vegie sticks.
- **Lunch time** - Children eat their lunch between 1.30 pm - 1.40pm. If a child has finished before the time, he/she must still wait until the time has elapsed. It is quite common for children to eat less when at school than you are used to. Normally one sandwich, a drink and some fruit will be plenty.
- The school does not have canteen facilities, but the Parents' Club provide some **special lunch days** throughout the year. A pie warmer lunch day operates during the colder months. This is run by our



students with an adult helper. More information about this special lunch day will appear in our newsletters closer to when it starts.

SCHOOL UNIFORM



Summer Uniform

Bottle green (with the school logo)
Black shorts (basketball)
Green and white checked school dress
Black skort/skort/shorts

Winter Uniform

Bottle Green windcheater (with the school logo)
Black track suits pants
EPS Beanie

Grade 6 students have their special Grade 6 polo shirt and Jumper

We have the whole range of Uniform in varying sizes here at school for your child to try on before ordering. You are welcome to purchase black bottoms at any store but you will need to purchase the tops through our online shop EduThreads. If any family needs assistance with uniform purchase, please see the Principal.

Everyone MUST wear a school wide-brimmed hat in line with our Sun Smart Policy – **baseball caps are not suitable.**

Eppalock Primary School is a SunSmart School, and we encourage parents to ensure that sunscreen is applied at home each morning especially in the summer months. We have sunscreen here at school so students can reapply during the day.

Footwear is parent's choice, however, please consider the appropriateness of what your children wear to school on their feet. School would recommend sports footwear. Surf sandals, thongs, high heels or bare feet are not appropriate.

ART SMOCK – It is recommended that each child have an Art Smock with long sleeves to be worn for Art (an old adult shirt is suitable).

LIBRARY BAG - Each child could have a Library Bag that can be used for MARC Van Library books.

TISSUES – Each child is asked to bring a box of tissues at the beginning of the school year.



**PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT ALL ARTICLES OF CLOTHING, LUNCH BOX,
LIBRARY BAG ETC ARE CLEARLY MARKED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.**

STARTING SCHOOL

Help make your child's Foundation year a happy one by showing an interest in the work he/she brings home or shows you in their classroom tubs.

- ◆ **DO** discuss it with him/her and praise him/her for it.
- ◆ **DON'T** be critical.

DON'T COMPARE - Children mature at different rates and the ability of children in Foundation varies greatly. However, each child brings to school special talents that will be acknowledged and encouraged. Your child will be valued for his/her uniqueness and will be provided with every opportunity to develop as an exceptional individual.

To help you child with their schoolwork.

- * Read him/her stories and talk about them with him/her.
- * When a book comes home from school, read it and talk about it with him/her. Please ensure that it is returned the next day.
- * Encourage your child to recognise and write his/her name.
- * Try to isolate sounds in words and make rhyming words.
- * Give him/her large sheets of paper and thick pencils or crayons to write or draw with.
- * Encourage children to recognise signs in the community - e.g., a red light means STOP.
- * Encourage children to compare things - e.g., bigger, smaller, less than, more than etc.
- * Encourage children to recognise colours.
- * Encourage children to count objects 1 to 10.
- * Show an interest in the work he/she brings home and encourage him/her to talk about it.
- * Encourage your child to look after his/her possessions.
- * If there is anything that worries you, then please ask.

The Early Years Program and Philosophy operates in the school for all students. This program consists of a two-hour literacy block (9:00am – 11.00am) including reading, writing, speaking and listening. Assistance with hearing/changing readers and helping children with writing is both appreciated and encouraged.

School Reader - when it first comes home it consists of mainly pictures.

Good Beginning Readers:

- Hold the book themselves.
- Turn the pages themselves.
- Point to each word as they read.
- Look at the pictures to check for meaning.
- Re-read at difficulty.
- Recognise when what they've said doesn't make sense.
- 1 to 2 little books are borrowed each day.

CHECKLIST

It would be appreciated if you would keep this checklist in mind when preparing your child for school.

Can your child:

- Do up shoelaces and buckles?
- Put shoes on correct feet?
- Recognise own bag, shoes, lunch box etc?
- Recognise own name?
- Use scissors?
- Clean up own playthings?
- Remember where belongings have been put?
- Make himself/herself understood outside the family?
- Answer questions in a way that will be understood?
- Share belongings and toys with other children?
- Separate fairly easily from primary care giver?
- Is toilet trained and aware of basic hygiene?

Although these things are not essential for starting school, the ability to do them will make the Prep year easier and more enjoyable.



RESTORATIVE PRACTICE

The philosophy of Restorative Justice encourages schools to shift their thinking from a traditional model of punishment to one of education, accountability and meaningful change. It views wrongdoing as a violation of people and relationships. When wrongdoing occurs, it is concerned with healing and repairing those individuals and their relationships. The restorative teacher views wrongdoing as an opportunity for learning.

She/he asks questions like *'What happened?'*, *'What were you thinking when you ...?'*, *'Did you make a good choice or a bad choice?'*, *'Who has been affected by your behaviour?'*

We appreciate family and parent support when working through any issues that may occur.

ICT

Each classroom has access to a bank of modern computers which the children use throughout the day to enhance their learning. The computer program is not a separate entity but is integrated into the regular program. Students are encouraged to use technology to research and present their work incorporating multimedia. Each classroom also has access to a school shared set of iPads. The school also has a tv screen in each room to display class prompts and learn.



EXCURSIONS / CAMPS



The school provides as many varied, relevant excursions as possible to give the children many personal experiences on which to base their learning. Cost of these is kept to a minimal amount. A permission form will be given to each child and parents are asked to sign this and return it promptly to the school office or classroom teacher prior to the excursion.

Children cannot attend an excursion or camp without a signed consent form.

Swimming instruction takes place in Term 4. The program is conducted at the indoor pool at Kangaroo Flat with qualified swimming instructors. The students travel to and from the venue by bus.

The students in Grade 3/4/5/6 are involved in a camp outside of Bendigo (location varies each year), and the P/1/2 students have a 'Stay back After School' activity. In recent years school has introduced a sleepover aspect for the grade 1&2 students as part of the school stay back.

The school joins with other schools to provide cultural and sporting activities throughout the year.

MARC VAN

Mobile Area Resource Centre provides library services on Wednesday's each fortnight and children can borrow books. Students need a designated 'book bag' to take the books home.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Eppalock PS does have After School Care through OSHC Adventures. This program operates 5 days a week when required. Families need to register through the OSHC Adventures website to have their child participate. Our office staff will be able to help with registration, however all communication and booking goes through the OSHC Adventures website. Families that are eligible for the Childcare Subsidy can claim that back from sessions attended.

SCHOOL BUS

Eppalock Primary School has a free (conditions apply) school bus run which operates morning and afternoons on school days. For bus application forms, timetables and further information please contact the school. It is vital that students know how they are travelling home at the end of the day. Parents must contact the school (note or phone call) if arrangements change.



BOOK CLUB

Your child will have the opportunity to buy books (at very competitive prices) through the Scholastic Book Club at regular intervals during the year. Catalogues and order forms are sent home with the newsletter.

CONVEYANCE ALLOWANCE

This allowance is available to assist eligible students with the cost of travel to school. For further information, please contact the school.

MEDICAL

Emergency information sheets are completed at enrolment and updated each year. Parents are asked to inform staff of any medical problems that arise during the year or any change of address, telephone number or emergency contact. If your child is to receive medication while at school, parents are to leave the medicine at the office and complete the Medication Register detailing the type of medicine, the dosage, and the time that it is to be administered.

The school must be notified if your child has an infectious disease. There are regulations governing exclusion from school for infectious diseases. The more common diseases are stated below.

Note -- “contact” means child of school age or pre-school age living in the same house as the patient.
“patient” includes carrier.

| Diseases | Exclude from School | Contacts |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Chicken pox | Until fully recovered or at least one week after the eruption first appears | Not excluded |
| Diphtheria | Until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery from infection. | Domiciliary contacts excluded until investigated by the medical officer of health, or a health officer of the Department of Human Services and shown to be clear of infection. |
| Hepatitis (infectious hepatitis) | Until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery from infection, or on subsidence of symptoms. | Not excluded |
| Measles | Until at least five days from the appearance of rash or until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery from infection. | Non-immunised contacts must be excluded for 13 days from the first day of appearance of rash in the last case unless immunised within 72 hours of first contact. |
| Mumps | Until fully recovered. | Not excluded |
| Rubella or German Measles | Until fully recovered or at least five days after onset of rash. | Not excluded |
| Pertussis (whooping cough) | Until two weeks after the onset of illness and until receipt of a medical certificate of recovery from infection. | Domiciliary contacts must be excluded from attending a children’s services centre for 21 days after the last exposure to infection if the contacts have not previously had whooping cough or immunisation against whooping cough. |
| Impetigo (school sores) | Until sores have fully healed. The child may be allowed to return provided that appropriate treatment has commenced and that sores on exposed surfaces such as scalp, face, hands, and legs are properly covered with occlusive dressings. | Not excluded |
| Conjunctivitis | Until discharge from eyes has ceased. | Not excluded |
| Ringworm | Until appropriate treatment has commenced. | Not excluded |
| Pediculosis (head lice) | Until appropriate treatment has commenced. | Not excluded |