



2024 PARENT HANDBOOK

Contact Information:

Janet O'Shannessy
Principal

 6629 1321

'Helping Each
Other Grow'



Education

Eltham Public School
proudly stands on
Bundjalung Country



KNOW
YOUR
COUNTRY



Principal's Welcome

It is a pleasure to welcome you and your family to the Eltham Public School community. Our school provides an atmosphere where learning is encouraged and supported in a nurturing environment.

Eltham Public School is an integral part of the surrounding community. Through our school, you and your family will have the opportunity to take part in a range of events and share in the achievements of all children.

We promote a learning environment which is child-centred. Our school is a happy, caring and welcoming place. The students demonstrate enthusiastic and positive attitudes towards their school, learning, themselves and others.

Learning is driven by student needs and community collaboration. We aim to use our resources to the greatest advantage to provide individual enrichment for students while ensuring comprehensive learning experiences.

I look forward to meeting you and I am happy to answer any questions you may have about our school.

Janet O'Shannessy
Principal



Small School - Big Heart

There are 39 families with students enrolled at Eltham Public School. The school has a current population of 60 students across three classes that have small student numbers.

We have a dedicated team of five teachers who have a range of specialty areas to ensure students receive a dynamic education.

Positive, respectful relationships are evident and widespread among students, and staff promote student wellbeing to ensure optimum conditions for student learning across the whole school.

Parents and teachers work together closely to provide a high level of support for students. Parent input is welcomed and valued. Strong links between school and home are promoted and encouraged.

We warmly invite our parents to be actively involved in the school as strong relationships between the school and all members of the community result in positive outcomes for students.



Behaviour Expectations

We are committed to providing a safe, supportive and responsive learning environment for everyone. We teach and model the behaviours we value in our students. The learning, wellbeing and safety of all students is a high priority for staff. We implement teaching and learning approaches to support the development of skills needed by students to meet our high standards for **respectful, safe** and **engaged** behaviour.

Students at Eltham Public School are required to demonstrate our 'Eltham Expectations' in all settings. These expectations have been negotiated with students and our school community.

Our **expectations** are;

1. **Be Safe** (make safe choices)
2. **Be Respectful** (follow instructions)
3. **Be Learners** (do your best)

We take prompt action in response to behaviour that is detrimental to self or others, or to the achievement of high quality teaching and learning.

The Resilience Project

'The Resilience Project' is committed to teaching positive mental health strategies to prevent mental ill-health and build young people's capacity to deal with adversity. At Eltham Public School, we implement their evidence-based Teaching and Learning Program throughout our classrooms, staffroom and school community. Teachers and students engage in weekly lessons and activities around the principles of **Gratitude, Empathy, Mindfulness (GEM)** and **Emotional Literacy** to build resilience.

Gratitude is about paying attention to, and being thankful for, the things we have.

Empathy is about understanding others' feelings and perspectives, and being kind to others.

Mindfulness is about bringing our attention to the present moment and being aware of our thoughts, emotions and surroundings.

Emotional Literacy is about labelling our emotions as we experience them and increasing our emotional vocabulary.

Information about The Resilience Project is regularly communicated to parents and school community through our newsletter.



Assemblies

Whole school celebration assemblies are held once a term to recognise academic, sporting and social accomplishments. During each assembly all classes will showcase an item or student work samples. Dates and times will be advertised via fortnightly newsletters. Parents, families and friends are most welcome to attend.

Attendance

Education for your child is important and regular attendance at school is essential for your child to achieve their educational best and increase their career and life options. NSW public schools work in partnership with parents to encourage and support regular attendance of children and young people. When your child attends school everyday, learning becomes easier and your child will build and maintain friendships with other children.

Education in NSW is compulsory for all children between the ages of six years and below the minimum school leaving age of 17 years. The Education Act 1990 requires that parents ensure their children of compulsory school age are enrolled at, and regularly attend school, or, are registered with the NSW Education and Standards Authority for home schooling. Once enrolled, children are required to attend school each day it is open for students. At Eltham students are expected to **attend school 90% or more of the time**. Attendance is regularly monitored by the Attendance Team at school.

Bell Times

Morning supervision begins at 8:30am.

9.00 - 9.10	FRUIT BREAK
9.15 - 11.15	FIRST SESSION
11.15 - 11.30	EATING TIME
11.30 - 12.00	PLAY TIME
12.00 - 1.30	SECOND SESSION
1.30 - 1.40	EATING TIME
1.40 - 2.00	PLAY TIME
2.00 - 3.00	THIRD SESSION
3.00	HOME TIME

Buses

School Bus Service - Bulzomi Bus Lines (Contact: 0400 585 331). Private Vehicle Conveyance and Bus Transport forms are available online. Parents apply online at NSW Transport for travel subsidy or free bus transport. Supervision is provided for students as they board the bus at 3pm.

Please ensure you inform the school and bus driver of any changes to travel arrangements - even if it is just for one afternoon.

Communication

A digital newsletter is sent through the Sentral Parent Portal, to Facebook, our school website and via email each fortnight on Friday. Newsletters are the regular means of contact with families and advise parents of upcoming events, and recent school activities, news and photos.



Sentral Parent Portal enables families to stay informed with the wonderful activities occurring at our school, notifying us of any student absences, booking interviews, viewing newsletters and signing permission notes for excursions. Parents can also view their child's attendance rates. All permission notes are digital via this app, unless you contact the office and request paper copies to be sent home. Notifications settings should be kept on for the Sentral Parent Portal, to ensure you will stay up to date with school events and news via push notifications.



Find us on Facebook - Eltham Public School

Creative and Performing Arts

Our school places emphasis on every child taking an active part in creative and performance activities. We have a specialist music teacher who offers concert band tutoring for students in Years 4/5/6. Our instruments include flutes, saxophones, clarinets, trumpets, bass guitars, organ and drums. Students in K-3 have access to recorders, xylophones, ukuleles and percussion instruments.

Our students perform regularly at school events and at a variety of local shows such as the Lismore Performing Arts Festival.



The Creative Arts play a significant role in people's lives. Visual arts, music, drama and dance offer students and people of all ages opportunities for personal expression, enjoyment, creative action, imagination, emotional response and aesthetic pleasure. The artforms also provide students with opportunities to explore, celebrate and share social and cultural values about spiritual and worldly beliefs in Australia and in other regions and cultures.

At Eltham, students gain increasing understanding and accomplishment in the visual arts, music, drama and dance through our Creative and Performing Arts experiences. Students make artworks, take on roles and create imagined situations shaped by the elements of drama, and compose their own dances using the elements of dance. Our whole school perform at the end of the year in our annual 'School Concert' and in the Lismore Performing Arts Festival every second year.

Crunch and Sip

'We begin our school day with Crunch and Sip' (or 'Fruit Break') where students can 'crunch' on some fruit or vegetables and 'sip' on water. The idea is to help kids re-fuel and boost their physical and mental performance and concentration in the classroom. This initiative links with the PDHPE curriculum and aims to foster healthy eating habits for children.

Each day we recommend parents provide:

- An extra container or piece of fruit or vegetables
- A water bottle (plain water only)

Curriculum

NSW Public Schools have six Key Learning Areas (KLAs) which are all covered each year of your child's education. These curriculum areas are as follows:

- English
- Mathematics
- History/Geography
- Science and Technology
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education
- Creative and Performing Arts

Eltham Public School has a strong commitment to delivering high quality, inclusive programs in all subject areas. Additional learning such as Aboriginal Education, Multiculturalism, Public Speaking, Drug Education and Child Protection are also embedded where appropriate.

Environmental Education

Involving students in food gardens is a rewarding and educational experience with academic, social and environmental benefits. Our school is equipped with resources to allow students to create and care for vegetable gardens - from planting to harvesting. Gardening lessons enable skills-based learning that extends across the entire school curriculum. Parents are invited to share in the gardening experience with students. Please see staff if this is an area of interest for you and your family.

Excursions

Excursions and visiting performances are planned regularly to complement classroom learning. Plans for conducting excursions, programming special days/events and visiting performances are discussed at P&C meetings and are advertised in the school's newsletter. You will be asked to complete a consent form via Sentral to allow your child to participate in each excursion or activity. Any payment required and the consent form must be returned by the due date to ensure your child participates.

School camps (overnight excursions) are held every second year for students in Year 3 and annually for Years 4/5/6.



First Aid and Medication

It is most important for you to keep the school informed about your child's health. If your child is feeling unwell at school, they will be monitored by staff and sent to sick bay. Parents and carers will be contacted if necessary. All staff are trained in First Aid with annual anaphylaxis and CPR accreditation. In an emergency situation, the school may seek help from NSW Ambulance. All students enrolled at our school are provided with ambulance cover during school activities in NSW. **It is important to notify the school immediately should any of your personal or emergency contact information change.**

Basic first aid is given at school. Hot and cold packs, latex free bandaids and Savlon antiseptic cream are used. Please let the school know if any of these products are not suitable for your child.

As we are a 'Sun Smart' school, sunscreen is provided for students during sporting activities and excursions. Please advise the school if your child has any sensitivities to particular sunscreen brands.

If medication needs to be administered during school hours please provide it to the school with a note authorising staff to administer, dosage amount and the times to be administered. It is important that the medication is provided in its original packaging with the child's name and prescription instructions clearly labelled. NO medication is to be kept in students' school bags.

First North Community

Eltham Public School is a proud member of the First North Learning Community. Other schools in this community include Bexhill, Clunes, Eureka, Rosebank and Upper Coopers Creek. Our schools combine on a regular basis throughout the year to participate in a variety of sporting, cultural and social activities, allowing students to foster peer relationships within a broader group.

We are also a member of The Rivers P-12 Learning Community and have strong links with the campuses of the Rivers Secondary College.

Learning and Support

The learning and support needs of our students are discussed regularly at Learning and Support Team meetings. Students who require assistance or extension with their learning are supported in a number of ways to ensure each and every child maximises their learning potential. Parent consultation is a big part of this process. In addition to teaching staff we have support personnel which includes Student Learning and Support Officers and a School Counsellor.

The School Counsellor has teaching experience and additional qualifications in psychology and counselling. They provide assistance in matters of educational assessment and the social and emotional wellbeing of students. The counsellor will also aid, where required, in referrals with other agencies e.g. Speech Pathologist. Eltham's school counsellor works on a rotational basis with other small schools in our local area. Parent consent is obtained before a child is referred to the school counsellor.

Library

Our school library is a valuable and important part of our school. It is equipped with an extensive range of books and modern resources. Students attend a library lesson once a week which supports the class literacy programs. Borrowing is encouraged and all students should have their own library bag.

Parents and Citizens Association

The P&C has an important role in many aspects of our school's planning, operation and management. The P&C meet via Zoom, on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:30pm. Annual membership is \$2.00.

Fundraising ventures are discussed and planned at P&C meetings. New ideas are always welcomed. The social aspect of fundraising is seen as an important feature of parent participation.

Notices of meetings are included in the newsletter. The P&C president, Kate Behan, can be contacted via email: elthampandc@gmail.com

Payments and Contributions

Student Statement of Accounts are issued with Workbook Pack fees annually which covers the cost of student text books, online subscriptions and classroom resources. The Voluntary Contribution Fee is \$50 per student and \$20 for siblings. Voluntary Contribution Fees are utilised to purchase additional educational resources and materials for students. Excursions, incursions, camps and events are held periodically to enhance student learning and may incur small costs.

Payments can be made via the Sentral Parent App, school website (POP - Parent Online Payments) or at the school office which has both EFTPOS and cash facilities. Payment plans are available - please see the office if you require this service.



Playground

Playground supervision begins at 8:30am. Students are supervised by teachers during recess and lunch. Children are required to sit for the first 15 minutes of the lunch break and again for the first 10 minutes of the recess break in order to eat their food.

Our Student Learning Support Officers, provide structured physical activities during every play break, from Monday through to Friday.

The school grounds are equipped with a sandpit, fixed equipment, tennis court and a Covered Outdoor Learning Space (COLA). Sports equipment and toys are also available.

Reporting to Parents

School reports are issued twice per year at the end of Term 2 and 4. The reports are based on the teacher's assessment of progress towards syllabus outcomes and efforts over the six month period.

Parents are invited and encouraged to discuss their child's progress throughout the year. Formal parent-teacher interviews are organised at the end of Term 2 and 4. At Eltham, parents and teachers frequently have the opportunity to discuss a range of aspects of each individual child's development and participation.

Scripture

Non-denominational religion lessons are available and conducted for 60 minutes each fortnight. Parents elect for their child to attend by indicating their preference at enrolment. Children whose parents elect for them to 'opt-out' of religious education are provided suitable alternative work and are supervised by their teacher in their own classroom.

Sport

Each year we utilise 'Sport in Schools' funding to access specialist coaches and equipment to conduct lessons for all students. Examples include golf, gymnastics, netball and basketball.

As a school we participate in P.S.S.A. (Primary School Sports Association) annual athletics, swimming and cross country carnivals. These events are combined with the First North community of small schools. Based on individual student results, opportunities for further competition at Zone, Regional and State levels are possible. Eltham has a proud history of students representing the school at a state level in swimming and athletics.

Students who have interests in team sports such as netball, football, hockey, soccer, basketball and softball are able to participate in zone try-outs for Northern Rivers teams.

The school has a mixed soccer team coached by staff. The team participates in the NSW small schools knockout competition.

An intensive swimming program is conducted each year for all students. This program is tailored to each child's individual swimming abilities and is taught by qualified swimming instructors.

Private tennis coaching is also available before and after school with 'Tennis 4 Ever'. Contact Julie Haydon 0427 922 900 for more information.



Staff

Our professional, university-educated teachers encourage students to develop a love of learning and a desire to succeed. They maintain the highest integrity and concern for your child's wellbeing.

Teaching Staff:

Janet O'Shannessy – Teaching Principal

Jakeb Currie – Classroom Teacher and Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Instruction

Thomas McKenzie – Classroom Teacher

Hannah Watson – Classroom Teacher

Helen Gray – Specialist Creative Arts Teacher



Support Staff:

Debi Mandato – School Administration Manager

Steve McCluskie – District School Counsellor

Leslye Mitchell – Band Coordinator

Mark Thomson – General Assistant

Student Leadership

There are a number of opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills at Eltham. Students from Years 3 to 6 may apply for the School Leadership Team. Selected students are responsible for a number of school operations. Their leadership includes fund-raising, assisting in the Tuck Shop, organising 'Eltham Exciting Experiences' each term, consulting the student body to vote on initiatives and supporting kindergarten and new students as they transition to our school.

Technology and PBL

Eltham Public School has leading technology programs and facilities. Technology is a vital part of our curriculum from K-6. Each classroom has access to iPads, laptops, PCs and state of the art interactive whiteboards. We also regularly access the NSW STEMShare Kits which include Lego robotics, 3D printers and filming equipment.

Technology plays a vital role in our Project Based Learning (PBL) pedagogy which underpins teaching practices in Science, History and Geography. Teaching this way allows students to work on a project over an extended period of time (usually a term) that engages them in solving a real-world problem or answering a complex question. They demonstrate their knowledge and skills by developing a product or presentation for a real audience. As a result, students develop deep content knowledge as well as critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills in the context of creating an authentic, meaningful project.



Tuck Shop

Students in the senior class operate the school tuck shop every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at recess time.

Money raised is used by the leadership team to subsidise the costs of termly 'Eltham Exciting Experience' events and excursions.



Volunteers

We place a strong emphasis on a community approach at our school and always welcome parent and family volunteers.

Parent input occurs in a number of ways including tuck shop, gardening, classroom helpers, P&C, assisting with transport and a variety of special interest activities where parents have expertise.

Parents who would like to help in classrooms are encouraged and welcome to assist with activities such as reading, computers, cooking, writing, crafts, gardening or performing arts, etc. Any member of the community wanting to help out at the school in any way must have a current Working With Children Check (WWCC). Parents of children who currently attend the school require their identification to be confirmed with the front office.

Uniform

Girls

- Bottle green school check dress
- Bottle green school check blouse or green and gold polo shirt with school emblem
- Bottle green shorts, skirts or track pants

Boys

- Green and gold polo shirt with school emblem (short or long sleeve)
- Bottle green shorts, track pants or trousers

All students require:

- Bottle green broad brimmed hat
- Bottle green school jacket or jumper
- Covered black shoes with white socks

Caps are not accepted as adequate sun protection. Hats are required for all outdoor activities. Our school follows the 'no hat - play in the shade' policy.

New uniforms can be purchased from the 'School Locker' in Ballina. The school office has hats and second hand uniforms for sale. All items of clothing and property should be clearly labelled with your child's name.

