



VERRAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

TO FOSTER AND DEVELOP ATTITUDES, SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE TO READY CHILDREN FOR LIFE



PARENT HANDBOOK



Please keep for future
reference

VERRAN PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

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After School Care

SKIDS (Safe Kids in Daily Supervision) run an after school programme in our school hall from 3pm to 6pm for Primary aged children. This organisation is separate to any Verran Primary School management, responsibility and payment. Contact 09 576 6602; verran@skids.co.nz for further details.

Assemblies

A full school assembly is held in the hall on the last Friday of each month at 2.30pm. All parents and caregivers are welcome to attend. Classes take turns to run these assemblies.

Attendance (Absence, sickness)

Irregular attendance patterns have been identified as one of the major barriers to children's learning and the Ministry of Education provides schools with a number of avenues of support to help reduce unjustified absences and truancy. Children are required by regulation to attend school unless prevented by special circumstances or illness.

It is important that children arrive each day on time. We require prior written notification to the Principal if your child is going to be absent for reasons other than illness eg family holiday.

The school day starts at 8.55am when children need to be at school ready to start the day with pencils sharpened, bags hanging up. Arriving after the bell can cause disruption to the class and make it difficult for a child to settle.

Roll call is at 8.55am and if children are not there they will be recorded as late or absent.

If your child is unavoidably late please notify the office on arrival. If your child is absent for the day you need to notify the Office. Any unexplained absence will be followed up with a phone call.

Student absence: please ring the school office (483 7052) before 9am and leave a message or text 021 635 876 to leave a message.

Children School Banking (ASB)

ASB have a banking scheme at our school. Every Friday, children put their filled in deposit in a bank envelope into the bank deposit box in the foyer by the school office. The school takes these deposits into the ASB bank. Application forms are available from the school office.

Behaviour

At Verran Primary we believe in being proactive and encourage parents to be the same. If there is anything happening at home that may affect a child's behaviour or learning we would appreciate knowing about it. If your child's teacher has concerns we will contact you to discuss the concern.

Car Parking

There is no car parking available in the school grounds for parents. We encourage children to join their closest walking school bus as a way to avoid congestion at the school gate. There is limited

parking on Verran Road and NONE allowed in the roundabout. To increase visibility for the Kea crossing please do not double park or park on yellow dotted lines. The kea crossing only operates after school. Before school, children must not cross Verran Road but must walk around the cul de sac. We look forward to parental reinforcement of these safety rules.

There is no pedestrian access allowed through the school driveway. Children must use the pedestrian gates by the Enviro Room or the gate by Room 1.

Cellphones

If children absolutely require a cellphone for after school use they must be handed into the school office before the start of school and collected at 3pm. All cellphones must be named and switched off during school hours (8.55am to 3pm). As a general rule we strongly recommend these remain at home.

Class progress

Children are classified according to their years at school:

Junior school Year 0 – 2

Middle school Year 3 – 4

Senior school Year 5 -6

At the end of the year, we look at new entrant children whose birthdays fall at the beginning of May to assess whether they should be moved to Year 1 or Year 2. We take into consideration both the social and learning needs of the child. Our goal is to ensure that children spend enough time in the junior school to build the self confidence, social skills and foundation learning skills that will allow them to proceed to the Middle school with confidence.

Clothing and Footwear

Children should be appropriately dressed at all times and we request that you name your child's items of clothing and belongings to assist their return. Clothing that is not claimed is kept in the cloakroom outside Room 3 and Room 4 for about a term. After that it is put into the clothing bin at the school gate. We ask that children wear shoes or sandals to school each day – this is a health and safety issue.

School T shirts are available at certain times during the school year. No stock is carried so parents need to place an order.

Code of Conduct

At Verran Primary School we aim to respect each other and the environment, to communicate positively, work hard and enjoy ourselves.

Dental Health

The Dental Therapist is located at Birkenhead Primary School. Children can be enrolled at the clinic from 3 ½ or when they start school. If you require urgent treatment contact 480 9602 direct. A mobile dental van visits our school once a year and screens all children .

Donations

Suggested contribution per child

Full payment for the year \$130

4 Term payments of \$32.50

Payment by arrangement with Principal.

For two or more children the amounts are \$230 for the whole year or 4 term payments of \$57.50.

This is a voluntary contribution to your child's education and is the minimum amount we have estimated needed to subsidise government funding.

All contributions are tax deductible and we will issue you with a receipt for tax purposes.

As a decile 6 school our funding from the Ministry of Education only meets 75% of our costs to run our basic operations. Many of the extras we provide have been subsidised through fundraising. We see parental contributions as the most feasible way (and so do most parents) to provide educational opportunities for our children. Please support our school. The contribution we suggest per child equates to just 60c per school day.

Educational Visits and Performances

Outings and visits outside the classroom are an important aspect of educational programmes. We try to provide some event for children each term to tie into our current theme. When children are out of school we expect them to show appropriate behaviour and act as ambassadors for Verran Primary School.

This year the Activity fee is \$25 per term per child and will cover all these visits or performances. This is a user pays cost and cannot be carried by the school.

All outings and school performances are undertaken with the knowledge and approval of the Principal.

Children may walk to local venues which are within walking distance of the school. If children are to be transported, parent/caregiver permission is required. If travelling by car children must wear seat belts. Children need appropriate clothing and footwear.

EFTPOS

Eftpos is available in the school office to pay for donations, Activity fee, sports, trips etc. We do not provide a cash out service. Payment by credit card is not available.

Emails

An easy way to communicate with the school is via email:

office@verranprimary.school.nz (Office enquiries – Leonie Sykes)

jdunning@verranprimary.school.nz (Principal - Jeanette Dunning)

All teaching staff can be contacted in a similar way : their initial and last name @verranprimary.school.nz.

ERO Report – Education Review Office Report

The latest ERO report on the school can be downloaded from www.ero.govt.nz

Extra Curricular Activities

Verran Primary School offers a variety of extracurricular activities to give children new opportunities.

Activities offered include

- School singing group
- Guitar instruction
- Enviro activities
- Kapa Haka
- Cricket
- Rugby
- Basketball
- Hockey
- Netball
- Soccer

Where these activities are run by outside groups there is usually a charge. Verran Primary School passes these charges on to those children participating in them. Once again these are not costs that can be borne by the school.

We welcome parental involvement and offers to assist in running extra curricular activities for our children.

Grounds (after hours)

You are welcome to use the school grounds outside of school hours. We expect the grounds to be treated in an appropriate manner consistent with the rules which apply during school time. A benefit to us of school families using the school grounds is a reduction in vandalism. If you see anything of this nature please notify the police or the Principal.

Play in the school grounds is not supervised after 3.10pm and thereafter parents must accept full responsibility for their own children. All students must go home at 3pm and can only return to school after 3.15pm with parental permission/supervision.

The after school care programme accepts responsibility for the children who are booked into the programme.

Hats

To promote sun safe behaviour every child must wear a hat in the summer months – Terms 1 and 4. If a child is not wearing a hat they are required to play in the shade. Please ensure hats are named.

Headlice

This is a perennial problem in schools. If we notice a problem in a class we will send home a headlice information sheet. The health nurse recommends regular brushing and a weekly application of conditioner and the use of a lice comb to be combed through the hair while the conditioner is on it, to eliminate any live lice.

Health (nurse, hearing and vision, sickness at school)

The Health Nurse is a regular visitor to school and is available to help with any concerns you or a teacher may have. Hearing and vision checks are conducted twice a year by the Ministry of Health. The Health Nurse will contact you with any concerns arising from these tests. We ask for consent to these tests when we enrol your child.

We have a sick bay in the administration area. Minor injuries are treated by school staff trained in St Johns First Aid. In cases of more serious injuries we contact you if we think medical attention is required. If we cannot contact you we will take your child to an accident and emergency unit or call an ambulance. We will also contact you if your child becomes ill at school. If your child is unwell in the morning, we ask that you do not send them to school as we are not resourced to attend to sick children.

Homework

Any homework given should complement work being taught in classroom programmes and help to establish study habits.

In the Junior school (Y0-2), homework is usually home reading and/or a fun maths activity.

As children move through the school they are encouraged to read each night and to learn basic mathematical facts, spelling words and perhaps undertake a topic based learning activity.

In the Middle and Senior school homework is generally given out at the beginning of the week, to be completed and returned by Friday.

We are aware that many children are involved in extracurricular activities after school. We want your child's homework commitments to work in with these other interests and encourage you to notify the classroom teacher if these other interests need to take priority.

ICT (Information and Communication Technology)

The school is networked for ICT with all classrooms, the library, administration block linked through a central server. Though we do have a dual platform of PC and mac computers, the majority of computers the children use are imacs or emacs. There are at least 2 computers in each class and all teachers have access to their own school laptop and a small pod of older PC computers. We are providing for future ICT purchases on an ongoing basis.

All staff, students and parents are made aware of the school's Internet safety policy and sign an agreement regarding use and responsibilities.

Learning Programmes

Parents are the child's first teachers and can provide the school with valuable insights into the child's social and learning needs. Mutual support between home and school is very important.

In general, Verran Primary School's teaching and learning programmes are guided by research supporting the following principles - children learn by doing; tasks need to be meaningful and offer success; each child is unique and has unique learning needs; programmes aim to strengthen and challenge children's skills, attitudes and knowledge.

We regularly assess students using a range of formal and informal assessments to enable us to identify where children are at and what the next learning step is for them. This information is used to plan for the ongoing development of learning programmes. Learning programmes are differentiated to meet the range of learning needs in every class and children are often grouped with other children with similar learning needs.

Learning Themes

At Verran Primary School the whole school is involved in theme planning and the different emphasis each year group will take on the theme. Each term there is a theme to which different subject areas are integrated. The themes are broad enough to allow teachers in each team to tailor the topics to children's particular interests and authentic learning experiences.

Library

The school library is a popular hub of our school. All classes have a designated library time and the library is also open at lunchtime. We encourage children to borrow books, treat them appropriately and return them on time. When books have been mistreated or lost we seek reimbursement from you.

Medication

School staff will not administer prescription medication at school unless there is written permission from the parents and this is authorised by the Principal. A copy of the school policy and a slip for signing is available through the school office. All medication must be handed in at the school office and will be stored in the sick bay and administered by staff.

It is our policy not to hold and administer non prescription medicine to students at school in our sick bay e.g. Paracetamol.

Money / Valuables

Any requests for money will be made via a letter or invoice from the school. Please ensure that money for sports, swimming, waterwise etc, is sent in a sealed envelope with the child's name and Room number on the outside.

Children are discouraged from bringing large sums of money or other valuables to school as we cannot guarantee their security.

Visitors and parent helpers to our school are asked to take responsibility for their possessions whilst on the school grounds.

Newsletters

School newsletters are sent home once a week, generally on a Wednesday. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform you about the daily happenings and events at school. Please check in your child's bag for communication notices from school.

A copy of the school newsletters can be found on the school website and if you wish to receive the school newsletter by email then please let the office know.

Open Door Policy

We have an open door policy and welcome discussion with you on the matters of interest or concern related to your child. The preferred time for discussions with teaching staff is outside teaching hours and depending on the amount of time required, prior arrangement of a suitable time is appreciated. We welcome parent help both within the classroom and in other activities that happen in the school. These requests for assistance are usually made through a newsletter sent home.

Please feel free to make suggestions in writing of ways we can improve our school and to let us know if things are going well. Email is a good way to communicate with us.

Parental Concerns Procedure

In the event of an issue arising we aim to manage your concerns in the following way:

In the first instance, a complaint in relation to a particular class, child or that class's teacher should be raised with the teacher concerned.

In the event that the complaint is not resolved, you can follow one of these avenues – the syndicate leader or the Principal. If you still have concerns then you can approach the Board of Trustees (in writing).

In our experience concerns are normally resolved quickly when the concerns are communicated promptly. We value your input in alerting us if you feel a problem exists that requires attention.

Parent Support Group (PSG)

This is a group of parents, chaired by a Board member, who raise funds for the school by organising various events during the year.

Your active involvement in this group would be greatly appreciated as they do a great job of raising funds for various school projects.

Further details are available on separate sheet.

Playgrounds

There are two playgrounds for the children – the junior playground and the senior playground. In addition the juniors have sand pit areas for play. The older children are not allowed on the Junior play areas, nor the juniors on the senior playground.

To ensure safe play the children are asked to abide by the following rules – Be fair, share. No pushing or pulling others. Use equipment appropriately.

Reporting to Parents

This involves a combination of formal parent and teacher interviews and written reports. The reports go home at the start of Term 2 and about 3 weeks later is the parent teacher interview. There is another interview scheduled for Term 3. The final report for the year goes home in Term 4.

During the year we may hold curriculum focussed parent evenings or send out newsletters to better update you on educational change.

Because the education of your child is a partnership we welcome communication when you wish to know more about how your child is progressing.

School Lunches

Chewing gum and sweets are not allowed in school. We encourage children to have a healthy balance of food in their lunch box. Because we are an enviro school we discourage excess packaging that goes to landfill eg chip packets. We do categorise rubbish into landfill, worm farm, recyclable and encourage all children to put their lunch waste into the appropriate receptacle. To help us manage the amount of rubbish we have to dispose of, and to give you an idea of the foods your child is (or isn't) eating, we ask children to take home uneaten food and their food wrappers.

We discourage children from sharing their lunches.

Children may order lunches on a Friday when PSG cook a sausage or American hot dog and offer other food for sale. See lunch order menu form for further details. When ordering put the child's name and room number and what they want on the outside of an envelope, with the money inside. These orders go in the lunch box in each classroom by 9am.

Stationery

Parents can buy most stationery requirements from an outside stationery supplier. Those items that are specifically required by the school can be purchased from the school office.

Volunteering

Volunteering is a great way for you to contribute to the school. Your contribution in the smallest ways can make a huge difference to what we can achieve to promote better learning opportunities and effective partnerships between home and school.

There are many ways you can be involved: classroom parent help, Parent support group (PSG), enviro, kapa haka, school productions, Board of Trustees, working bees, sharing special skills – music, art, coaching and managing sports teams, helping with grant applications, supporting school fundraising, walking school bus.

Please contact us if you would like to contribute in any way ! We look forward to hearing from you.

Walking School Bus

We have one walking school bus route to and from school every day. The route is Park Hill Rd / Berne Place / Roseberry Ave intersection.

We are always looking for parents to assist with these so please contact the office if you are able to help.

Wheels Day

We do not allow children to ride their bikes or scooters to school. However, every Friday children can bring along something to ride or play with, for wheels day.

Any item brought to school can only be used inside the school grounds, riding them to school is not allowed. We ask that all items brought to school for wheels day are taken home each Friday.