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**NEWMERELLA**

_PrimaOy School_

**CUTTING PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS**

**Values -**

- Keep ourselves fit, healthy and safe
- Care about the feelings, health and safety of others
- Care for our own and other people's property
- Encourage and support others through teamwork
- Care for the environment
- Accept and seek help when required
- Do our best
- Set high goals and standards
- Compliment and celebrate success and achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Honesty</th>
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<tr>
<td>• We communicate truthfully and openly</td>
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<td>• We learn from our mistakes</td>
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<td>• We listen carefully with an open mind</td>
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<td>• We take responsibility for our behaviours</td>
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<td>• We treat people with respect</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning</th>
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<td>• We think about, review and take responsibility for our actions</td>
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<td>• We respect other people's beliefs, cultures and differences</td>
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<td>• We understand how we learn best</td>
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<td>• We strive to challenge and extend ourselves as independent learners</td>
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“Cutting Pathways to Success”

Dear Parents

Newmerella Primary School warmly welcomes you and your child to our school. Our school provides a friendly and caring environment that enhances learning, personal growth and wellbeing for all students.

Our school has an open school policy that encourages parents to be actively involved in their child’s learning and development.

To achieve success in delivering the educational needs of your child, we look to parents for support and co-operation. Partnerships between students, staff, parents and the wider school community are fostered and highly valued.

We aim to provide a stimulating, safe and happy environment to assist your child’s transition into our school.

If you have any concerns at all, please feel free to contact us. The Principal and staff are committed to assisting you and keeping you well informed.

We look forward to working with you and your child and seeing them grow and achieve to their full potential.

Yours faithfully

Stephen Mathers
Principal – Newmerella Primary School
Starting school is a wonderful and exciting time for all concerned and we hope this information booklet will assist you in helping to give your child a positive transition into school life.

We welcome the opportunity to share with you, the joint responsibility of developing your child to their full potential. A close liaison between school and home greatly increases the chances that your child’s education will be a happy and rewarding experience.

School life is an extension of the home environment in which the values of co-operation and sharing, tolerance and a respect for the rights of others are encouraged.

Just as children begin to walk and talk at different ages, so do children learn at different rates. Whilst one child may be ready for a particular task, another may require different activities which are suited to the level of that child’s development. Some children are ready to read when they begin school, others require tasks which encourage and allow reading readiness to develop. The most important aspect of readiness to read is the emphasis placed upon reading in the home. Daily reading with your child is a most important part of this process.

The school will organise opportunities such as Parent Information Evenings and Parent/Teacher Interviews, to meet with you to share information on your child’s learning and what we are trying to achieve. In addition, you are invited to contact us if you have anything you would like to discuss. Usually a few informal words with the teacher as you deliver or collect your child will be sufficient, but there may be occasions when you need to arrange an appointment for formal discussions.

The start of a school year can be tiring for children and this is especially so with Foundation Year children. The classroom program will make allowances for this. Children are expected to attend school for the full day on each school day of the week, unless they are overtired or unwell. Parents need to telephone the school to advise that a child will be absent.

Your child will receive two written reports a year showing their progress.

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to you and your child and we hope that you will enjoy your association with us and will accept our invitation to become an active member of our school community.

Stephen Mathers
PRINCIPAL
TRANSITION FOR FOUNDATION STUDENTS

Starting school is a big change for children. Often the hardest part is being away from the family and familiar surroundings. Some children find it difficult to join a group of other children and this can impact on their initial enjoyment of being at school.

Some ways you can make the transition from home to school easier for your child are:

Before school starts: Be positive about school. Talk to your child about the school where he or she will meet other children and make new friends and take part in interesting and enjoyable things. Visit the school so that your child becomes familiar with the school environment.

Provide opportunities for your child to spend some time away from the family: This will help your child to become more independent and to build self confidence. An overnight stay with Grandparents or a sleepover at a friend’s house will help your child to be more at ease in different environments.

Share reading experiences: The bedtime story is really important for 5 and 6 year olds. Share new stories and rediscover old favourites. Allow some quiet moments for reading in bed and encourage children to borrow books from the town library.

Our transition program at Newmerella Primary School begins with school readiness sessions. The idea of these sessions is to open the classroom to potential Foundation Year students and their parents to come along and familiarise with us at school. These sessions are held once a week over a few weeks in term three.

In Term Four, prospectively enrolled preps are invited to come for half days and full days during the term. Dates to be advised.

These transition visits to the school prepare children for the year ahead and usually dispel any worries about coming to school.
Encourage questions: Questions are vital for investigating and learning. Listening to and answering these questions will help your child remain an active and curious learner. You, as a parent, should also be asking questions of your child, particularly questions which require more response than a ‘yes/no’ answer. Don’t be put off when your child’s answer to “What did you do at school today?” is “Nothing”. Be more specific - ask about friends, activities, reading time, singing, games, craft and play times. Encourage children to reply using sentences rather than single or few words. This will help develop your child’s language development.

Encourage children to discover for themselves: We all have to learn to take responsibility for our own learning. Young children are natural investigators. Don’t always tell them the answers, but do provide the means for them to find their own answers. Much problem solving is learned through play. Encourage imaginative play, dressing up and role playing.

Encourage drawing and writing at home: When is a child ready to draw and write? As soon as he or she is able to hold a pencil! Keep plenty of pencils, crayons, paint, paper, cardboard and scissors on hand and encourage their use.

Sometimes write for your child: Write down a story or statement as your child tells it, then read it back several times. Draw some pictures together to go with the story and display the ‘story’ for the whole family to share.

Put TV viewing and computer games in proper perspective: Most children enjoy watching TV, but they also need time for playing, reading, being outdoors and using their own imaginations. Choose carefully what and how much TV your child watches. Sometimes ask questions about their favourite programs.

Ensure your child knows his family name and address: Could your child find his or her way home? Do they know their surname? Do they know their address and telephone number? Learning these things can be made into a game - there is no need for pressure or drills.

Get to know your child’s teacher as a friend: The benefits of a good relationship between teacher and parent are obvious. Don’t hesitate to communicate with the teacher as you see the need - before confusion develops or problems arise. (But please be mindful of the teacher’s daily program and make a time that suits you both.)
PREPARATION FOR SCHOOL

Your child will be able to adjust to school life better if they are able to do ALL these things independently:

- To use a handkerchief or tissue independently.
- To put away playthings and materials after use.
- To wash hands and face without assistance.
- To remember to use and flush the toilet and wash hands afterwards.
- To know how to take off and put on clothing.
- To repeat own name and address, also telephone number if possible.
- To leave you for a few hours without being upset.
- To tie their own shoelaces or use buckles or velcro on shoes and cope with buttons and zips on clothing.
- To know that they must never accept anything from strangers or leave the school in the company of strangers.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT

If you wish to become involved in your child’s school programs these are some of the ways:

- Encourage and support your child.
- Serve on the school council or become involved in working bees or other whole school community activities.
- Donate some of your time to help in the classroom. Listening to readers or assisting with craft activities or excursions involve you and give you a better insight into the dynamics of the classroom, how it is run and how your child fits in socially. (A current Working with Children's check is necessary)
- Keep communication pathways between home and school open and up to date.
Newmerella Primary School is a small country school which was opened in 1889. It is located five kilometres west of Orbost and nearly 400 kilometres east of Melbourne.

The school offers programs to provide a stimulating environment catering for individual needs enabling all children to achieve and celebrate success.

Of particular mention are the school's extensive camps, excursions, sports, science and technology, music, arts and environmental programs.

The organization of classes is based on a multi-age structure which encourages and enhances individual achievement and social development.

Our school is at the forefront and a leader in its technology resources which include electronic interactive whiteboards and up to date netbook and i pad computers in every classroom.

At Newmerella we have a very stimulating learning environment with modern, new, attractive classrooms, a hall, art-room, school library, resource and music rooms, an oval, three new adventure playgrounds, supergrass covered basketball and volleyball courts, native vegetation plantation, chook pen and vegetable garden.

Our school is an active member of the Far East Alliance of schools that works closely together to improve teaching and learning.

The Alliance arranges a wide range of academic, social and sporting opportunities for students whilst also providing professional learning opportunities for school staff.

Parents' participation in school activities and programs is widely encouraged. Parental assistance in the classroom with reading and social activities is always very much welcomed.

Newmerella Primary School is committed to maximizing its opportunities for all students with staff professional learning playing a vital role in achieving this.

Newmerella Primary School looks forward to continuing to provide an education of excellence for many years to come.
SCHOOL COUNCIL:

This is the important decision making body at the school. The school council is responsible for assisting the Principal and staff in matters affecting school policy, student and teacher welfare, buildings and grounds improvements and equipment purchases.

School council meetings are public meetings and all are invited to attend but only elected members may vote.

Meetings are held every second Tuesday of each month at 5:15pm. See the newsletter for details.

The current composition of the Newmerella Primary School Council is:

- 9 Non-Department employees
- 3 Department employees and the Principal
- Up to 2 community members

School council elections are held early in the year. Councillors serve a two year term in office with half retiring annually. Community members serve a one year term. A list of councillors will be published in the Newsletter after the election.

SCHOOL FUNDS & EXPENSE STRUCTURE

Each year School Council sets fees for the adequate running of the school. Money is used to pay for:

- All start up costs of books and materials
- Transport
- Arts Council performances
- Art/Craft materials
- Maintenance of computer equipment
- Photocopying
- Physical education equipment and some sports excursions
- Swimming, small excursions and entry costs
- Newsletters
- Incidental expenses

Please note that the money raised is less than 2% of the total school budget and all parents are expected to pay these fees.

Parents may be able to claim the Camps, Sports and Excursion Fund (CSEF) if they have a means tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent. The allowance will be paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions, or sporting activities for the benefit of your child. Currently the allowance is $125.00 per student.
To make it easier for parents, the school has provided for each student an Essential Education Pack as an alternative to student booklists where parents usually purchase all the required resources themselves. These packs are to be purchased from the office before the start of the school year and are then released to your child's classroom. Teachers will name all the items. We have payments plans to assist parents which include Centrelink deductions, BPay or arranged regular deposits. The school does not request any Voluntary Contributions.

PUPIL SUPERVISION BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL:

On normal days, teachers will be on duty between 8:00am and 4:00pm. CHILDREN SHOULD NOT BE AT SCHOOL OUTSIDE THESE TIMES.

ENROLMENT:

The school may enrol a child if they turn five before the end of April. An enrollment form must be filled in to have a child enrolled. A copy of the child's Birth Certificate and an immunisation form must be presented to the school upon enrolment. Important details are on this admission form such as emergency contacts in case of illness/injury. Children from another school cannot be enrolled without a "transfer note" from their previous school.

STUDENT ABSENCES:

'Every Day Counts'

Regular and punctual attendance is a vital factor in the progress of children at school. This is an important matter because if the absence rate is high, a child's development and involvement in group programs is seriously affected. When children are away from school a note or personal (phone) message must be given by parents. This way the school can make sure that the child was absent with parental consent. Records are kept and all reasons for absences are recorded and sent to the Department of Education.

APPOINTMENTS TO SEE TEACHERS:

The school welcomes parent visits and their active involvement and interest in their child's learning and development. However parents need to be mindful that each classroom teacher and the Principal have a heavy classroom commitment and it is important not to disrupt classroom learning. Parents are asked to limit visits to outside class times. If parents wish to discuss pupil progress or any problems related to their child it is probably best that they ring or seek a mutually suitable time prior to the discussion.
Oral Report day and two Written Reports are provided to give comprehensive feedback to all parents.

**BUS TRAVEL:**

Children must have permission to travel by bus. Bus forms for permanent and casual travel are available at the school office.
For any changes to bus travel arrangements, parents are asked to contact the school and **GIVE 24 HOURS NOTICE PRIOR TO TRAVEL.**
This is a Department of education requirement and students will not be granted permission without 24 hours notice unless exceptional circumstances arise. This includes students getting off at different stops other than their own.

Children will *always* be placed on the bus unless a written note or telephone call is made to the contrary.

**NEWSLETTERS:**

These are distributed on Mondays to keep parents in contact with happenings at the school.
They are the main source of communication between the school and home.
Newsletters are also available from the school website. www.newmerellaps.vic.edu.au

**UNIFORMS:**

Wearing of school uniform is compulsory. The uniforms can be purchased at Donchi’s DJ Clothing & Footwear in Orbost. Notes are to be provided when students are out of uniform. School hats must be worn in Term 1 and Term 4 due to our Sunsmart policy.

**LIBRARY:**

Our library is well stocked with an array of books to suit all reading interests and abilities.
Children are encouraged to borrow books on a regular basis. Library sessions are held with teachers during class times once a week. The borrowing system is computerised; each book has an electronic bar code and is recorded on computer. Reminder notices will be sent home with children who have overdue books.

A Mobile Library visits the school fortnightly. Parents and children are encouraged to use its resources.
SCHOOL LUNCHES AND FREE FRUIT:
Purchased lunch orders are available on Fridays only. Rosies Bakery collects the orders from school and deliver the lunches prior to lunchtime. An lunch menu and pricelist will be supplied at the start of the year. Orders are to be written on a paper bag with your child's name and grade, and money placed inside the bag.

FREE FRUIT FRIDAY
A free fruit program is currently run for the children providing morning snacks each Friday. We also gladly appreciate any donations of fruit to assist with this program.

JUNK FOOD:
The school has a policy of promoting healthy eating habits. We ask for parental assistant by not suppling children with lollies, chewing gum, etc. whilst at school.

HEALTH & INFECTIOUS DISEASES:
Generally, minor injuries at school are attended to by a teacher "on duty" at that time. In the event of a serious injury every effort will be made to contact parents immediately. If they cannot be contacted, then the emergency contact numbers supplied on the enrolment form will be used.

If injuries need attention immediately, children will be transported to hospital for further attention either by ambulance or car. In the event of back or neck injury the child will not be moved and an ambulance will be called.

It is recommended that all parents join an ambulance scheme.

- Remember, infections spread quickly at school.
- If in doubt, parents should contact the school.

Please send a note when your child returns to school.

- Diptheria
  To be excluded until medical certificate verifies freedom from infection.
- German Measles:
  To be excluded until medical certificate clearance, or recovery OR seven days after the appearance of the rash.
- Impetigo (School sores):
  To be excluded until sores are treated and covered.
- Infectious Hepatitis:
  To be excluded until medical certificate clearance or recovery.
- Mumps:
  To be excluded until medical certificate clearance or recovery.
- Head Lice:
  To be excluded until EFFECTIVELY treated.
- Ringworm:
  To be excluded until medical certificate is issued stating that treatment has been received.
- Scabies:
  As above.

HEAD LICE PROGRAM:
Trained volunteers will do regular checks and if your child has head lice you will be notified by phone and asked to pick up your child and treat them. Once treated your child may come back to school.
Newmerella PS shares a commitment with ALL DET schools to maintain the highest standards of policy and protocols which protect the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people as our highest priority. We ensure that schools are safe places for children and that all staff implement the Child Safe Standards to protect all students from abuse and neglect. Our school is committed to being fully compliant with Ministerial Order 870—Child Safe Standards in schools.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION:**

No child will be excluded except on medical grounds. A note must be sent to school with the child. Children are encouraged to use the physical education equipment during lunch and recess times.

**SWIMMING PROGRAM:**

This is undertaken at given times in the school year. The school encourages all children to learn to swim. Parents who wish to help with instruction or who have undertaken a swimming course are very welcome.

**GROUNDS ROSTER:**

A grounds roster has been drawn up involving most families. With the implementation of this roster the school grounds can be maintained to a high level with just an hour or two per family per year. Details of the roster are sent out at the start of the year.

**BICYCLES and HELMETS:**

By law children must wear bicycle helmets to school. Children riding in a dangerous manner to or from school may be warned by teachers and where necessary they will inform parents. Continued unsafe behaviour on bicycles will be reported to police for the children’s own safety. All bicycles coming to school should be safe. Parents should regularly check that their children’s bikes are safe.

**Bicycles should be parked in the bicycle shelter whilst at school.**

**RECYCLING PROJECT:**

The school has developed a recycling program which includes a worm farm, chickens, vegetable garden and composting. All children are encouraged to minimise and dispose of waste to the correct recycling areas.