



Little Yarra  
STEINER SCHOOL

## Parent Handbook



*The community of the Little Yarra Steiner School is proud and pleased to welcome you and your family to our beautiful school. We wish you an enriching journey.*

*This Parent Handbook contains practical information about how we operate as a school and community. Please keep it handy for future reference, keeping in mind that changes do occur over time.*

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## GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

### *The School Office*

The school office is located in the Administration Building. Our friendly office team can assist you with any queries, fee payments, or other school information you may require. You can also contact the office by phone (03) 5967 1953 (option 5) or email [office@lyss.vic.edu.au](mailto:office@lyss.vic.edu.au).

The office is open from 8.30am until 4.00pm Monday to Friday during school terms.

### *Preschool Program*

The Preschool spans four years: Playgroup, 3-year-old Kinder, 4-year-old Kinder, and Prep.

#### *Playgroup*

Currently playgroup runs on Monday and Wednesday mornings in the Murrum room from 9.00am – 11.00am. A parent or guardian attends with the child and the group is led by a playgroup leader. Playgroup helps to familiarise children with the Preschool program, make connections with other children and to feel at home in the space. This helps children feel more comfortable when it comes time to go to Murrum (3yo kinder) the following year without their parent or carer.

Please contact our registrar via email [registrar@lyss.vic.edu.au](mailto:registrar@lyss.vic.edu.au) if you are interested in joining.

#### *Murrum Kinder*

Murrum is a funded kinder program for children who are 3 years old at the beginning of the year, turning 4 throughout the year. It is held in the Murrum room three mornings per week. Children attend for two sessions each week.

Session times:

Murrum	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Murrum Kinder (children 3 turning 4)	No Sessions	Start - 8.45am Finish - 1.00pm	No Sessions	Start - 8.45am Finish - 1.00pm	Start - 8.45am Finish - 1.00pm

## Kinder

This is a funded 4-year-old kinder program for part-day sessions and is held in multi-age groups with the Prep children in the Djirri Djirri and Wirrup rooms. Children enrolled in kinder are 4 turning 5 throughout the year. Kinder children attending for the whole day will be charged an extra fee for the time not covered by the government funding. See timetable below:

<b>Djirri Djirri &amp; Wirrup</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Kinder part day sessions	Start - 8.45am Finish - 1.00pm	Start - 8.45am Finish - 1.00pm	No Sessions	Start - 8.45am Finish - 1.00pm	Start - 8.45am Finish - 1.00pm
Kinder whole day sessions	Start - 8.45am Finish - 3.00pm	Start - 8.45am Finish - 3.00pm	No Sessions	Start - 8.45am Finish - 3.00pm	Start - 8.45am Finish - 3.00pm

## Prep

Prep children attend 5 whole days from Semester 1. Prep forms part of the multi-age group with Kinder children in the Djirri Djirri & Wirrup rooms. An exclusive program for the Prep children operates on Wednesdays.

<b>Djirri Djirri &amp; Wirrup</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Prep (children 5 turning 6)	Start - 8.45am Finish - 3.00pm	Start - 8.45am Finish - 3.00pm	Start - 8.45am Finish - 3.00pm	Start - 8.45am Finish - 3.00pm	Start - 8.45am Finish - 3.00pm



### ***School Hours for Classes 1-12***

*Start*                8.45 am

*Finish*             3.15 pm

\*Class 1 students finish at 12.30 pm on Wednesdays;

\*VCE classes may finish at 4.00 pm.

The teachers of these groups will be in communication with parents regarding this.

Please ensure students arrive at school between 8.30am and 8.45am. Where children finish at 3.15pm they need to be collected by 3.45pm.

### ***Half Days***

At the start of each year the children are introduced slowly to the Preschool and Class 1. Depending on the need of the class there may be a period of half day sessions over the first few weeks of school. This will be determined by the school at the time and communicated to parents by letter before the start of the year.

### ***End of Term***

Preschool: The last day of each term is a half day with a finish time of 12:30 p.m.

Class 1 to Class 12: Term 1 finishes at 3.15 pm and the last day of Term 2, 3 & 4 is a half day with a finish time of 12.30 pm Please note: occasionally these times may vary. Please keep an eye on the newsletter for accurate up to date information on dates and times.

### ***Attendance & Absences***

Attendance and participation in class is the key to ensuring the students receive a wholesome, encompassing education. Teachers & guardians mark student attendance on a class roll at the beginning of the day.

All absences need to be accounted for. An automatic SMS message is sent to the designated parent mobile should a student be absent from school without notification. If a student is absent for any reason, the school must be notified.

This can be done by

**Phone:** (03) 5967 1953 (select option 1)

**Email:** [office@lyss.vic.edu.au](mailto:office@lyss.vic.edu.au)

**SMS;** 0438 814 170

**Enter:** absence in Parent Lounge

### ***Late Arrivals and Early Departures***

If your child is arriving late (after 8.45am) they need to come to the office and obtain a late slip for their teacher. Any student leaving school during school hours must be signed out at the office by a parent or authorised guardian. If your child returns to school on the same day, you need to come to the office to sign your child back in.

### ***Calling Home***

Students will only be permitted to use the phone in the office in the event of a health and well-being emergency. Students may only come to the office with permission from a teacher/guardian.

### ***Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices***

To ensure a calm and unhurried environment is maintained we ask that while on school grounds parents keep mobile phones and electronic devices out of view of children. Students must not use personal mobiles at school during school hours, including lunchtime and/or free periods.

### ***Phones at school***

Students requiring mobile phones for any reason must hand them in at the office on arrival.

### ***Messages***

The office staff makes every effort to deliver emergency only messages to students and staff.

### ***Lost Property***

Please label your children's clothing. If your child loses an item of clothing, there are baskets located in both the class foyers and in the Administration building. Please retrieve lost clothing before the end of each term as all unclaimed items may be sold for fundraising purposes or donated to charity.

### ***Dropping Off on the School Grounds***

The speed limit within the school grounds is 10 km/hr!

The parent car park is located on your immediate right as you enter the school. To maintain children's safety please walk on the pathways.

A drop-off zone exists as you enter the school in the sign-posted area around the small roundabout. Please minimise the time spent in the drop off zone to enable other parents to have similar access.

Beyond the drop-off zone is staff, disabled and 10-minute visitor parking. Late arrivals should use the parent carpark and walk to the office.

### ***Buses***

We have four private school buses, which travel from Cockatoo, Belgrave/Mount Evelyn, Healesville and East Warburton. They arrive at 8.35 am and depart at 3.25 pm. If you would like to access any of these services, please contact the school office on [office@lyss.vic.edu.au](mailto:office@lyss.vic.edu.au). These services are available for students from Class 1 to 12.

Little Yarra also links in with the bus service provided to Upper Yarra Secondary College (UYSC), which connects to buses to Powelltown and Hoddles Creek.

### ***Excursions***

Organised excursions are integral to our educational programs and require parents or guardians to sign a consent form (Excursions and Camps) at the beginning of the year as part of their enrolment update. Forthcoming camps and excursions are listed on our website and newsletter calendar, as well as information sent home with the students.

### ***School Photos***

Little Yarra engages a professional photographer to come to the school each year and take class, individual, family and whole school photos. Forms are sent home via the students and these, along with payments, need to be returned to the office before the photographers arrive. The dates for photos are communicated through the newsletter.





## **Emergency Procedures**

In the event that the school is not open to students (for example on Catastrophic fire danger days) the school will communicate such closures via the school's website and, if known in advance, in the newsletter. Please ensure your contact details are up to date with the school.

## ***Policies and Procedures***

School policies and procedures are regularly updated and, where relevant, communicated through the school website and/or newsletter. Copies of policies can also be provided by the office on request. The school is required to have a Parent Code of Conduct, amongst other policies, as stipulated by regulation. This is published on the school website.

## **HEALTH & WELLBEING**

### ***First Aid***

The first aid room is located to the right of the foyer as you go into the administration building. If a child requires paracetamol or ibuprofen this may be administered with written consent of the parent/guardian. This permission is collected from the Student Health and Medical Form at the time of enrolment and then at the beginning of each year with the annual enrolment update. First aid staff record all treatment. Homeopathic remedies may also be used to supplement first aid. Ambulance cover is recommended for families not covered by private health insurance, a Health Care Card or Pension Card.

### ***Food***

Morning tea and afternoon tea for Preschool students (Playgroup to Prep) are provided. Meals prepared in the Preschool are made from biodynamic and/or organic produce where possible. Please confer with your child's teacher where there are food allergies or sensitivities. Preschool children are required to bring a packed lunch from home. We encourage parents to provide healthy, well balanced nutritious lunches with limited packaged and processed food.

In Class 1 to Class 12 we encourage parents to provide their children with healthy, well-balanced lunches and avoid processed and packaged items. Healthy, well-balanced lunches promote good eating habits and nourish the children in a way that supports them for the whole day. The school does not have a canteen, as such, students will need to provide their own lunch each day.

### ***Media***

Steiner education advises against the use of electronic media in young children's lives. Children without media influences benefit greatly both in the short and long term. In the classroom these children tend to exhibit a wholesome interest in their work, show considerable will to engage in

activities and, most importantly, retain those most vital powers of childhood – wonder and imagination. This puts them in good stead for intellectual learning in later years.

## **Clothing**

### ***Classes 1-8 (Please refer to the Class 9-12 handbook for Upper School students)***

Appropriate dress for school is clothing that is tidy, clean and comfortable – multi-layered and warm in winter, and cool in summer (while allowing for the fluctuating temperatures in the Yarra Valley). When outside, primary aged students must wear shoes or sandals at all times. Clothing is to be plain and without advertising, slogans or sharp images. Bare shoulders and midriffs, excessive jewellery, radical hairstyles or makeup are not sun safe or appropriate for educational activities at school. Clothing made of natural fibres is recommended.

## **Sun Hats**

### ***Classes 1-8 (Please refer to the Class 9-12 handbook for Upper School students)***

Sun hats are expected to be worn outside every day in Term 1 and Term 4. In Preschool and Class Teacher period (in Class 1 & 5) hats are supplied by the school and included in the school fees. Should a student need a replacement during this time, it will be included as sundries on your school account.

## **AVENUES OF COMMUNICATION**

### ***Newsletter***

Little Yarra publishes a weekly newsletter containing school news and events. As a parent you will automatically receive the newsletter by email, however you can also sign up through our newsletter page: <https://lyss.vic.edu.au/parents-community/newsletter/> with an alternative email address.

This is our preferred method of distribution as it gives you immediate access to current information.

### ***Internet***

Little Yarra communicates many aspects of school life through its website: [www.lyss.vic.edu.au](http://www.lyss.vic.edu.au)

### ***Facebook Page***

The school also has a Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/Little-Yarra-Steiner-School-and-Kindergarten-111373398923800/>, which you are invited to follow. Although the newsletter is our primary form of communication, upcoming events are occasionally also advertised on our Facebook page.

### ***Class Carers***

Class Carers are members of the parent body who volunteer to support the Class Teacher. They help welcome new families entering the school, support those in need, make sure practical tasks like washing is done and fresh flowers arrive for the classroom. They also assist in communicating to the class from the teacher primarily via text message and email.

### ***Class Meetings for Parents and Teachers***

Class meetings are conducted for all classes from Preschool to Class 12. The parents of each class usually meet with their child's Class Teacher or Guardian three times per year. Class meetings are an opportunity for the parents of the class to gather with the Class Teacher for an informative evening and meet with other parents in the class. During either Terms 1 & 3, when parent-teacher interviews occur, a class meeting may not be held.

In the Preschool and Class Teacher period, class meetings are conducted by the Class Teacher and in the Upper School by the Guardians. Class meetings are an essential part of the school's educational philosophy, and it is vital that each child is represented by at least one parent at each meeting.

In Class meetings the Class Teacher gives an overview of the consciousness of the child at their particular age, what curriculum has and will be presented, and how this relates to the development of the child. Any other items of interest are also brought by the teacher. There is time for a hot drink and chat with other parents in the class. Class meetings are a wonderful chance to foster a sense of community within the class parent-body, develop a stronger relationship with the Class Teacher, and learn more about your child and their education.

The dates for class meetings are published in the school newsletter.

### ***Parent-Teacher Interviews***

Parent-Teacher interviews are individual interviews held in Term 1 for parents of Class 1 to Class 8 and in Terms 1 & 3 for parents in Classes 9 – 12. Interviews are conducted by the Class Teacher for Class 1 to Class 8 and with the Subject Teachers in the Upper School. Parents will receive communication from the school via the newsletter and book interviews with the relevant teacher/s online.

### ***School Reports***

Parents of students from Prep to Class 12 receive two reports per year – one at the end of each semester. These are emailed to parents.

### ***Questions, Comments, Concerns***

If you have a question, comment, or concern about your child, please discuss this with your child's Class Teacher or Guardian. It is important to make a time with them to discuss the matter privately. If the situation does not reach a satisfactory outcome with the teacher, please seek out the appropriate member of Management.

## **FEE INFORMATION**

### ***Fee Payments***

Term statements are sent by email, if an email address has been provided to the school, or by post each term and are due within 14 days of receipt. Fees may be paid in person at the office by cash or EFTPOS. Credit card payments can be taken over the phone. Please talk to our accounts department on (03) 5967 1953 (option 3) or email [accounts@lyss.vic.edu.au](mailto:accounts@lyss.vic.edu.au), should you wish to pay by automatic periodic payments from your debit card. Should you wish to pay using direct debit, the school's account details are Name: LYSS; Bank: Bendigo Bank; BSB: 633 000; Account number: 131 415 010; Reference: Your family code/name.

### ***Edstart***

LYSS has partnered with specialist provider, Edstart, to make managing school fee payments easier. Edstart has already partnered with many other Steiner schools in Australia and have an established track record of supporting their families. Edstart offers an easy, flexible and zero-cost way to pay for your child's education in periodic instalments that suit your family budget, with no credit checks. Families using Edstart can spread school fees into weekly, fortnightly or monthly payments over 12 months, with the ability to choose your preferred day for when payments are made. With your child's outcomes at the heart of what we do, parent fees are crucial to the school's sustainability. All instalment payments will be made through Edstart. We ask that all families wishing to pay by instalments create an Edstart account. For more information and to set up your account please visit <https://edstart.com.au/lyss> The school will pay the cost of providing this service ensuring that it remains free for you to use. You can also contact Edstart on 1300 139 445 or email [contact@edstart.com.au](mailto:contact@edstart.com.au) if you have any queries or require assistance with setting up your account. Alternatively, you can contact Ross on [ringram@lyss.vic.edu.au](mailto:ringram@lyss.vic.edu.au) or 5967 1953 to arrange for a confidential discussion regarding this service and how it may support your family.

### ***Fee Relief***

Under some circumstances the school will make a temporary reduction in fees where a family, already established at the school, is experiencing unusual and short-term financial hardship. Enquiries about fee relief should be directed to the Business Manager.

### ***Conveyance Allowance***

The conveyance allowance is a form of financial assistance to help families in rural and regional Victoria with the cost of transporting their children to their nearest appropriate



school/campus.

The conveyance allowance is available to eligible students travelling by private car or by school bus.

To be eligible students must

- attend their nearest government or non-government school/campus appropriate to their year level at which admission is permissible;
- be enrolled at a school/campus outside Melbourne's metropolitan conveyance boundary;
- reside 4.8km or more by the shortest practicable route from that school/campus attended;
- be of school age (attending Prep to Class 12) and reside in Victoria.

Application forms are available from the school office. Previous applications are carried forward providing that all details remain correct. Please fill in a fresh form if your address details have changed or you are adding an extra child to your claim.

### ***Camps, Sports and Education Fund (CSEF)***

The government offers an annual subsidy to all Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card holders with school aged children (from Prep to Class 12) called the CSEF. Primary school students (Prep – 6) will receive \$125 off their school fees and Secondary students will receive \$225 off their fees.

If you are a Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card holder, please contact the office for a form.

### ***Exit Procedure***

If you withdraw your child from the school before they graduate from Class 12 the school requires one term's written notice in advance. Notice includes submitting an Exit Form to the school. This form is available from the front office or the Registrar. Where eligible, bonds are refunded in full provided all fees have been paid and there are no outstanding accounts due to the school.

As part of the exit procedure the school encourages families to share feedback through the exit form.

## SCHOOL STRUCTURE

### **Board of Directors**

A Board of Directors governs Little Yarra Steiner School. The Board has legal responsibility of the school. Members of the board are:

*Maria Brouwers (Chair)*

*John Stewart (ex-officio)*

*Maxine Harrison (ex-officio)*

*Damien Callan*

*Ross Ingram (ex-officio)*

*Pauline Lucas*

*Ric Butler*

### **Management**

Day-to-day management of the school is the responsibility of the members of Management. Their respective responsibilities are:

*John Stewart  
Principal*

*jstewart@lyss.vic.edu.au*

*Bernie Wagg  
Assistant Principal*

*bwagg@lyss.vic.edu.au*

*Ross Ingram  
Business Manager  
ringram@lyss.vic.edu.au*

*Maxine Harrison  
College Chair  
mharrison@lyss.vic.edu.au*

*Dani Fischer / Rachel Mager  
Chair of Management  
dfischer@lyss.vic.edu.au  
rmager@lyss.vic.edu.au*

*Damien Callan  
Management Member  
dcallan@lyss.vic.edu.au*

### **College of Teachers**

The College of Teachers is a standing committee of the Board and holds the Anthroposophical impulse of the school. Steiner describes the teachers' meeting in this collegiate form as: "The real purpose of the teachers' meetings is to study human development, so that a real knowledge of human beings is continually flowing through the school. The whole school is the concern of the teachers in their meetings, and all else that is needed will follow of itself. The essential thing is that in the teachers' meetings there is study – steady, continual study." *The Kingdom of Childhood*

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

There are many areas of the school that need extra input and help, and we are always grateful for volunteers. Joining in on various parent activities is also a wonderful way to get to know other parents and the school.

To support your child's class directly, your Class Carer will be able to guide you in how you can best do this. Tasks may include helping with knitting, craft, reading and walks. Taking on the role of Class Carer may be another way you are able support the class.

The annual event in the school calendar that involves the whole school community is the Open Day and Fair, which takes place in November. It is supported by volunteer work from the parent body. The school communicates events via the weekly Newsletter and is grateful for the help and support of all parents able to assist on the day.

The 'Associated Community Groups' section (opposite page) also provides various ways in which you can support the school.



## **ASSOCIATED COMMUNITY GROUPS**

Below is a list of Community Groups of which you may wish to be a part.



### ***LYSS Parents Association***

The LYSS Parents Association represents all members of the school community working together cooperatively to support the school and to build a vibrant and effective community culture. Information about meetings can be found in the calendar of the newsletter.

### ***Fair Steering Committee***

The Fair Steering Committee is made up of parent volunteers, teachers, administration and maintenance staff. This group coordinates and oversees the Fair component of the annual Fair and Open Day. If you have an interest in this area, contact the school office on [office@lyss.vic.edu.au](mailto:office@lyss.vic.edu.au).

### ***Craft Group***

The school has a Craft Group, which meets regularly in the administration building on Monday mornings from 9.00 am. The group does a variety of craft activities, sharing their skills and passion for craft, with children in attendance. Should you wish to join Craft Group please speak with front office or email [office@lyss.vic.edu.au](mailto:office@lyss.vic.edu.au).

### ***Sweet Porridge***

Sweet Porridge is Little Yarra's parent and community newsletter. It is published monthly. It provides adult education and an avenue of communication. Appropriate editorial and advertising content is welcome. Email: [sweetporridge@lyss.vic.edu.au](mailto:sweetporridge@lyss.vic.edu.au).

