



There are no limits for those who try.

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GRETA VALLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

HANDBOOK

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This is the Greta Valley Primary School Handbook.

During your time as a member of this School Community, this Handbook will assist you with information which will be updated from time to time.

Each page is numbered. When a particular page is superseded (eg. rosters and lists), you will be asked to replace it with the updated version.

SCHOOL PROFILE

Greta Valley P.S. opened in 1993 as the result of the merger of the two remaining local schools and following the closure of several others over the preceding years. As a result the children are all bussed to school from a wide area around the school comprising Greta South, Hansonville, Greta, Greta West, Lurg, Upper Lurg, 15 Mile Creek, Ryan's Creek, Upper Ryan's Creek and Molyullah. These far flung districts support two major centres, Wangaratta and Benalla. Our exit students will complete secondary school at any one of five secondary schools in one of these two locations. Our intake of preps each year could have attended any one of nine different kindergartens. Parents work in either city if they commute to work, or have local employment or rural businesses. They support four different local fire brigades, several different football teams, churches in a number of centres and community activities in their own local districts. Many of our families have only met one another through the Greta Valley primary school. In all other aspects of their daily life they have a common community with only a section of our wider school community.

The support the school receives from our families is fabulous. They are committed to creating and maintaining the best possible local school they can. Fund raising is enormous with between 20-25% of our cash budget created by locally raised funds. The two major contributors to this are the catering at 15 Mile Creek Camp and volunteer cleaning of our school. Working bees are very well attended and our grounds are well maintained and improving every year as a result. Support is evident in classroom programs, clubs activities and outdoor education activities.

The school enrolment has been steady for the last seven years and remains in the thirty's. This has allowed us to offer two classrooms with full time teachers and enrichment programs delivered by another .6 teacher. Over the years this has been supported by other staff working at lower time fractions or for short time frames, who have been able to extend our curriculum with their expertise.

Our school has made outdoor education a major feature of its curriculum, with a strong belief that our children benefit enormously from this program. They are able to practise the very important life skills of persistence, organisation, resilience, getting along and confidence through these activities. Their overall level of fitness is raised and they are highly engaged in school as a result of the extensive program. This program is largely supported by the funds retained within the school by volunteer cleaning.

Greta Valley is one of five schools in the Valley Schools cluster and we share time together for sport, curriculum enrichment, planning and professional development. We have recently embarked in a shared curriculum and professional development activity in the "Success for Boy's" initiative. Our school is a member of the Benalla Cluster of schools which also offers curriculum and professional support, shared planning and professional development. These two avenues of contact with the wider teaching community are very important for our small staff to develop and extend their professional knowledge and support.

Greta Valley Primary School provides:

- Comprehensive use of computer-based information technology and communication by the students.
- Extensive Outdoor Education Program.
- Staff participation in continuing education programs.
- Education designed for the individual student.
- Gifted Education Program.
- Reinforcement of life skills that emphasise persistence, consideration, confidence, organisation and continuous individual improvement.
- Language Other Than English, French.
- Physical Education.
- Music Specialist.
- Science Specialist.
- Visiting Art and Library Vans with specialist teachers.

YOUR ROLE AS PARENTS

Your attitude to your child's school and his/her teachers is one of the greatest influences affecting their learning. A positive and supportive attitude and a partnership approach are very important.

Parents are welcome at the Greta Valley School at any time. The level of classroom support or the regularity of "hands-on" help that you can offer will vary depending on the age of your children and other work commitments. Talk to your child's teacher to arrange the kind of help that will suit you both.

All parents can be involved in their child's schooling from home. Discuss their day, listen to them read and read to them. Support homework tasks and projects.

Conversation is one of the greatest tools to develop verbal expression which leads to competent written English. Listen to and converse with your children.

Your child may return home from school quite tired. He/she will "unload" their troubles or concerns and during this initial period of time, these issues seem huge. A good tip is to listen but don't become too concerned. After a drink, something to eat and a rest, the second discussion on the same topic often seems far less disturbing.

If these problems or concerns are important please contact us at school.

Fundraising (see section about Cleaning and Parent Club)

Working Bees. These will be advertised through the newsletter and usually occur on the weekend before school returns after each term holiday.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS:

- To pay the Levies/Fees set by School Council, by the end of Term 1.
- Support all school activities where possible.
- Be aware of what your children are learning.
- To be involved in Policy Development and Review.
- To support the decisions of our School Council.
- To support School staff.
- Absent children - to notify school by phone or note (as provided in this folder).
- Medication – to be handed to the classroom teacher with a written note for dosage.
- To sign excursion notices and return them promptly.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Greta Valley Primary School welcomes parental involvement. Your skills, interests and work commitments will determine the amount of time and kind of involvement you can offer.

You may like to consider the following opportunities:

- Winter Sports Program - Coaching and attendance at games.
- Classroom support - Reading, Art and Craft, tidying book shelves, sharpening pencils, making teacher aides, refreshing wall displays.
- School Garden.
- Parent Club
- Outdoor Education Program.
Support with activities and transport.
- School Council.
We meet eight times a year. Elections for School Council positions occur at the beginning of each year.
- School Library - catalogue books and help maintain some order.
- If you have a skill or area of expertise, tell us about it. Our children love learning new things from the adults in our community.

GRETA VALLEY SCHOOL PARENT CLUB

Greta Valley Parent Club is very actively involved in fundraising for our school. Meetings are fairly informal with a social atmosphere. All parents are welcome and it is a great way to get to know each other.

The School Parent Club organises fundraising and most social events, sometimes in conjunction with School Council.

Catering for camps at 15 Mile Creek Camp and Clearing Sales is the main source of fundraising. It is assumed that all families will be able to help in some way with this catering. A roster for each camp will be published in the newsletter. New parents requiring more information can contact the school for the phone number of the parent in charge of this activity.

Funds raised are used to provide subsidies for school excursions for all children and major school improvements.

The School Parent Club is involved in organising Social events such as Family Trivia Nights, the Bush Dance, Luncheons, etc., and providing "little extras" to make these events more pleasurable. Being involved in the School Parent Club is a great way to support your school and "do your bit" while socialising with families in the Greta Valley Community.

GRETA VALLEY P.S. COUNCIL:

Current Members:

President Anthony Griffiths

Vice President Vicki Dosser

Secretary Julie Delaney

Treasurer Kris Porker

Members:

Mal Phelan

Tina Moyle

Julie Delaney

Wendy Moore

ALL parents are invited to attend School Council meetings, they are open meetings. These are usually held on the third Wednesday of the month commencing at 7.30pm.

SCHOOL STRATEGIC PLAN

Our present School Strategic Plan runs for a four year period and will be renewed following a School Review. These reviews are required by the Education Department and conducted by external contractors to assess our school's levels of achievement and overall performance.

School Council, staff and parents will be involved in establishing our goals and priorities after each School Review.

Copies of our current document are available for your perusal at the school.

SCHOOL POLICIES:

School Council maintain an ongoing review to ensure policies are relevant to the needs of the school community.

If you would like more information about our policies, you can contact us at school.

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

Several people are our mowing roster but extra help is always welcome. If you can support us by helping to mow the grounds, contact the school. We have a lovely big John Deere ride-on mower to make your job easier.

Working Bees are held at the beginning of each term. From time to time extra jobs need to be done. If you have practical skills and would like to help, tell Kris or Mal Phelan (5766 6430). Mal is our School Council building and grounds rep.

STUDENT FREE DAYS:

School Council will nominate four days as being student-free. These days allow the staff to attend In-service activities, prepare reports and sort out organisational details.

There is also one day per year that is taken as a community holiday. In recent years, this has fallen on Benalla Show Day.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Greta Valley Primary School does have a school uniform.

The Official School Colours are Navy and White and the following items are available for purchase twice a year.

- Navy or White Polo Shirt with logo
- Navy Shorts
- Navy Windcheaters with logo
- Navy Tracksuit pants
- Sew-on logo

Navy hats and beanies with logo are available all year round.

Children **must** wear hats at school in Terms 1 and 4.

NEWSLETTER:

School newsletters are distributed to the oldest child in each family on the Friday of each week.

Your newsletter will include Dates to Remember and the Cleaning Roster. Catering Rosters will also be attached. The newsletter will inform you about forthcoming events, excursions and camps and outstanding achievements by our pupils. Parents may wish to advertise items, events etc. through the school newsletter. Parents who wish to place small private notices in the school newsletter are asked to send a single copy typed and ready for pasting or to e-mail the item. Items exceeding a third of a page, which involve outside organisations or private business, are to be delivered as multiple copies (20 - one per family) ready to be stapled to our newsletter.

From time to time accounts and receipts may be attached to your school newsletter. These will be folded and stapled in position.

VISITING SERVICES

- High Country Mobile Library Van visits alternate Mondays. This is a community service available to all the public. In the back of this folder you will find a timetable and membership application form.
- School based library service visits alternate Fridays.
This is called the M.A.R.C. Van (Mrs. Leanne Novak's van). Books which are to be returned to this van have a stamp resembling a library truck.
- School based art and craft lessons visit alternate Fridays.
This is called the M.A.C.C. Van and Mrs. Amanda Aldous is the art teacher.
- Visiting Speech Pathologists or Occupational Therapists are organised for children who require this extra assistance.

SWIMMING PROGRAM:

The school conducts a swimming program during Term 4. This is held over a number of weeks at one day per week.

The children are bussed to and from the Benalla Pool. Parents pay for this program.

ATHLETIC SPORTS:

We compete against other rural schools at an Athletic Carnival which is held early in Term 2

The emphasis is on children showing their personal best on the day. There are no winning school trophies but we present medals and ribbons for outstanding achievement.

Parents are encouraged to assist on this day.

Some successful children 10+ years may be selected to compete in Zone Finals and possibly at Olympic Park in Melbourne.

WINTER SPORTS PROGRAM:

Children in the Senior Grades take part in Football and Netball matches against other schools in our district during Terms 2 and 3.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION:

Children should be appropriately dressed to take Physical Education lessons. Once you are familiar with the timetable you should ensure that your child has shorts/track suit pants and sneakers on the days required. Girls who prefer a sports skirt must wear sport knicks.

N.B. NO HAT - NO P.E. During Terms 1 and 4

This is in line with our school Sunsmart Policy.

MUSIC LESSONS

Keyboard and Violin lessons are also available at the school by arrangement.

Julie O'Brien is employed to take class lessons in Music and teach instrument music to the older children.

SCHOOL TIMES

School commences each day at **9.15am**

Morning Recess	10.15 - 11.00am
Lunch Recess	1.00 – 1.45pm
School Cleaning	3.20 - 3.30pm
Dismissal	3.30pm

* Last day of each term dismissal is 2.30pm.

If your child is going to be at school before 8.45am, please contact a member of staff so that supervision can be assured.

COLLECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SCHOOL

Most children at Greta Valley Primary School travel to and from school by bus. If you wish to alter this arrangement on any afternoon (home trip) you must call the school or give the teachers a note. If you have not made contact with the school, and neither parent is at school by 3.30pm, children will be asked to board the bus and travel home as normal.

If your child is to be collected by someone other than a parent, we must hear from you before we will allow the children to go home with anyone else.

COLLECTION OF CHILDREN FROM BUS STOP

The Northey family have the school bus contract. They offer care and concern for your children well above any other bus service I know of. If you are not at the bus stop to meet your child in the normal way, the Northey's will bring your child back to school. Your child will stay here while we endeavour to contact you. If there is no staff at school, the Northey's will take your child to their home and once again make contact with you. Joe and Lyn Northey can be phoned on 5729 7523 and Connie and Dave Northey can be phoned on 5729 7522.

BUSSING TIMETABLE 2007

Small Bus Toyota

AM	Northey	8.20am	PM	School	3.36pm
	Northey	8.22am		Dosser	3.45pm
	Pangbourne	8.27am		Jordan/Wheelens]3.53pm
	Dosser	8.40am		Harris Gunn/Fogarty]	
	Jordan/Wheelens/]8.48am		Pangbourne	4.02pm
	Harris Gunn/Fogarty]			Northey	4.07pm
	School	8.58am		Northey	4.09pm

Big Bus Hino

AM	Moyle	8.09am	PM	School	3.36pm
	Phelan	8.22am		Moyle	3.43pm
	Robertson	8.24am		Phelan	3.56pm
	Moore	8.29am		Robertson	3.58pm
	Griffiths	8.34am		Moore	4.00pm
	Smith	8.42am		Griffiths	4.01pm
	Davey	8.44am		Smith	4.17pm
	School	9.00am		Davey	4.19pm

There may be slight variations to these times due to weather conditions, changes to enrolments or children not travelling on a specific trip thus making the trip shorter. Parents are asked to ensure that the children are at the bus stop well before their pick-up time as the bus will not wait.

EMERGENCY PLAN FOR SCHOOL BUS

1. In the case of an impending flood or fire in the vicinity of the bus route, no bus will run and parents will be notified.
 2. In the event of a fire threatening while the bus is en-route, the bus will proceed to the nearest safe area and make contact with the school if possible.
 3. In the event of a flood interrupting the route, the bus will return to school and the parents notified.
 4. In the case of a threatening fire or flood, no child will be left at a bus stop without the presence of a supervising adult.
 5. Parents who wish to check the progress of the bus in an emergency situation should ring the school or Northeys.
- Please keep telephone calls to a minimum and brief in duration.
 - School buses are furnished with a pager and mobile phone. That number is for emergency contact only and is held by the school.
 - The school buses are owned and operated by Joe and Lyn Northey and can be contacted on 5729 7523.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

The advantage in being a member of a small school is that teachers get to know your children very well and you have the opportunity to see us frequently. This allows us to have open and on-going conversations about your child's progress. Teachers welcome this but do ask that you do not impose on classroom time.

The following format for school reports exist:-

- A skills-based report presented in July and December.
- A folder displaying a selection of your child's work.
- A scheduled Parent/Teacher interview mid-year.
- Other discussions between Parents and Teachers to occur at mutually acceptable times.

STAFF'S RIGHT TO PRIVACY

Our school and its staff are members of a small community. As the Principal and with School Council support, I ask that each of you respect the right of our staff to live, socialise and relax within the community as private individuals.

Phone calls to staff member's homes should be limited to emergencies. Communications about excursions and extra curriculum activities will be advised by newsletter, so keep these handy.

Matters pertaining to your child - his/her educational, social or emotional well being are to be addressed while staff are at work. Appointments can be made at any time of year. You do not have to wait for parent/teacher interviews.

TRANSITION

Days are nominated each year for Grade 5 and 6 children to visit Secondary Schools. Programs for Benalla and Wangaratta vary to some degree. It is worth while for your child to visit as many Secondary Schools as possible. This allows them to become familiar with the bus travel, large numbers and large campus. It also gives the one or two children attending each of our five local secondary schools some support from peers when they are visiting their preferred school.

PREP PROGRAM

Prep children will be given one rest day per week for all of Term 1. Wednesday will be the Prep rest day for Term 1 2007.

Prep children often become tired and we suggest that you keep your child home for **extra** rest time if it is needed. A tired child will not learn and will not cope socially. Not only is it a waste of time being at school, it is unfair to put your child through an upsetting day when they feel the whole world is against them. A sleep in and an extra rest day solves all these problems.

Ring and let us know when you are doing this.

