COWAN
PUBLIC SCHOOL

PARENT INFORMATION
A vibrant and caring learning community
Welcome to Cowan Public School. We trust that you will find all the information you may need in this book. Please contact the school if you have any queries, by:

- **Phone:** (02) 9456 1065
- **Fax:** (02) 9456 3026
- **E-mail:** cowan-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

People at our school

**Principal**
Mr Paul McSweeney

**Class Teacher**
Mrs Cate Ruzek

**Class Teacher**
Mrs Mary Lynne Jansons

**Class Teacher**
Ms Clare Daly

**Class Teacher / Librarian**
Mrs Lynne Scanes

**Learning / Support Teacher**
Mrs Carina McSweeney

**School Admin Manager**
Mrs Marie Hope

**School Admin Assistant**
Mrs Lynette Hodder

**General Assistant**
Mr Mark Janssens

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Attendance

Children are required to attend school each day the school is open. Our school hours are:

- 8.50am  school commences
- 11.00-11.25am  recess break
- 1.00-1.50pm  lunch break
- 2.50pm  school finishes

If your child has to be away due to illness or special circumstances, you are required to send a note to the teacher explaining the reason for the absence. If your child is to be absent for more than two days, it is important that you notify the school. Repeated cases of unexplained absences are referred to the Home School Liaison Officer. It is in your child’s best interests to be at school each day, as repeated absences will have an impact on your child’s learning.

Book Club

Order forms for Scholastic Bookclub are sent home approximately twice per term. Bookclub offers you a wide range of books and computer programs for your child at reasonable prices. Our school also receives free books based on the value of orders placed. Books ordered through bookclub generally take about two weeks to arrive.

Canteen

Students wishing to order lunch are able to place an order at Cowan General Store in the morning and orders will be delivered to school at lunchtime. A full price list is available from either the school or Cowan Store.

Cowan PS also has a ‘cake day’ once each month. A roster is made and families send in cakes for sale. Usually families are only on the roster once each year. Cakes are available for sale to students at recess.
Change of Address

It is important that you contact the school office as soon as possible with any changes to your initial enrolment so that our records remain accurate. These include changes in your address, home, work or mobile phone numbers, emergency contact details, family details.

Communication

Our school newsletter, the ‘Cowan Sun’ is published once each fortnight. The purpose of the newsletter is to enable parents and community members to be fully informed about the latest developments at the school, provide a calendar of events, samples of students’ work, recognize student achievements, provide curriculum information, and general school and community news.

Curriculum

Learning activities at Cowan Public School are planned around the six key learning areas for New South Wales primary schools. These areas are:

1. **ENGLISH** - An experienced and dedicated teaching staff focuses on literacy acquisition, particularly the teaching of reading in the crucial early years. The effective teaching of spelling and writing is also a major focus area. A learning support team provides support for students with learning difficulties, including programs developed by the support teacher learning.

2. **MATHEMATICS** - A K-6 Mathematics program based on stages of development ensures each student is working at an appropriate level. Students are able to complete the primary school curriculum in a flexible time frame, according to their level of skill development.

3. **HUMAN SOCIETY and IT’S ENVIRONMENT** - covering changes and continuity, environments, cultures and social systems & structures.

4. **SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY** - technology assisted learning enables the students to investigate, problem solve and access relevant and current information in each classroom. The school has a complete network system with all computers linked to the internet.

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CREATIVE AND PRACTICAL ART- includes music, dance, drama and visual arts

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION-
Students participate in a daily fitness program, which teaches and develops essential movement and fitness skills. Students attend athletics, swimming and sports carnivals. The school provides opportunities for many extra curricula activities including choir, dance, peer support, PSSA sport and interschool sporting gala days, in addition to other activities.

Enrolment

Children may enrol in Kindergarten at the beginning of the school year if they turn five years of age on or before July 31 in that year. Documentation providing proof of age, such as a birth certificate, is required on enrolment. Proof of immunisation is also required.

Students transferring from other schools can enrol at any time.

Equipment

It is expected that your child bring to school the following items each day:
- lead pencils
- ruler
- sharpener
- eraser
- coloured pencils/textas
- glue
- Students in years 3 to 6 should also bring a blue or black pen, and a red pen.

Excursions

Excursions are an important part of your child’s education. Excursions are organized to compliment units of work being undertaken by students in the classroom. Excursions also provide students with the opportunity to develop living skills in a safe & structured environment outside the school. It is anticipated that students attend all excursion organized for their group. If parents are experiencing any difficulty with paying for excursions, they can contact the principal and apply for student assistance. All inquiries are kept confidential.

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Hats

Our sun safe policy requires that all children wear a hat each day regardless of the weather conditions. Children not wearing their hats are requested to play or sit in the shade area of the playground.

Homework

Class teachers may set homework during the year to support class and theme work, consolidate concepts and skills learned at school. Completing and returning homework is important as it teaches your child about responsibility and self discipline. Please contact the class teacher if your child is experiencing a lot of difficulty with the work given.

Kindergarten Orientation Program

An Orientation Program is conducted for children enrolling the following year. This involves the children attending school for a number of sessions during Term 4. This time allows the children to become used to the formal routine of the school, the parents used to the school routine and the teachers to assess the children ready for the following Kindergarten year.

Library

Students are encouraged to use our school library. All books need to be taken to and from school in a library bag for protection. Students should return books on Wednesdays to their class box in the library. Students have lessons each Wednesday or Thursday in the library, and an opportunity for borrowing. Whilst we accept wear and tear from normal usage, any willful damage to books, or loss, must be met by the child/children concerned.

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Lost Property

Unclaimed items are placed in the lost property box in the Computer Room. Please look there if your child is missing any clothing. In order to minimize loss, please ensure that all items of clothing belonging to your child are clearly labelled with their name.

Medications

If your child requires medication, this must be sent to the school office in the morning, with a note detailing when and how the medication is to be administered and any possible side effects. Medications remain in the office to prevent wrongful use and ensures the children have their medication in a quiet surrounding and in the correct manner.

If your child suffers asthma, the school office must be notified, and then these students should carry their own puffer. No other medications are to remain with your child.

Parents & Citizens Association

The P&C association provides valuable support to the school, is instrumental in raising funds to support school programs, and provides parents with a forum to meet with other parents to discuss a range of issues. Meetings are held once a month at 9.00am at school. Parents and community members are encouraged to attend and support these meetings.

Parent Helpers

 Throughout the year, the school will be asking for parents who are able to assist with a diverse range of activities from reading tutors to committee members. Your help will be much appreciated, and it is a good way of involving yourself in your child’s education.

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Parent/ teacher interviews

If you have a concern about your child and their progress, or simply wish to discuss your child’s education, please contact the class teacher or office to arrange a suitable time.

Parking

Street parking is available at both Chandler Avenue and Park Road entrances. In the interests of safety for children entering and exiting the school, parents are requested not to park in the area between the driveway gates and the pedestrian gate on Chandler Avenue.

Presentation Night

Presentation night is held in December each year. Prizes and presentations are awarded to students on this night. The school receives donations to support this activity and to help recognise the achievements of students from within our school. In addition, all students are involved in a performance on the night.

Reading

It is important that your child has the opportunity to read daily. Reading materials can include books, magazines, comics, newspapers, words on flashcards, reading games, reading involved with class research work, as well as parents reading aloud to their children.

Children should be free to choose their own books on topics that interest them. The books can be chosen from school, home, library or borrowed from friends.

How can parents help?

- supervise your child’s reading for 10 minutes per day for at least 3 nights per week.
- when your child is reading, please let them try to work out the words. If they are having difficulty, tell them the word.
- for the beginner reader, or child having problems with reading, parents can assist by reading with, or to their child.
- for the fluent reader, question your child about their comprehension of the story, eg: Who are the characters? Which is your favourite part?

Remember: Home reading should be fun!

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Reports

Individual achievements are reported to parents through progress reports, at the end of term two and four. These give you a clearer indication of the skills your child is achieving at school and areas needing assistance.

Parents are encouraged to have an interview at any time during the year, if they wish to discuss the progress of their child.

School Counsellor

A school counsellor visits our school about once each fortnight. The counsellor assists with a wide range of services. Referrals may be made to the school counsellor by the class teacher or parent. Written parental permission is required.

Religious Education

Please nominate on the enrolment form the scripture group you wish your child to attend. Supervision is provided for children not attending scripture group. Religious education is held each Monday afternoon.

Student Assistance

Some financial assistance can be provided by the school for textbooks and excursions for parents experiencing financial difficulty. Application for assistance can be made through the principal or school office. All applications are confidential.

Supervision

No child is permitted to leave the school grounds at any time without written permission. Teachers are on duty during recess and lunch breaks, but there is no supervision for children who arrive prior to 8.20am. The Department of Education and Training will not accept responsibility for your child before that time.
**Textbooks**

At the beginning of each year, your child may require textbooks. These may be purchased through the school at a greatly reduced cost, and will be detailed in the school newsletter as to the cost involved. At the conclusion of the year, they become a permanent record for you of your child’s work. Families experiencing financial difficulties may apply for Student Assistance to help cover some of these costs.

**Uniforms**

It is the policy of Cowan Public School, in conjunction the P&C, that children wear the school uniform at all times. We encourage students to wear the school uniform with pride.

Jewellery is not permitted at school, except for small personal items such as sleepers, signet rings, and watches. The school will not accept responsibility if these items are lost or stolen.

**Voluntary school contributions**

Students are provided with a range of school resources including exercise books, paper, stationary and art and craft materials throughout the year. Voluntary School Contributions help offset the costs of these resources. School Contributions are essential in enabling us to maintain the high quality of programs at our school and all parents are encouraged to contribute. Payment can be in either one payment, or by installments if preferred. Information of fees will be noted in a school newsletter in Term 1.