



**ACT**  
Government

Education



## Primary School Information Handbook

2020-2021

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## Principal's Welcome



### Welcome to Farrer Primary School

Farrer Primary School is a thriving learning community in which teachers and families work in partnership to provide opportunities that foster creativity, deep thinking and skill development. We want our students to be active learners who ask questions about the world around them and have the tools to find answers to these questions. We aim to equip students with 21st century skills through curriculum focused on the explicit teaching of Literacy and Numeracy skills alongside real world learning units based on the Australian Curriculum, local priorities and student interests.

Our school is committed to providing high quality teaching and learning programs for all children. Students are supported, challenged and extended through a range of learning and extracurricular opportunities. Farrer Primary is well regarded as a school of academic excellence across the curriculum including specialist programs in sustainability, physical education and Japanese.

Our Farrer values of honesty, excellence, fairness, respect and persistence are important in the development of responsible citizens. As part of our Positive Behaviours for Learning journey staff, students and community will be reviewing these values to determine if they best represent our current and future goals.

We value and promote student voice through our Student Parliament, class discussions and individual goals set in writing and maths. Parent and family partnerships are highly valued by our education team. We value parent input, feedback and involvement in learning, extracurricular and community events.

Farrer Primary School is a caring, happy school in which students are encouraged to be themselves and strive for continuous improvement.

If you are enrolling at Farrer Primary School, we look forward to your long association with us. This handbook outlines many features of the school. We are more than happy to make a time to show you around and answer any of your questions.

I warmly welcome you to Farrer Primary School.

Kind Regards,

Liz Wallace  
Principal



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## Contacts

Farrer Primary School  
Lambrigg Street  
FARRER ACT 2607

Phone: 02 6142 0860

**Email:** [info@farrerps.act.edu.au](mailto:info@farrerps.act.edu.au)

**Website:** <http://www.farrerps.act.edu.au>

### Farrer Primary School Leadership team - 2020

<b>Principal:</b>	Liz Wallace
<b>Deputy Principal:</b>	Kate Banwell
<b>Preschool-Year 2 Executive Teacher:</b>	Mariana Fuenzalida
<b>A/g Year 3-6 Executive Teacher:</b>	Paul Campbell

## Introduction

Farrer Primary School offers a preschool to year 6 setting catering for an enrolment of approximately 350 students from kindergarten to year 6 and 44 students in the preschool. The school and suburb were named after William Farrer (1845-1906) who is famous for his early wheat experiments at the nearby rural property 'Lambrigg'. He was also featured on the original \$2 note. Farrer first opened in 1970. The two main buildings are named after the past principals – Sam Ellyard (junior school) and Chris Cameron (senior school).



The school offers a supportive and caring environment that caters for the needs of all students.

The school's vision is that

*At Farrer Primary School we value and provide an **inclusive** and **supportive** environment which encourages **excellence** and **innovation** in the development of lifelong learners.*

*We work together to promote **sustainability** by being active members of our local and global community.*

*We are safe, responsible, respectful learners.*

Our focus on sustainability is reflected in the resources, specialist teachers and purpose built classrooms from our preschool through to our Environment Centre.

The high profile Japanese language program delivers a specialised language approach in senior primary years and offers enrichment through linguistics and the performing arts. Every child has access to a specialised science program and spends time each week participating in a high quality science program with a specialist teacher.

Farrer Primary School is focused on excellence in Literacy and Numeracy as its main priorities and develops socially and environmentally literate students through a well designed curriculum.

The school values inclusivity and provides a Learning Support Unit for students with Autism and successfully integrates students with additional needs.

Some unique features of our school include our Student Parliament leadership program for year 6 students and our Senate which acts as a school governing body for Year 6 students to become a part of the decision making process of the school. Peer mediators support our playground to be a happy and safe place for all students and provide another pastoral care aspect to our playground along with the teachers on duty. The school encourages physical activity for all students across the school. We offer both a year 5 and year 6 woodwind band. This forms part of a larger combined band that plays with other schools in a primary combined concert band. Students also have the opportunity to join the school choir and participate in music and performing arts activities as part of their regular curriculum.

Farrer Primary has high standards for student achievement, behaviour and success and offers a school environment where every child is nurtured and encouraged to achieve their potential.

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## SCHOOL ORGANISATION

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### Hours of operation / Drop off and pickup

School commences at 9.00am and concludes at 3.00pm. Parents are encouraged to have their child/ren arrive as close to 9.00am as possible and students should arrive at school *no earlier than 8:45am* when supervision is provided until class time.

The fixed playground equipment is not directly supervised before or after school. Therefore, it should only be used by students at times when they can be supervised by their parent or carer.

Lunch eating time	11.10 - 11.20am
Lunch play	11.20 - 12 midday
Recess	1.30 - 2.00pm

Parents are welcome to come into the school to collect their child/ren at the end of the day. It is preferable however for parents to wait adjacent to classrooms rather than to enter the class during the closing minutes of the day as class teachers are finalising the day with students.

### Enrolment procedures

Parents / carers are welcome to apply to enrol / transfer their child/ren at any time during the school year. Farrer Primary School welcomes all students from the suburb of Farrer and parts of Isaacs as identified in our Priority Enrolment Area (PEA). You can find maps and information regarding PEAs at our Education and Training Directorate (ETD) website [https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/enrolling-in-a-public-school/priority\\_placement\\_areas](https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/enrolling-in-a-public-school/priority_placement_areas)

Children can be enrolled in Preschool if they are four on or before the 30 April in the year they are due to attend preschool.

Children are enrolled in Kindergarten, the first year of Primary schooling, if they are five years old on or before 30 April. Children who have attended Farrer Preschool are automatically enrolled for Kindergarten the following year if they are in the PEA for Farrer Primary School.

Each year the school arranges an orientation program to support children in transitioning from preschool to kindergarten. Teachers and the school leadership team hold an information session for all new preschool and kindergarten parents. The program and procedures for the start of the new school year are outlined at this session. This aims to make transitioning as successful as possible for children and their families.

All prospective enrolments, new families and out of area families are encouraged to make an appointment with our Deputy Principal to discuss their request to attend Farrer Primary School. Acceptance of out of area students is made at the discretion of the Principal and is dependent on school capacity, class sizes and local context. We encourage you to visit or contact our front office and make an appointment with our Deputy Principal.

Please inform the front office of any changes to contact phone numbers as soon as possible. Up to date contact information is important in case of sickness or emergency.

## School Map



## Preschool

Preschool education is provided for all children who turn four on or before 30 April in their preschool year. Enrolment is completed online through the Education and Training Directorate website by following the Enrolling / Transferring ACT Public Schools link [www.det.act.gov.au](http://www.det.act.gov.au). Once enrolled students automatically continue on to Kindergarten at Farrer Primary School if they are in Priority Enrolment Area for Farrer Primary School. Please see [https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/enrolling-in-a-public-school/priority\\_placement\\_areas](https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/enrolling-in-a-public-school/priority_placement_areas) for information.

Staff at the preschool work closely with primary school staff and are a part of the Preschool to Year 2 team who meet regularly to ensure a consistent approach and common programs are available for all children.

As well as a common approach to learning, liaison with the preschool ensures that the transition to kindergarten is smooth and enjoyable. Preschool students regularly visit the primary school and a buddy class system supports children to feel part of the school.

In term 4 a more formal program of visits and a parent information session are held.

A Farrer Preschool handbook is available on our school website.



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## Uniform

The Farrer Primary School Board endorses the wearing of a uniform as it is part of the school ethos of help to create a sense of belonging and pride in the school and so engender a positive school spirit.

The FPS uniform is bottle green and white. In accordance with the ACT Government and FPS uniform policy, we offer a gender neutral uniform which encourages active play, is sourced from suppliers who can provide assurance of ethical sourcing and is SunSmart. Farrer Primary School follows the *Sun UV Protection Students Policy* for ACT Schools found

[https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications\\_and\\_policies/policies/A-Z?result\\_791371\\_result\\_page=S](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policies/A-Z?result_791371_result_page=S)

- **Shoes:** closed toe shoes are required.
- **Hat:** a requirement of the Sun Protection Policy is for students to wear a hat which protects the face, neck and ears whenever they are outside. Students without suitable hats must play under shaded areas whilst outside. To comply with the Cancer Council ACT's policy, hats should have a broad brim. School hats are available from the uniform shop, these are reversible with the sports house colour on the reverse. Families can find out which house your child is in by calling the front office.
- **Bag:** you can provide your own school bag or buy one from the uniform shop. It is suggested that the bag easily fit a lunchbox, hat, library bag and drink bottle at a minimum.
- **Library bag:** needs to fit an A4 book and be water resistant. There are some for sale in the uniform shop.

Purchasing of new uniform items is done online only.

Purchases must be made through the online shop [www.school24.net.au](http://www.school24.net.au). Payment can be made via credit card or bank transfer. The uniform shop policies on exchanges and refunds are on the [FPS website](#).

For new students you will need:

- The registration code 251 289 63
- To set up your student via the canteen tab

Uniform Exchange – cash only.

The second hand shop will gladly accept clean, undamaged uniform items. The P&C run one rummage sale each term which is advertised via the school newsletter and on the Farrer P&C Facebook Page. Families can also email the P&C to arrange an appointment to look through the second hand items.

The Uniform Shop is online only. Appointments to try on sizes can be made by emailing [FPSuniforms@gmail.com](mailto:FPSuniforms@gmail.com)

Delivery of orders- Families will receive email notification when purchases are ready for collection. Orders are usually processed within 3 days of ordering during terms.

Orders are delivered to the FPS Front office and can be signed out by a parent or student during office hours.

No orders are processed during the school holidays. If you have a rush, please email and the team will do their best to help out.

All enquiries please email [FPSuniforms@gmail.com](mailto:FPSuniforms@gmail.com).

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## Absences / Late arrivals

All absences from school must be covered by notification from the child's parents or carers. This allows teachers to complete the registers of attendance (rolls) according to Government policy. Absences can be notified by SAS, calling the front office or through a written note to the class teacher. The front office will make contact via text message in the case of unexplained absences.

In the interests of safety, no child is to leave the school grounds during school hours without permission being given directly to the school by parents or carers. Parents taking a child from the school before 3:00pm are asked to sign their child out at the front office.

If students arrive after 9:15am, they are to go to the front office accompanied by a parent / carer and be signed in by office staff. Students will then receive a 'late slip' to hand to class teachers. This informs the teacher the student has been signed in.

## Accidents / Injury / Illness and Medication

In case of an accident / illness, staff will direct students to the office for first aid. If a student is too ill to remain at school their parent/s or carer/s will be contacted. It is therefore important that we have current home and work telephone numbers. Students will remain in sickbay until contact can be made with parents.

If students have any of the following illnesses or conditions they should not come to school:

- Infectious childhood illnesses, e.g. chicken pox, measles, mumps, whooping cough
- Vomiting and / or diarrhoea
- Conjunctivitis
- High temperature
- Severe pain, e.g. toothache, headache, earache
- Heavy colds or flu and
- Untreated head lice

Students should remain at home until they are well and no longer infectious or contagious. In the case of vomiting and/or diarrhoea, students should not return to school for 24 hours after symptoms have disappeared. For further information please refer to the Education and Training Directorates Infectious Diseases policy. <http://www.det.act.gov.au>

Should your child need to take medication during the school day, we ask that you please bring their medication to the front office. It must be accompanied by written instructions from their doctor or parent/carer. All medications must be clearly labelled, in date and display the student's name. For further information please refer to the Education and Training Directorates Health and Safety Policy First Aid. <http://www.det.act.gov.au>

An individual Anaphylaxis and Asthma management plan is required on enrolment if applicable.

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## Before and After School Care - OSHClub

A before and after school care program is provided by OSHClub. OSHClub is dedicated to high quality care for children and features a wide range of age appropriate activities and includes a healthy afternoon tea.

OSHClub operates from the school hall.



The contact number for access to this program is 0428 130 826 or website – [www.oshclub.com.au](http://www.oshclub.com.au).

## Appointments

Communication between school and home is highly valued. For brief conversations, parents are able to speak with teachers before school. Should parents wish to have lengthier conversations, they are invited to make an appointment by contacting the front office on 6142 0860.

For any discussion with the team leaders, the Deputy Principal or Principal, parents are invited to make an appointment.

## Assemblies

Assemblies are held in weeks 3, 6 and 9 each term. These take place in the school hall on Friday mornings starting at 9:15am. Each year level has the opportunity to share work in an assembly across the year. Parents are welcome to attend, particularly if their child is receiving an award or presenting an item.

## Bicycles and Scooters

Families are encouraged to support their children in being physically active. Riding to school is one positive option. Children are asked to walk their bikes, scooters, skateboards once they reach school grounds. They are then asked to place these in the bike enclosure on arrival. The enclosure is kept locked over the school day and opened again at home time.

A reminder that helmets must be worn for riding to and from school.

## Dogs on School Grounds

Under the policies of the Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate, dogs are not permitted on school grounds. Section 42 of the act defines places where dogs are prohibited. These include the grounds of a childcare centre, preschool, primary school, high school or secondary college during school hours or when school sport including training is being conducted.

Please refer to the ACT Domestic Animals Act 2000 <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au>

## Houses / Sports Carnivals

A sporting house system operates within the school for sports carnivals (swimming, athletics, cross country) and other events.

Students are allocated to one of the sporting houses on enrolment. There are three houses: Winglen, Glenwarri and Bencubbin. Houses are named after wheat varieties developed by William Farrer in the late 1800s and are said to be disease resistant and suitable for cold climate.

The teams gain points for individual participation and sportsmanship and compete for a trophy at the end of the year.



Glenwarri – Green  
Winglen – Blue  
Bencubbin - Yellow

## Lost Property / Personal items

Please ensure all articles of clothing are labelled with your child's name. This makes it easier to return items if found around the school. There is a lost and found rack and tubs located just outside the staffroom in the Robertson building.

Students are asked not to bring large sums of money or expensive items like mobile phones or computer games to school unless prior arrangements have been made. The school is unable to take responsibility for such items. Mobile phones need to be handed to the front office each morning for storage.

## School Library

Farrer Preschool and Primary School have a rich library collection. The collection is current, reflecting children's interests and aligned to the curriculum.

Children are encouraged to borrow books on a regular basis to foster literacy at home. We ask that families please provide a separate, labelled bag to store and carry borrowed library books safely.

Teachers will advise families of their class library day.



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As part of learning programs, students have access to audio / visual resources and computer technologies to develop the information literacy skills of locating, selecting, organising, recording, communication and evaluating information. Your child and family will also have access to eBooks and audiobooks.

### **Stationery Packs**

In 2021 Farrer Primary School will continue with an environmentally sustainable book pack arrangement. Materials will be delivered in bulk to classroom teachers for distribution. The process aims to save families time and money. It is also more environmentally friendly than previous processes as the school orders based on need. The arrangement also allows for flexible payment options.

Costs vary depending on year levels. Payment can be made in cash, EFTPOS/Credit Card (at the front office) or through QUICKWEB accessed through the school website via the payment tab.

### **Year 6 Student Parliament**

The School Parliament gives students an avenue for participation and a voice in governance and decision making. Ministers are appointed to a range of portfolios. Issues are raised by students at a classroom level and conveyed through their minister to the parliament.

Over the course of the year, students have opportunities to lead the school in different projects.

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## **COMMUNICATION**

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Farrer Primary School welcomes and highly values school-home-community partnerships. You are welcome to contact your class teacher or the school regarding matters that would assist your child's learning and wellbeing at school. For brief conversations, you can approach staff before or after school - noting that there are times where staff have meeting commitments. Should you require a longer period of time, please make an appointment via the front office.

### **Community Notice Boards**

Community notice boards are located at the entrance to the Cameron and Ellyard buildings and display further information about school and community events.

### **School Newsletter – Farrer Community News**

The school newsletter, the Farrer Primary School Community News, is a means of sharing information with our community. It includes dates, excursions, learning experiences, policy information, invitations, reports on school activities, OSHClub (before and after school care) and community news.

The newsletter is available electronically through email. Please notify the front office if you wish to receive a paper copy.

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## School Website

Our school website can be found via [www.farrerps.act.edu.au](http://www.farrerps.act.edu.au)

## Term Overviews

Term overviews from class teachers provide an overview of learning programs and year level events. These are shared via email at the start of each term.

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## PARENT & CARER INVOLVEMENT

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Parents and carers play a significant role in every aspect of school life from preschool to year 6. We appreciate the assistance and expertise that parents and community members bring to diverse areas of learning and to the school as a whole.

## School Board

Families are welcome to contribute to the decision-making procedures of the school through the School Board.

Each ACT Public School is administered by a School Board whose membership comprises of the school principal, two elected staff members, three elected members of the parent community and a nominee of the Education and Training Directorate. Elected members normally serve for a two-year period.

The School Board is the policy-making body of the school. Its major functions are to:

- determine the educational policies to be implemented at the school;
- assess, from time to time, the needs of the school in relation to the provision of buildings and facilities, equipment, funds and teachers and other staff and make recommendations to the Director General (of the Education Directorate) with respect to the meeting of those needs;
- determine the purposes for which funds made available for the school are to be expended;
- make recommendations to the Director General in respect to the use of the buildings, facilities and equipment;
- develop relationships between the school and the community and between the school and community organisations; and
- make recommendations to the Director General on matters relating to the school.

Responsibility for the implementation of policies established by the Board rests with the Principal and staff.

## P&C (Parents and Citizens)

The Farrer Primary School Community Association (P&C) plays an important role within the school. Meetings are generally held on the Wednesday evening of week 3 and week 8 and are advertised in the

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school newsletter. All parents are invited to attend the meetings. As well as its more official activities, P&C provides an informal meeting opportunity for parents and coordinates fundraising for the school.

## School Canteen – The Kids’ Kitchen

Nourishing our children's health by providing healthy canteen food and drinks is a priority for our school community. The Kids' Kitchen offers a delicious and healthy menu. The food is made from fresh ingredients and where possible, uses the produce from our school environment centre.

The Kids' Kitchen is operated by the P&C (Farrer School Community Association) and our canteen manager is Katie, a Farrer Primary School mum. Katie is supported by a sub-committee of the Farrer P&C.

Year 6 students assist in the canteen at lunch and recess. Working in the canteen gives them a chance to build skills in customer service, food handling, maths, communication and team-work.

**Opening hours** - The Kids' Kitchen is open every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday during term-time for online lunch orders and for counter service. It is open at both lunch and recess.

Canteen services are available to students from Kindergarten to year 6 only.



**The menu** - The Kids' Kitchen follows the Nutrition Australia, National Healthy School Canteen Guidelines. The menu adheres to the "traffic light" system, which is used to categorise food based on Australian Dietary Guidelines. The canteen aims to offer only GREEN and AMBER items through its menu.

The menu is reviewed regularly and aims to provide healthy food made from seasonal produce. The menu is published every term in the school newsletter. It is also available on the school website.

More information about the National Healthy School Canteen Guidelines and the ACT Public School Food and Drink Policy 2015 can be found online at [www.education.act.gov.au](http://www.education.act.gov.au)

**Special dietary requirements** - If you have a child with special dietary requirements, food allergies or food sensitivities please contact the canteen to discuss your child's needs. Vegetarian and Halal menu options are available.

**Canteen prices** - The canteen does not aim to make a profit from its operations. Prices are kept to a minimum to create a sustainable business. In the event that a profit is realised during a financial year, funds are used to contribute to P&C Fundraising.

### How do I access the canteen?

There are two ways to purchase food from the canteen:

1) Pre-order lunch online:

Orders can be made on the day or in advance, online via School24 (see instructions for registering below). They must be made by 0830 on the day of the order. Recess foods cannot be pre-ordered.

2) Visit the canteen during lunch or recess.

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Children can buy snacks, drinks and frozen items, from the canteen counter during lunch and recess. Items are priced between 50c and \$2.50. In a bid to reduce food waste, hot food and lunch items such as pies and sausage rolls must be ordered online. To help manage stock levels, there is a purchase limit of 2 items that are the same per transaction. Cash sales only.

**Where does my child pick up their lunch order?** - Lunch orders will be delivered directly to classrooms. If the order includes a temperature sensitive item such as a frozen snack, children will be given a voucher to pick it up from the canteen during lunch or recess.

**What is School24 and how do I use it to make a canteen order?** - School24 is an online ordering system that allows you to place lunch orders via the School24 website.

To register go to [www.school24.net.au](http://www.school24.net.au) and enter the FPS ID: 25128963.

The system allows you to pay-as-you-go or to set up funds which can be topped-up. To top up you can use your credit or debit card (there is a small fee) and your account will be topped up instantly. Alternatively, a Direct Debit transfer will be credited to your account in 2 working days once approved by the canteen manager.

**Can I help in the canteen?** - The viability of the Kids' Kitchen depends on parents volunteering their time to assist the Canteen Manager. No experience or qualifications are necessary.

If you're interested in helping contact the canteen via email or simply pop in and say hi!

Ingredient donations are another option for parents who are time-poor. Non-perishable pantry staples such as pasta and rice or freezer bags, baking paper and foil are always appreciated. Please leave these with the front office if the canteen isn't open.

The committee welcome, encourage and appreciate comments, suggestions and menu ideas. Please do not hesitate to get in touch. Phone: 02 6142 0868 [thekidskitchenfarrer@gmail.com](mailto:thekidskitchenfarrer@gmail.com)

## Helping in Classrooms / Library / Preschool

Preschool to Year 6 classes welcome your assistance. This may include interaction with individuals and small groups of students in a range of different activities.

The *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011* (the WWVP Act) commenced on 8 November 2012. It aims to reduce the risk of harm or neglect to vulnerable people in the ACT.

The WWVP Act requires those who work or volunteer with vulnerable people to have a background check and be registered.



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Detailed information about obtaining a WWVP card can be obtained via  
<https://form.act.gov.au/smartforms/servlet/SmartForm.html?formCode=1318>

All volunteers are required to visit the front office to sign in and out when assisting at school.

Please speak with your child/rens' teacher/s and let them know that you are willing to help.

## Voluntary Contributions

Families are invited to make a voluntary contribution to the school each year. This financial contribution goes directly into the school budget and assists the purchase of resources to support learning programs for all children in the school. The School Board is responsible for establishing the voluntary contribution amount each year.

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## CURRICULUM

Farrer Primary School implements the Australian Curriculum and the Early Years Learning Framework. Wherever possible, literacy and numeracy skills are developed within the authentic context of integrated inquiries. Skills and understandings in these areas are taught explicitly.

Much of the early childhood and primary curriculum integrates learning areas into connected units or inquiries of study in order to make learning more authentic for students. Teachers work in teams to plan for the delivery of curriculum and other programs. The curriculum is enhanced in many ways through the teacher's individual interests and expertise.

The Early Years Learning Framework is located  
<https://docs.education.gov.au/documents/belonging-being-becoming-early-years-learning-framework-australia>

The Australian Curriculum can be found  
<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/>



## Assessment and Reporting

The major aims of assessment procedures are:

- to ensure that each child's physical, personal and academic needs are systematically identified and provided for;
- to diagnose areas requiring further or personalised teaching;
- to provide data regarding student progress and achievement;
- to provide feedback to teachers on lessons and programs and
- to provide information for reporting to parents.

Assessment procedures at Farrer include individual portfolios. These portfolios are collections of student work that show evidence of learning and are added to throughout the year by both students and teachers. The school uses the Seesaw platform as its electronic portfolio.

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Teachers carry out ongoing assessment. They do this by collecting a range of data including observations, anecdotal records, student work samples, written assessments and checklists.

Kindergarten students across the ACT undertake a system wide assessment, BASE. This assessment looks at literacy and numeracy in the first month of school. BASE is undertaken again in term four to provide teachers and families information on individual children's progress and future needs. Each time BASE is administered, families receive a report of their child's results.



Our Year 3 and Year 5 students participate in the National Assessment Program in Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). This assessment provides parents and teachers with a report on some of their child's understandings and skills in writing, reading, spelling, grammar and punctuation and aspects of numeracy. The reports also demonstrate how students compare with other Year 3 or Year 5 students across Australia on these aspects.



The Farrer Primary School reporting schedule consists of:

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| Term 1 | Parent information sessions<br>'Getting to know you' interviews |
| Term 2 | Semester one student reports emailed to families                |
| Term 3 | Parent - teacher interviews<br>Learning Journey                 |
| Term 4 | Semester two student reports emailed to families                |

## Learning Support

Farrer Primary School aims to provide learning experiences that cater for the abilities, interests and learning styles of each student. Learning is a shared responsibility in which students, teachers and parents all play a vital role.

A percentage of Farrer Primary School students speak English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD). A specialist teacher works with these students in small groups or alongside the class teacher in order to build their competency in English. The school acknowledges the key role first languages play in establishing a foundation for further language learning. Parents and carers are encouraged to maintain their home language with their children.

Class teachers work closely with colleagues in the areas of literacy and numeracy to help develop and implement classroom programs for children with specific learning needs. Specialist teachers are also able

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to conduct learning programs in individual or small group situations as required. Our aim is to provide students with the time they need to develop essential skills and understandings.

Students with diagnosed additional needs are supported in mainstream classes under the Inclusion Support Program (ISP). These students have an Individualised Learning Plan (ILP) that is developed collaboratively by teachers, executive staff, parents and school psychologist if required. ILPs may also be used in class for students who are not part of the ISP but require adjustments for other reasons.

## Learning Support Unit Autism (LSUA)

The Learning Support Unit Autism (LSUA) at Farrer Primary School is a specialised educational learning environment for children on the Autism Spectrum. Each child in the multi-age LSUA has an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) focusing on literacy, numeracy and life skills.

Staff work with families and other professionals to create ILPs. Literacy and numeracy goals are aligned with the Australian Curriculum accessed at the student's point of need.

Examples of life skill goals could be

- Communication skills (expressive and receptive language)
- Social skills (reciprocal interactions, sharing, turn taking, playing with others, emotional learning, cooperation)
- Independence
- Organisation
- Self-care
- Transitioning from small group to large group settings



Each student works to an individualised timetable that is catered to their needs outlined in their ILP. This provides students with a predictable routine allowing for optimal learning to take place. This format can assist in the minimisation of anxiety associated with learning and structures. All learning is focused on the goals jointly constructed by teaching staff and families.

Students have the opportunity to develop their skills in a structured and safe environment, taking their learning from small to large group settings. Students have opportunities to learn social skills in the LSUA and with appropriate supports in place, transfer this learning into the broader community. This assists with the mastery of everyday skills, for example greeting and farewelling a friend.

The LSUA is located in the centre of the school with access to both Ellyard and Cameron buildings and play equipment. Students are encouraged to play and interact with peers at break times through structured play activities and support from staff when needed.

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Students have opportunities to work as part of their mainstream classes supported by Learning Support Staff (LSAs). This is based on individual student needs as outlined in the ILP. Students may for example, join their mainstream class for inquiry lessons, PE and grade specific experiences such as the swimming program, excursions and camps.

## Homework



For home learning (homework) to have value, it must be relevant, achievable and interesting. It should be a way of involving parents in their child's education, not as research assistants but partners. Homework activities reinforce the learning that has taken place at school. It may take many forms – oral, written, social, technological, or physical activities.

Students are encouraged to read to, to read with and / or be read to each night. Engaging in conversations about texts is a highly important contributor to children's literacy development.

Children have opportunities to borrow books from the junior school home reading collection as well as borrowing through our school library. Public libraries are a wonderful resource too and well worth joining if you and your children are not already members.



## Specialist Programs – Japanese

All Year 1 to Year 6 students at Farrer Primary School participate in the Japanese program. Currently each class receives 45 minutes of Japanese instruction each week. Lessons take place in the Japanese room. Students enjoy a range of activities to learn spoken and written Japanese language. Throughout the year there are also various opportunities for students to engage in Japanese cultural activities.

Why learn Japanese?

- Learning another language increases students' understanding of their own language structures and grammar.
- It enhances general cognitive development.
- Japanese is one of the priority languages in the Asia-Pacific region to be taught in Australian schools.
- Study of languages provides opportunities for students to become more accepting of diversity, more respectful of others and more aware of their place in the international community.

## Specialist Programs – The Environment Centre

The Environment Centre was established in the year 2000 when the need for more wet areas for hands on science, horticulture and technology-based activities was identified. This was very much a community-based project that came to fruition after years of planning and fund raising. The environmental science

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teacher provides weekly lessons to students across the school, implementing programs that incorporate aspects of science in the Australian Curriculum.

The Farrer Primary School Environment Centre includes the following aspects:

- animals
- gardens including fruit trees and a carbon forest
- water tanks
- worm farms
- composting facilities
- storage (garden sheds) and
- a classroom

The 'Green Team' consisting of Year 6 students, assist with animal and garden care twice a week during lunch times. Parents are encouraged to also assist, with several families providing care for the Environment Centre animals and garden during the school holidays on a roster system.

Clean Team lead our school in our efforts to reduce, re-use and recycle. They are a motivated and engaged group who support our efforts to be a leading school in waste management and sustainable practices.



The Environment Centre also assists learning about sustainability, crop/plant management, examining and maintaining habitats and waste management.

Each Monday morning a group of parents meet to work and help keep our Environment Centre looking fabulous! We certainly welcome you to join in!

### Specialist Programs – Physical Education

In 2021 a new specialist Physical Education (PE) program will be implemented with a focus on skill development and team skills.

Carnivals will be held throughout the year and teams will be formed to represent the school in team sports. Further information about our new PE program will be provided as the new year begins.

### Enrichment Opportunities (Gifted and Talented)

Teachers at Farrer Primary School actively seek opportunities for enrichment and encourage student participation. Opportunities for extension are offered through involvement in activities such as Rostrum, the school's annual science fair and ICAS assessments run by the University of NSW.

ICAS assessments are online assessments, designed to recognise and reward academic excellence. The assessments are based on the curricula for the relevant year level. Students are asked to demonstrate a deeper, integrated and thorough level of learning.

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The Education Directorate has information regarding Gifted and Talented Education. This can be located at <https://www.education.act.gov.au/support-for-our-students/g-and-talented-education>

Information for families can be gained from our school Gifted and Talented Liaison Officer. Please call the front office to make an appointment.

## Excursions / Incursions and Camps

The school arranges excursions and incursions to complement and enrich units of inquiry and classroom programs. Teachers provide details of planned excursions. The school procedures for excursions require written permission from parents. The school assists parents who are unable to meet the full costs of an excursion. The school provides an opportunity for families to contribute to an Excursion Fund for their child/children. The fund process is for all classes Preschool to Year 6. Essentially payment covers all class excursions cultural visits and visiting artist performances for each term and an end of year whole school celebration.

The school's camp program enables students to further their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Camps may have a cultural, environmental or outdoor emphasis and are an important part of the educational programs. In 2021 a day camp will be offered to students in years 3 & 4. Students in years 5 & 6 will have the opportunity to take part in a two night camp.



## Flexible Learning Environment (FLE)

Farrer Primary School has a flexible learning environment (FLE) which is a comfortable, fun and interactive environment used to promote integrated learning.

The space features a series of flexible modular furniture. Staff are able to reconfigure the room for different uses such as delivery, applying, creating, communicating and decision making. Large graphics and text, a playful colour palette, feature lighting and 3D acoustic panelling is used to engage students and encourage them to be creative and work collaboratively.



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## School Band / School Choir

For many years Farrer Primary School students have enjoyed music tuition through our school's involvement in the Instrumental Music Program (IMP). The IMP is a section of the Education and Training Directorate which provides schools with a package of services designed to supplement the music education of up to 22 selected students in each of Year 5 and 6. Students involved in this program are part of a system of over 1700 musicians all learning in the same situation in 40 schools across the ACT.



Farrer Primary School also offers students the opportunity to be involved in the school choir. The choir performs at school assemblies and special events such as Floriade.



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## PASTORAL CARE

We strive to provide a caring, happy and safe environment for every child. This is reflected through our school values of: inclusion support, excellence, innovation and sustainability.

Our school expectations are that children be safe, respectful, responsible learners. Behaviour expectations across our school link back to these expectations.



In mid 2019, Farrer Primary School began its journey as a Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) School. PBL is a framework that schools use to get everyone – student, staff, families and the school community, on the same page to create a safe and supportive learning environment for all students.

PBL is an international evidence-based whole school process which can be implemented in any school setting to support all students.

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## Features of PBL

Schools create clear expectations and rules that use positive language, for example "walk" instead of "don't run". This is done for all areas across the school and all people involved in the school community. Students and families are involved in this decision-making process.

PBL features a system designed to acknowledge students for following the expectations. Each school community decides how they would like to do this and for this reason, acknowledgements look different every school.

The clearly defined set of expected behaviours (expectations and rules) is backed up by teaching procedures and procedures for acknowledging expected behaviours as well as responding to other behaviours.

School communities also work together to decide on what happens when things don't go according to plan.

PBL uses an educative approach so there is the opportunity for students to get back on track.



Our school is supported in implementing PBL by an External Coach from the Education Directorate.

## What are the benefits of PBL?

When PBL is implemented well, teachers and students have more time to focus on relationships and classroom instruction. Students and staff benefit from:

- increased time focused on instruction;
- improved social-emotional wellbeing;
- positive and respectful relationships among students and staff;
- reduced inappropriate behaviour;
- better support for teachers to teach, model and respond effectively to student needs and
- a predictable learning environment where staff and students know what is expected.

## Student Wellbeing

Farrer Primary School has implemented the *Friendly Schools Plus* program, a Directorate endorsed approach to teaching social skills. Friendly Schools is an anti-bullying initiative for schools developed through extensive research with Australian children and adolescents. It is recognised nationally and internationally as a comprehensive, evidence-based framework that can reduce bullying behaviour. The Friendly Schools initiative has been designed to align with both the Australian Curriculum and the National Safe Schools Framework.

Senior students are trained as playground peer mediators, a leadership opportunity which teaches students to resolve low-level conflict using their peers as mediators. Mediation opens up communication

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channels allowing the disagreeing students to discuss their problems and come to a resolution with the guidance of the mediators and playground teacher.

## Buddy Classes

Each class in the school is assigned a buddy class. Senior classes generally buddy with a junior class. This is a supportive and sharing relationship which operates across the school. During 'buddy class time', the two classes come together to complete activities that build on multiage relationships to enhance our caring learning environment. Activities may include buddy reading, ICT tasks, creative arts or physical games.

Preschool – Year 3  
Kindergarten – Year 4  
Year 1 – Year 5  
Year 2 – Year 6

## School Psychologist

A School Psychologist attends Farrer Primary School each week and is an integral member of the staff and student pastoral care.

The Psychologist is responsible for providing diagnostic testing where appropriate as well as advising teachers and parents on the psychological, educational and behavioural modifications to be provided to children at school.

Families can make contact with our School Psychologist through contacting the front office.

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## CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

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If you have any concerns about your child's education please have a conversation with the class teacher.

You are also welcome to make contact with an Executive Teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal by contacting the front office on 6142 0860.

Should the need arise, the ACT Education and Training Directorate has a policy for complaints resolution.

All Education and Training policies can be accessed at:

[www.det.act.gov.au/publications\\_and\\_policies/policy\\_a-z](http://www.det.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policy_a-z)