



*Resilience - Excellence  
Compassion*

# *Halls Gap Primary School Information Booklet*

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# Halls Gap Primary School

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## **Introduction**

The Staff, School Council and Parents of Halls Gap Primary School extend a warm welcome to you and your child/ren as members of our school community.

We trust that your child's stay at Halls Gap will be happy and successful and that your involvement with our school community will be enjoyable and rewarding. We hope that, as parents sharing the education of your child, you will actively support our activities and functions.

We look forward to working together to provide the best possible educational opportunities for the students attending Halls Gap Primary School, catering for their considerable range of talents and abilities.

This booklet has been prepared to provide information about the school and its programs for parents and students. Please read it and keep it handy for future reference. If you have any questions or would like further information about any school activity, please ask the Principal or staff at the school

Our school recognises that the best educational opportunities are provided when a positive relationship exists between school and home. We look forward to working with you to develop exemplary programs for your child.

## **Term Dates 2017 – 2020**

### 2017

Term 1: 30 January (school teachers start) to 31 March \*

Term 2: 18 April (Tuesday) to 30 June

Term 3: 17 July to 22 September

Term 4: 9 October to 22 December

### 2018

Term 1: 29 January (school teachers start) to 29 March (Thursday) \*

Term 2: 16 April to 29 June

Term 3: 16 July to 21 September

Term 4: 8 October to 21 December

### 2019

Term 1: 29 January (school teachers start) to 5 April \*

Term 2: 23 April to 28 June

Term 3: 15 July to 20 September

Term 4: 7 October to 20 December

### 2020

Term 1: 28 January (school teachers start) to 27 March \*

Term 2: 14 April to 26 June

Term 3: 13 July to 18 September

Term 4: 5 October to 18 December

# Halls Gap Primary School

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## 1. *Our Purpose*

Halls Gap Primary School is committed to providing a learning environment that is friendly, healthy, dynamic and respectful. We strive to provide an education that allows all students to achieve success and reach their full potential intellectually, creatively, physically and socially.

### **School Profile**

Halls Gap Primary School is located in a picturesque setting adjoining the Grampians National Park. The school serves the local community with many of the school families involved in tourism, retail and Parks Victoria.

Halls Gap PS strives to equip students with capacities to manage themselves and their relations with others, to understand and act effectively in the world, and to prepare them for success in education, work and life.

Three core interrelated strands encompass all areas of learning which form the bases for planning and programming at Halls Gap Primary School.

- Physical and Personal Learning – Health and Physical Education, Personal Learning, Interpersonal Learning, Civics and Citizenship.
- Discipline Based Learning – The Arts, English, Languages Other Than English, Humanities (Geography, History and Economics), Mathematics and Science.
- Interdisciplinary Learning – Communication, Design, Creativity and Technology, Information and Communications Technology and Thinking,

Early Years Programming and catering for individual learning needs are strong features across the school. Multi-age groupings operate in all curriculum areas from Prep to Grade 6.

The school broadens its curriculum options by utilising the services of the Mobile Area Resource Centre based in Great Western. Strategies used to enhance children's learning include: cross-age tutoring, buddy system, multi age groupings and one on one intervention. Additional programs that assist in the all-round development of the child, including Junior School Council, Swimming Program (survival and competition), Athletics, cluster school activities, bike education, Zone sporting opportunities, extensive transition activities, camps and the annual School Concert.

The school enjoys the added benefits associated with being nestled within the Grampians National Park. The school grounds provide both large open spaces for play and activities while maintaining the feel of being very much within a rich, natural environment. The school nature reserve provides an added dimension for activities and programs.

Halls Gap Primary School is a member of the Grampians Cluster (Halls Gap, Pomonal, Great Western and Concongella). The cluster schools enjoy shared group days, cultural activities, sporting opportunities, camps, transition and networking opportunities.

### **Shared Expectations**

Schools have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures that all students are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, and can engage effectively in their learning and experience success. To support a rich and varied educational environment the school has a clear set of values –

#### **EXCELLENCE**

*STRIVE TO BE THE BEST THAT WE CAN BE*

#### **COMPASSION**

*GIVE CARE AND CONSIDERATION TOWARDS OTHERS*

#### **RESILIENCE**

*SHOW STRENGTH OF CHARACTER AND A POSITIVE OUTLOOK*

School expectations include:

- Inclusive teaching practices
- Accessible educational provision for all students
- Parent/carer partnerships and liaison
- Community partnerships which engage families and the community in ways that support student achievement and success
- Provision of appropriate student services
- Development and provision of appropriate, relevant and challenging curriculum that gives students the opportunity to experience success in their learning.

## **2. School Times**

The school day is divided into three sessions:

### **SESSION 1**

Commences at 9:00 am and ends at morning recess at 11:00 am

### **SESSION 2**

Commences at 11:30 am and ends at lunch time at 1:00 pm

The school has supervised eating time in classrooms from 1:00pm to 1:10pm

### **SESSION 3**

Commences at 1:45 pm and ends at 3.15 pm, the end of the school day.

Sporting Schools will run during the course of the year. Each term there will be a sporting program which will commence for those students interested. Times and days to be advised. Qualified instructors will be engaged to run these programs, parental permission to be involved will be required. Some programs will require parental support. These sessions are dependent on the ongoing grant funding from the Sporting Schools Victoria. Students who cannot behave appropriately during sessions will be excluded from participating. Days and dates will be confirmed each term.

## **3. Student Contribution Levy, Camps and Excursions**

Each year the School Council sets a student contribution levy and this will be advised to parents prior to the commencement of the new school year.

The levy can be paid as a lump sum, each semester or per term.

In the past the school and School Council have subsidised the Senior Class camp, 20% of total cost. Recent camps have been to Hobart, Canberra, Melbourne, Little Desert, Sovereign Hill Ballarat, and Cape Bridgewater and at venues within the Grampians area. The school camp is designed to complement the student learning program. Leadership programs (cluster initiatives) are periodically undertaken and might encompass a conference in Ballarat or other venues and activities as set by the cluster organisers. More details will be provided when planning is finalised and information released to participating schools.

## **4. Student Engagement**

### **Definition**

Student engagement can be defined as three interrelated components: behavioural, emotional and cognitive.

- **Behavioural engagement** refers to students' participation in education, including the academic, social and extracurricular activities of the school.
- **Emotional engagement** encompasses students' emotional reactions in the classroom and in the school, and measures students' sense of belonging or connectedness to school.
- **Cognitive engagement** relates to students' investment in learning and their intrinsic motivation and self-motivation.

## **Rationale**

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DET) is committed to providing safe, secure and high quality learning and development opportunities for every student in all Victorian schools. Students can only reach their full educational potential when they are happy, healthy and safe, and when there is a positive school culture that is fair and respectful to engage and support their learning.

## **5. Curriculum Provision**

At Halls Gap Primary School a diverse curriculum in a rural school environment allows for personal attention for individual students in small classes.

Halls Gap Primary is proud of its programs that are delivered in a safe, caring and supportive environment by a small team of dedicated teachers, parents and friends of the school.

### **Early and Middle Years Programming**

Halls Gap Primary School is heavily committed to the implementation of Early and Middle Years Literacy programming. Children participate in daily two-hour literacy sessions, during which they are immersed in stimulating reading, writing, speaking and listening activities. This is an extremely busy part of the day that is rewarding for all students, parents and teachers alike.

Literacy and Numeracy are basic to all learning. Children need these skills in order to confidently learn in other areas of the curriculum and in everyday life. The Early Years Strategy is the Victorian Department of Education Early Childhood Development and Training's plan to improve children's literacy and numeracy learning in the early years of schooling. The strategies and advice outlined in this program form the basis for teacher planning and instruction at Halls Gap Primary School.

Reading is making meaning from print, which is all around us. This includes reading books, magazines, posters, etc, watching films and videos, and using computers. We use writing to communicate ideas and information. Through writing we explore ideas, record things we've done and still have to do, and share our thoughts, desires and feelings. Working in partnership with your child's school, parents can develop shared understandings about learning. By bringing home and school experiences together, our children will have a very solid and secure foundation on which to build their learning.

### **Home Reading**

In keeping with our commitment to home-school partnerships, the staff of Halls Gap Primary School places a great deal of emphasis on our home-reading program. Staff are happy to assist parents with home reading ideas if required, don't hesitate to ask. It is only through co-operation between parents, students and teachers, and with REGULAR reading, that children are able to develop their reading skills.

### **MARC Library**

The Mobile Area Resource Centre library is an important resource centre for children and teachers. Children are encouraged to borrow books regularly. This service comes to our school every second Thursday. As well as providing a borrowing service, the MARC librarian provides a library skills development program and literary appreciation sessions for all students. Please remind your child or children to change their books regularly. Please help us to avoid overdue books by checking the return dates with your children.

### **Disabilities and Impairments**

The process of obtaining resources for the Disabilities and Impairments program is quite involved and so it is expected that any parent who is seeking to enroll a student who has special needs will give the school plenty of notice so that the necessary applications can be prepared and processed.

### **Learning Technologies**

Learning Technologies is an important part of programming at Halls Gap and is used to enhance learning across all curriculum areas. We are strongly committed to providing a technology rich learning environment for all students. Children have access to computers in their classrooms and all facilities are connected into the internet. The school introduced a netbook program for all students in years 4-6 during 2010 which will be continued for 2015. Programs are used to research information, solve problems and present work creatively. Both students and teachers have embraced the challenge of integrating information and communication technologies into the teaching and learning process. In ensuring the school is equipped and resourced with up to date technologies, the school replaced class notebooks and introduced iPads into the classrooms.

# Halls Gap Primary School

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## Health and Physical Education

Physical Education and sport are valued curriculum areas at Halls Gap Primary. Students have opportunities to compete against students from other schools in our annual athletic sports, swimming carnival and cross country run. Students are encouraged to participate at local, Division, Regional and State levels of competition. The Physical Education program is complemented by an outstanding camps and excursions program that aims to develop students' understandings of the environment and wider community while encouraging cooperation and independence.

## Languages Other Than English – Chinese

Your child is given an opportunity to learn a second language at Halls Gap Primary. Students participate in weekly LOTE sessions with both spoken language and Chinese culture studies..

## Homework

Homework, other than home-reading and spelling, is not normally set for students in the earlier years of schooling. Tasks set for other children may be of a formal or informal nature and are related to the age of the child. Homework, particularly in Years 3 to 6, may take the form of written work, proof reading of written work, word study activities, share reading, completion of work set in class, research projects, mental math, puzzles or problem solving. This will vary from year to year.

Rather than being an onerous or unpleasant activity homework is designed to be an opportunity for parents to work with their children. When homework is set we appreciate parent support to see that it is completed satisfactorily. If you have any concerns in this area please discuss it with your child's class teacher.

## Excursions and Cultural Activities

Excursions and special visitors to the school, such as performance groups, are a vital starting point for our language experience program and for many other school programs.

Cultural activities are usually accessed through the cluster. Generally the cost of these is included in school fees.

Please note: Children will not be able to participate in an out of town excursion if the required permission note and medical information and indemnity form have not been returned signed by a parent or guardian prior to the excursion.

Excursions within the town (walking only) are covered by a minor excursions authorisation which will need to be completed once each year. All other excursions will have an information letter to parents and an attached permission form sent out prior to the excursion. These are generated through the schools administration system. Other details will be included in the newsletter.

- Year P-2 major day excursion
- Year 3 –6 children attend an annual camp.
- Year 4-6 students who have leadership roles will be expected to participate in the Leadership program which includes a conference and an overnight camp with students from across the Grampians Small Schools Cluster.

## 6. *Special Programs and Extension Activities*

### Student Leadership

Our Junior Council plays an important role in the school and creates an opportunity for all students to have a say in decision-making. In addition to fostering a sense of belonging and developing the students' organisational skills, the Junior Council encourages students to care for one another and to be aware of community issues. The major task they have undertaken is sponsoring an overseas child. While most of our senior students become involved in various leadership roles we do expect that Junior School Council take on various tasks on a regular basis.

### School Buddy Program

Each year all students are paired with another student who then becomes their buddy for the twelve months. The buddy program fosters positive relations in a caring and supportive environment. The buddy program is vital in developing a strong sense of community and working together.

# Halls Gap Primary School

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## **Co-operative Learning**

At Halls Gap Primary we place considerable emphasis on co-operative learning activities and students making real decisions about their own learning. Our programs provide children with opportunities to participate in small group and whole class activities.

## **Annual School Concert**

The annual school concert is held on the second last Thursday of term 4. This is an opportunity to showcase the students' performing arts skills. It is also the final official school function for the year with presentations being made to grade six students as well as book presentations to all students from the School Council. A merry gentleman also makes his appearance on the night.

## **7. School Council**

The Halls Gap Primary School Council is an elected body that represents the community and teachers. Its functions are:

- (a) To work with the Principal and Staff to develop school policy and educational aims. This forms the basis of our School Strategic Plan.
- (b) To administer school finances.
- (c) To ensure buildings and grounds are maintained and improved.
- (d) To foster community interest in the school.

School Council is an extremely important decision making group and we encourage you to contact us if you are interested in becoming a member. The School Council meets twice each term.

School Council members also need to know what people in the community feel are important. Please get to know the members of your School Council and help them to make decisions that will influence your child's education. Elections are held during March of each year. Half the elected representatives retire each year but they can seek re-election. New members are elected for a two year period.

## **8. Fundraising**

Halls Gap Primary School has a hard working, interested and supportive group of parents who work under the auspice of School Council to extend the involvement of parents in the school. Participation in our Fundraising Committee activities creates opportunities for members of our school community to become involved in the practical workings of the school. Funds raised have provided numerous resources that continue so support and enhance the learning program. If you would like to join the group watch the newsletters for information.

## **9. School Organisation**

Each Monday at 8:50 am we have an assembly at the flagpole. It is important that children are punctual for this assembly, as announcements and presentations are made. A senior student runs this assembly.

## **10. Office Hours**

The School Business Manager is available to manage finances and queries each Monday.

## **11. Admission Procedures**

Children who turn 5 years of age by the 30<sup>th</sup> of April will be admitted to our Preparatory Grade. Parents may enroll their child by calling at the school to collect and complete the detailed enrolment form. Please bring a copy of your child's birth certificate extract and certificate of immunization with you for our records.

Prep children find the first few months of school very tiring. As a result the children in Preparatory class will not attend on Wednesdays during Term 1. They will commence full time schooling in Term 2.

## 12. **First Day Attendance**

On the first day it is a good idea to leave as soon as possible after you have placed your child in the care of the classroom teacher. Don't be tempted to give your child too much lunch. Please wrap play-lunch separately and have clothes and belongings, particularly windcheaters, lunch boxes and drink bottles named.

## 13. **School Attendance**

In order for your child to reach their full potential at school it is critical that they regularly attend school. Research has shown that many children are put at educational risk if they miss more than 12 days of school in a year. We would strongly encourage you to organise holidays and shopping excursions, ie. non-essential absences during weekends and school holiday times. Students' absences are recorded on school reports sent home in June and December. Students achieving a high level of attendance are acknowledged at the school concert in December.

## 14. **Absences**

**However**, if your child is ill he or she should not attend school. Sick children will not be able to undertake normal class programs and their attendance at school can endanger the health of other students and staff. If your child is away from school a note is required. Notes are kept and become part of the audit system required by the DET. When your child is at school in the morning, and is collected and will not be attending in the afternoon, please advise your child's teacher so that we do not have unexplained absences. When collecting a child from the school during class time we ask all parents and guardians to 'sign out' the student so that we have a record of student movements.

## 15. **Illness or Accident at School**

If your child becomes ill at school or is injured, we will endeavour to contact you or your nominated contact person, so that arrangements can be made for collection.

## 16. **Student Records and Family Details**

In the interests of student safety it is vital that schools keep accurate records. Please ensure that you notify the school immediately should your personal/family details alter; particularly personal, work and emergency telephone contact numbers.

## 17. **Wet Days or Very Hot Days**

Children will not be dismissed early on wet days or on very hot days. On wet or very hot days, they will be supervised in the classrooms during lunchtime and the recess break. On normal summer days there are plenty of shady trees and classrooms are air-conditioned so normal school programs will operate.

## 18. **School Closure on Extreme Fire Danger Days and Code Red Days**

**EXTREME FIRE DANGER DAYS & CODE RED DAYS** – Halls Gap Primary School have been identified as being at high fire risk and on the Department's [Bushfire At-Risk Register](#), we will close on days determined **Extreme Fire Danger Days or Code Red** by the Emergency Management Commissioner. Where possible, four to seven days notice of a planned closure will be provided; parents and carers should, however, **expect that in some instances fewer than 4 day's notice may be provided.**

**Once an Extreme Fire Danger Day or Code Red day has been determined by the Emergency Management Commissioner this decision will not change – regardless of any changes in the weather forecast.** This will help limit confusion and help your family plan for how your children will be cared for when the school is closed. Advice will be provided to you directly when we are advised that our School will be closed due to an Extreme Fire Danger Days or Code Red Day determination, **NO staff will remain on site** and all out-of-school care / after school programs **will be cancelled.**



## 19. *School Uniform*

The wearing of school uniform helps to encourage pride in the school and assists in developing a school identity. School uniform provides a standard of dress among children and it also provides economical standard clothing.

Our school uniform is quite simple. Royal blue windcheaters with gold school logo and royal blue polo shirts with gold school logo. Blue and white checked school dresses, navy blue track trousers, shorts or culottes/skorts. Students require navy blue shorts or netball style skirt for inter school sporting events.

Halls Gap Primary School uniform is compulsory.

It is extremely important that children come to school in neat, clean clothes every day.

Please do not allow children to wear thongs, crocs or surf sandals as they do not provide adequate protection. Sandals, leather shoes or sports shoes are suitable for school wear. Hair that is shoulder length or longer should be tied back and fringes must be out of eyes.

**Children must wear navy blue wide brimmed hats during Terms 1 and 4 in accordance with our Sunsmart guidelines.**

Wide brimmed hats are provided by the school as part of our uniform. Baseball caps are not acceptable as they do not protect the ears, neck and sides of the face. Students are provided with hats by the school.

Orders for school uniform items will be placed several times a year with our preferred supplier, Primary School Wear. Orders will be called for through the newsletter. A small number of new stock is kept on hand. A number of second hand items are also available from students that have out grown them or have moved on. Please contact the office for uniform requirements.

## 20. *School Bags*

It would be appreciated if you could ensure that your child has a suitable school bag to bring to school every day - one that is not too awkward to carry but will hold your child's lunch, articles of clothing, book cover and samples of work. When notices or newsletters are handed out students are expected to put them in their bag ready to be taken home.

## 21. *Lost Property*

**Please name all personal clothing and equipment.**

If property is lost ask your child to check all the pegs in the classroom. Boxes of lost property are kept on the shelf outside the junior classroom. Please check if you are missing items.

**Please ask your children to bring home all extra clothing each day. We cannot help hand out items if they are not accurately named.**

## 22. *Lunch Orders*

Lunch orders will be available on Wednesdays only. A price list for lunch orders is available from the school. Lunches are supplied by the Bakery and Coolas Ice Creamery. Lunch orders are to be placed in the appropriate box in the centre space between the learning studios.

## 23. *Lunch at School*

Children eat their lunch in their classroom under the supervision of a teacher. We have a dedicated eating time from 1:00pm to 1:10pm. While children can heat food in the school microwave we do ask that noodle cups and foods requiring boiling water are not sent to school – they create a safety problem when children are preparing foods.

## 24. *Safety at School – Student Welfare and Discipline*

We have a general school rule that we should not do anything that will cause hurt or worry to ourselves or to others. This helps to keep all students safe and happy. Please discuss this with your child. Our aim is to help children co-

operate with others and be responsible for their own behaviour. A summary of the school's discipline plan is included in the section above titled Student Engagement.

## **25. Communication Between School and Home**

### **The Weekly Newsletter**

An important method of communication with our school community is the Halls Gap Primary School Newsletter. We aim to provide as much information in the newsletter as possible. It is important that you check important dates and events that need to be noted. Any parent or community notices to be included need to be at the school by 9am Monday. The newsletter can be received by email (please notify the school if you wish to receive it electronically), it can also be accessed via the school website.

### **Notices**

Despite attempts to include most items of information in the newsletter, some other notices will be necessary – notes about excursions and events that occur in between newsletters. These notices and the newsletter will be given to the eldest child in your family attending our school, unless the notice only applies to a particular grade or part of the school. Please check with your child each day to see if any information has been sent home. Help your child to manage notes and newsletters by establishing an expectation that they take the initiative to hand them to an adult when arriving home after the school day. Notes are to be returned to the notes box which sits on the shelf of the office window.

### **Student Diaries**

Each student is provided with a diary which is used for home-school communication with the classroom teacher. It includes information on readers, spelling lists, homework, and general information. Please check your child's diary daily. This is a communication book for both parents and teachers to use.

### **Facebook**

The school has a Facebook page that it updates regularly. Permission from parents is required for this.

## **26. School/Home Cooperation and Support**

### **Working together to ensure success**

Teachers at Halls Gap Primary School are very keen to involve parents in as many school activities as possible. We believe that it is most important for parents and teachers to work together in the education of all children.

### **At School –**

In strengthening the partnership between home and school, you may like to become involved in some of the following school activities –

- attending excursions
- attending annual Senior Class camp
- assisting with cooking/art activities
- hearing children read
- processing children's stories
- helping with working bees, watering, or looking after the garden
- assisting with the Craft Markets held at regular intervals throughout the year (the major fundraising source for the school)

If you would like to help out see your child's teacher.

### **At home -**

It is vital for your child's positive educational development that they know you are interested in their school work. Please hear your child read daily and share your interest in books that they have read. Encourage them with any homework they have and don't hesitate to speak to the teachers or the Principal if you have any worries about any aspect of your child's school life.

## **Parent – Teacher Interviews -**

Formal parent/teacher interviews are held each year. Schools are required to report to parents through interview (once a year) and by written report (twice a year). You will be informed of dates and available times by note attached to the school newsletter. Each semester an Individual Learning Plan is developed for each child. These plans provide the basis for discussion and future planning for learning. You are in no way restricted to this time to talk with teachers. You are welcome to discuss with teachers any aspect of your child's or children's school life at any time throughout the year. Please contact the Principal or relevant teacher to make an appointment.

## **27. Specialist Student Services**

Please contact your child's teacher if you feel he or she need the services of any of the groups listed below:

### **Counselling -**

Psychologists and social workers are available to talk to parents who have children with emotional or social difficulties. They also work with teachers in developing special programs for these children.

### **Health –**

The visiting school nurse can be contacted if you have any medical concerns. Each Prep child will receive a full medical assessment during their first year at school.

### **Speech –**

The services of a speech pathologist can be arranged if you have any worries or concerns about your child's or children's speech.

### **Medical / Dental –**

These services are available at regular intervals to assist your children. Information and permission forms will be sent home prior to any visits. A fee is charged for families not holding a Health Care card.

## **28. Camps, Sports & Excursion Fund (CSEF)**

The Victorian Government will be providing CSEF to assist eligible families to cover the costs of excursions, camps and sporting activities. If you hold a valid concession card, you may be eligible

## **29. Travel Conveyance Allowance**

To be eligible to receive conveyance allowance, a student must:

- be aged between five years (by 30<sup>th</sup> April) and 21 years
- live more than 4.8km by the shortest practicable route from the **nearest** school
- be enrolled at the **nearest** government school
- be 4.8 km or more from nearest bus stop if a bus is being caught to school.

Reimbursement for private car travel to the nearest school is made on the basis of the one way distance travelled per vehicle and the number of students in that vehicle. Payment is made to the family operating the vehicle.

The vehicle rate is determined by the distance between a student's place of residence and their school.

If you feel you are entitled to the conveyance allowance, please fill in an application form and lodge it at school by the middle of February.

Payment of private car conveyance allowances to schools will be made to schools. The school will then make payments to parents.

*\* All Information accurate at time of printing and subject to change at any time without notice*