



Years 1–6

Parent Handbook



CONNECT ~ COMMIT ~ EXCEL

Welcome to Balaclava State School

Balaclava State School is a Prep to Year 6 primary school located in the centre of Cairns. Our students are drawn primarily from the surrounding residential suburbs of the local area. We work to continually foster positive relationships with our families, local businesses, surrounding schools, clubs and professional associations. Our commitment is to give our students a strong start to education through creating a learning environment in which each child can thrive and become an independent, creative and connected learner. It is through these solid foundations that unlimited potentials will emerge.

- We focus on literacy and numeracy delivered through structured English and Mathematics programs ensuring our students have the necessary skills to participate in all aspects of learning;
- We use high-yield research-based teaching methods such as Explicit Teaching and Direct Instruction coupled with regular consolidation teaching episodes on a daily basis;
- We provide interesting and engaging curriculum units that broaden our students' experiences in Science, Technology, HASS, HPE and The Arts;
- We integrate IT into units of work and make a commitment to keep pace with new and relevant technologies;
- We promote traditional values such as high expectations, strong discipline, respect, and pride in our school;
- We utilise a team approach to planning curriculum and teaching to ensure consistency in what is being taught and the standards expected.

Our school motto is 'Connect ~ Commit ~ Excel' and we strive to enact this each day in our school. Our staff are professionally supported to reflect and improve upon practice and we are dedicated to helping our students build on strong foundations as they strive to be the best that they can be. We are a community of learners, committed to innovation and led by a united vision for professional excellence.

Balaclava State School provides an education that prepares our students for life. We offer a distinctive learning environment and believe in engaging children in learning experiences that foster their independence, creativity and the connectedness needed in today's world and our global future.

We recognise the individuality and varied abilities of our students and provide every opportunity for them to find their passion, take risks, strive to improve, succeed and learn from any set-backs.

I invite you to share in what we do by reading this handbook. We hope that it will answer many of the questions asked by parents and carers and I urge you to familiarise yourself with its contents and to keep it on hand for easy reference throughout the year.

If you require further clarification about any aspect of your child's school life, we invite you to discuss this with your child's teacher or the school administration.

We look forward to working in partnership with you during these, the formative years, of your child's life-long education.



Mr Peter Begemann
Principal

Important Information

School Administration Office Hours 8:00am—3:30pm

School Directory

Principal	Peter Begemann
Deputy Principal (Prep – Year 2)	Josanne King
Deputy Principal (Years 3-6)	Michelle Bussell
Head of Student Services	Josanne King
Head of Curriculum	Pia Toth
Business Manager	Colleen Scarcella
Address	418 Mulgrave Road, Westcourt 4870
Postal Address	PO Box 266M, Manunda 4870
Telephone	(07) 4081 5333
Email	ContactUs@balaclavass.eq.edu.au
Website	www.balaclavass.eq.edu.au

Teaching and Learning Programs

Our Curriculum

Balaclava State School delivers learning experiences to cater for children as individuals. We aim to foster the development of abilities, attitudes and skills that will guarantee progress of each child towards greater levels of independence. Balaclava State School's program is based on the Australian Curriculum.

The Australian Curriculum promotes excellence and equity for all students by providing a challenging curriculum from which rigorous, relevant and engaging learning programs can be developed that address individual learning needs.

The Australian Curriculum sets consistent national standards to improve learning outcomes for all young Australians. It sets out, through content descriptions and achievement standards, what students should be taught and achieve, as they progress through school. It is the base for future learning, growth and active participation in the Australian community.

English

The study of English is central to the learning and development of all young Australians. It helps create confident communicators, imaginative thinkers and informed citizens. It is through the study of English that individuals learn to analyse, understand, communicate and build relationships with others and with the world around them.

The study of English plays a key role in the development of reading and literacy skills which help young people develop the knowledge and skills needed for education, training and the workplace. It helps them become ethical, thoughtful, informed and active members of society.

Mathematics

The Australian Curriculum: Mathematics provides students with essential mathematical skills and knowledge in *Number and Algebra*, *Measurement and Geometry*, and *Statistics and Probability*.

It develops the numeracy capabilities that all students need in their personal, work and civic life, and provides the fundamentals on which mathematical specialties and professional applications of mathematics are built.



Science

Science aims to provide opportunities for students to develop an understanding of important science concepts and processes, the practices used to develop scientific knowledge, of science's contribution to our culture and society, and its applications in our lives.

It provides an understanding of scientific inquiry methods, a foundation of knowledge across the disciplines of science, and develops an ability to communicate scientific understanding and use evidence to solve problems and make evidence-based decisions.

The curriculum supports students to develop the scientific knowledge, understandings and skills to make informed decisions about local, national and global issues and to participate, if they so wish, in science-related careers.

HASS

The Humanities and Social Sciences encompasses the knowledge and understandings of history, geography, civics and citizenship, economics and business and gives students a deep understanding of the world they live in from a range of perspectives, past and present, and encourages them to develop an appreciation and respect for social, cultural and religious diversity.

Through studying Humanities and Social Sciences, students are given opportunities to develop their ability to question, think critically, solve problems, communicate effectively, make decisions and adapt to change.

HPE

Health and Physical Education offers experiential learning, with a curriculum that is relevant, engaging, contemporary, physically active, enjoyable and developmentally appropriate. Integral to Health and Physical Education is the acquisition of movement skills, concepts and strategies that enable students to participate in a range of physical activities confidently and competently.

In Health and Physical Education, students develop the knowledge, understanding and skills to support them to be resilient, to develop a strong sense of self, to build and maintain satisfying relationships, to make health-enhancing decisions in relation to their health and physical activity participation, and to develop health literacy competencies in order to enhance their own and others' health and wellbeing.

The Arts

The Arts have the capacity to engage, inspire and enrich all students, exciting the imagination and encouraging them to reach their creative and expressive potential.

The Arts offers students the opportunity to study all five subjects, Music, Dance, Drama, Visual Arts, Media Arts in the primary years of schooling.

The five subjects enable students to learn how to create, design, represent, communicate and share their imagined and conceptual ideas, emotions, observations and experiences.

Technologies

The Australian Curriculum: Technologies draws together the distinct but related subjects of Design and Technologies, and Digital Technologies.

It ensures that all students benefit from learning about, and working with, traditional, contemporary and emerging technologies that shape the world in which we live.

In creating solutions, as well as responding to the designed world, students will contribute to sustainable patterns of living for themselves and others.

In addition to classroom-based technologies, our students also have access to two specialist computer laboratories and mobile laptop centres.

Assessment

Throughout the year, all class teachers will complete standard, school-wide testing of their students, focusing on literacy and numeracy skills. The results of these tests are used to identify individual students that would benefit from additional support or extension activities.

Support Services

Key support services available at Balaclava State School include:

- Guidance
- Social Work
- Student Services
- Learning Acceleration
- Inclusive Education
- Chaplaincy



Extra Curricula

Music

Students engage in the general study of music through singing, movement and games. Classes enjoy a specialist lesson each week with our music teacher. In older year levels, students have the opportunity to participate in the school choir, band or our Instrumental Music Program.

Sport / Physical Activities

Balaclava State School promotes good health and nutrition through breakfast programs, dental hygiene program, healthy tuckshop choices and our Sun Safe policy.

Our Physical Education program engages all students in fun, active skill development across a number of sports. *Please note: All physical activities involve inherent risks. Like all state schools, we do not offer accident insurance to cover medical or other costs in the event of accidental injury. We therefore recommend families consider private insurance.*

Excursions

Our students' learning is enhanced through participation in school excursions. When planning excursions, our teachers ensure:

- The activity complements students' academic programs;
- Safe ratios of adults to students;
- Students not participating in the excursion are supervised and provided with an alternative program at school;
- Specific processes are in place if students are being transported in private vehicles; and
- Careful selection and preparation of all parents/volunteers participating in the excursion.

All school excursions are approved by our Principal and P&C Association. Our school regularly reviews and updates our excursion procedures using Education Queensland's Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment.

Common Routines

Getting Prepared

School Resource Scheme: Balaclava State School operates a Student Resource Scheme (SRS), the scheme is voluntary and you are under no obligation to join. The SRS's purpose is to provide you, the Parent/Caregiver, with a cost effective, value for money alternative to purchasing textbooks, resource, consumables and materials from elsewhere, through reduced prices gained from the school's bulk purchasing processes. A Participation Agreement Form MUST be completed to indicate your decision of whether or not you will participate in the Student Resource Scheme.

- **School stationery:** A stationery list is sent home with your child's Semester 2 report card for parents who choose to provide their own stationery, rather than participate in the school resource scheme. This list can also be downloaded from our school's website (www.balaclavass.eq.edu.au)
- **Uniforms:** Uniforms can be purchased from the School Administration Office. Payment can be made by cash, EFTPOS or Centrepay.
- **Class lists:** Class lists will be displayed on the notice boards around our school; all families will be notified when they are ready for viewing.

Before and After School

Please ensure your child is escorted to and from the classroom each day by a family member/carer - this is important for your child's safety and wellbeing.

- **Before school:** Arrive at school on time. Supervision is not provided before 8am. From 8am, children are required to remain in the designated supervised area until the bell rings at 8.25am
- **After School:** Children must be collected from the classroom at 2:30pm. Children not collected by 2:45pm are escorted to the Orange Seat Area and their parents are contacted by school staff.

Please note: due to health and safety regulations, children are not allowed to play on the playgrounds before or after school, unless supervised by a parent or guardian.

Breakfast

Please ensure your child is having a healthy breakfast every day. The benefits of having a healthy breakfast means children can concentrate more on their school tasks and learning.

Balaclava State School is proud to have a breakfast program open to all students at 8:00am every day. The Breakfast Program is held in the school hall.



Family and Community Involvement

Parents and families are an important part of our school community. Balaclava State School encourages families to become involved in their child's broad education experience with us - by keeping in regular communication with teachers, volunteering in class, and/or joining our P&C Association.

Communication

Open communication between home and school underpins a great school experience for children. Please feel free to discuss any problems or queries.

From the School

To ensure that you always know what is happening in our school, we provide important information through the following:

- Class newsletters – beginning of every term;
- Fortnightly school newsletter;
- SMS
- School Website - www.balaclavass.eq.edu.au ;
- Parent information nights and special events;
- Facebook page;
- P&C Meetings - please check our newsletter or Facebook page for details of upcoming meetings

From your family

We encourage you to share any news, concerns or questions with our school. General events in your family life – such as illness, new babies and visitors can be a source of excitement or concern for young children, and so may affect their behaviour. Please let your classroom teacher know of any such events.

Please feel free to discuss any problems or queries with your class room teacher – especially in regards to your child's progress, the school or the school program. Teachers will be happy to make appointments for longer discussions.

Contacting Staff

Contact details for your students teacher are provided to all families in the class newsletter, which is sent home at the beginning of every term.



Reporting to Parents

While our classroom teachers are available to discuss your child's progress throughout the school year, there are key times of year when we formally report to parents:

Parent Information Sessions

At times throughout the year, Balaclava State School will host both formal and informal Parent Information Sessions. The focus of these events may vary — from introducing curriculum changes, sharing helpful tips about helping your child's learning at home to open discussions about an important, emergent topic. All events are advertised in our newsletter, school Facebook page and school noticeboard.

Learning Progress Review Discussions (Terms 1 and 3)

Teachers are available for prearranged, individual meetings with parents and their child to discuss the student's individual achievement and learning needs.

Student Reports (Terms 2 and 4)

Formal reporting is completed for all students in late June and early December each year. Report cards are sent home either by post or with your child in the last week of the school term.

School Assembly

Assembly is held weekly on a Friday morning at 8:45am. Junior classes (Prep – Year 2) odd weeks and Senior classes (Year 3-6) even weeks. Parents are always encouraged to attend.

School Annual Report

Each year, Balaclava State School publishes an annual school report for the previous school year. This report outlines our achievement across a number of key performance areas, including student learning outcomes, resource management and community engagement. Electronic copies of the report are available on our website.

School Newsletter

The Balaclava State School Newsletter is published fortnightly. Copies are sent home with the eldest student in each family, emailed to all parents and can also be downloaded from our website. Our newsletter is one of our main communication links between school and home, designed to keep you informed on what is happening in our school community.

Volunteering

Our school welcomes the active support of our parents and community members. Whether it is volunteering in our tuckshop, supporting a reading program in class, supervising a school camp or offering a hand at a working bee — all help is greatly appreciated. If you are volunteering in our school, please remember to sign in at the School Administration Office.



P&C Association

The Balaclava State School P&C Association is an integral part of our school and works in partnership with the school's leadership team to:

- Promote the interests of the school by bringing parents, citizens, pupils and teaching staff into close co-operation;
- Ensure students have access to quality learning materials and equipment; and
- Ensure effective school policy and management of school activities.

Our P&C Association hosts regular meetings. Parents will be notified of an upcoming meeting by newsletter, Facebook and SMS. All parents are welcome to attend and are encouraged to take up formal membership. As a member, participants are entitled to vote at meetings and are also covered by insurance when involved in P&C activities.

After School Care

After School Care is available, information regarding this program is available by contacting the school office.

After School Supervision

All students are expected to leave the school grounds at 2:30pm (the end of the school day), unless involved in After School Care or organised activities with parents/caregivers, sporting organisations or teachers. Please contact the School Administration Office.

Policies and Procedures

All policies and procedures that relate to the management and operation of our school are available through our School Administration Office.

Complaints Process

The Department of Education, Training and Employment has a clear policy and process for schools to deal with any complaint received by parents/carers, community members, staff or students.

Our objective is to ensure that all complaints are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner to achieve an effective resolution for all parties.

Under our policy, all complaints must be documented. You should be aware that if you are making a complaint about a staff member, in most instances, the staff member will be told of the complaint and offered the right of reply. When making your complaint, you should ensure that you:

- Make an appointment to discuss your complaint with the class teacher in the first instance;
- Discuss the complaint and give them the opportunity to suggest a solution;
- The teacher will make a record of your complaint and advise the line manager of the outcome;
- Provide complete and factual information in a timely manner;
- Deliver your complaint in a calm and reasoned manner;
- Avoid making frivolous or vexatious complaints, or using providing deliberately false or misleading information;
- If after approaching the teacher, your complaint remains unresolved, make an appointment with your Deputy Principal; and
- Put your complaint in writing.

When to contact your local Department of Education office:

- If after speaking to the Principal, your complaint remains unresolved, you have the right to contact your local Department of Education Office;
- Complaints may be lodged by telephone or in writing. It should be Specific and outline the steps you have already taken with the school to resolve the issue; and
- The school will be notified of your complaint.

Student Code of Conduct

Productive learning and positive behaviour are inextricably linked. We believe that effective learning takes place when all members of the school community – students, staff, parents and visitors acknowledge and abide by a set of fundamental expectations.

The Balaclava State School Code of Conduct is based on four core expectations: Be Respectful, Be Organised, Be a Learner, Be Safe. Balaclava State School endorses a whole school approach intended to promote and support appropriate behaviours in all students. To facilitate this approach, the school has implemented the School-wide Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) framework as a means to revise and develop strategies and procedures to promote a safe, supportive and disciplined school environment.

Our Positive Behaviour for Learning is coordinated by the School Leadership Team - including representatives from administration, teaching, guidance, behaviour support, parent groups and community organisations. Important principles that guide our work under the PBL framework include:

- Appropriate behaviour needs to be explicitly taught;
- Acknowledging students for meeting our expectations is a crucial factor in reinforcing their use of positive and pro-social behaviours; and
- For some students, extra support will be required in both teaching and reinforcing such behaviour.

Balaclava State School offers interventions to support the teaching and reinforcing of appropriate behaviour at different levels. These include:

- Universal - for all students;
- Targeted- for students requiring extra support; and
- Intensive - for a small number of students displaying challenging and/or persistent inappropriate behaviour.

Our Student Code of Conduct is available from the school website or alternatively you may request a hard copy from the School Administration Office. A copy is provided to all families when enrolling their child/ren.

The Resilience Project

Helping our children navigate the stresses and strains of daily life is more important than ever. While we may not be able to remove all these challenges, we can pass on skills to help young people cope with stress and adversity. It is what's known as resilience, the ability to overcome difficult experiences and be shaped positively by them. Our brains respond to the information around us, so resilience can be taught, modelled and nurtured. By doing this, through strong support networks and encouraging communication, we can help young people understand when they feel down and know what they can do to make themselves feel better.



In 2020 Balaclava State School commenced implementation of a new program to provide quality teaching and learning to build student wellbeing.

The Resilience Project's Program as part of our whole school instructional program to support the development of student well-being and social-emotional capabilities.

The year-long wellbeing program consists of a series of weekly lessons that are completed with a Student Journals. The curriculum is broken up into four areas:

- Emotional Literacy,
- Gratitude,
- Empathy and
- Mindfulness

Year 4 – 6 students participate in the Resilience Project Survey annually providing feedback on student wellbeing.

General Information

Student Records

Individual student records are kept on file at our school. Copies of student's report cards, absence details, record of behaviour issues and contact information are available to parents/guardians upon written request, addressed to the Principal.

Keeping Us Up-to-date

It is important that you inform the school as soon as possible if there are any changes to:

- Contact details;
- Medical information; and
- Family circumstances.

Custody/Parenting Arrangements

Information regarding your family circumstances is essential to help us to understand and support your child while at school. A copy of a court order or custody order is necessary so that school staff can help ensure the legally designated parent or guardian collects children.

Internet Access

The internet provides our students with valuable learning experiences — offering access to information from around the world. All websites accessed through school computers are filtered through Education Queensland's Managed internet Services. Together with the supervision of our teachers, we aim to minimise the risk of students being exposed to harmful information. Student access to the internet is monitored through individual logins and passwords.



Birth Certificates

Education Queensland regulations state that proof of age and identity must be sighted before enrolment into school.

Absences

If your child is to be absent from school for any time, we ask that you advise us as soon as possible by:

- Calling the school;
- Sending a note to the class teacher;
- Emailing the school (ContactUs@balaclavass.eq.edu.au);
- Messaging the school's Facebook page.

Multiple unexplained or unauthorised absences will be investigated by the school's Student Engagement Officer and Deputy Principals. Please note if you plan for your child to be away from school for more than 10 consecutive days, you are required to submit an *Application for Exemption from Compulsory Schooling* (available from the School Administration Office) with supporting documentation/evidence which is then considered for approval by the Principal. This may or may not be granted depending on the circumstances.

Children are asked not to arrive at school before 8.00am. The school does not provide supervision before this time. Children are expected to sit on the Orange Seat Area under E Block until 8:00am when they are then allowed to move responsibly to the hall. It is expected that all children will depart the school grounds by 2:45pm.

Arriving Late and Leaving Early

If your child arrives at school after 8:45am, please present to the Student Services Window for a late slip prior to going to the classroom. Regular late attendance will be investigated by the classroom teacher, Student Engagement Officer and Deputy Principals.

If your child needs to leave school early, please report to the Student Services Window for an early pass. On presentation of the pass to the teacher students will be permitted to leave the school grounds early.

Mobile phone access

Students of Balaclava State School are discouraged from bringing mobile phones to school as they can distract from quality learning activities. If parents need to contact students they can do so through the School Administration Office. All mobile phones must be handed to the School Administration Office until the end of the day for security reasons.

Head lice

Like most schools we face a battle to keep these annoying 'pests' under control as outbreaks occur from time to time. Should an incidence of head lice be reported in your child's class, an alert letter will be sent home advising of the outbreak and requesting parents check their child's hair.

Accident insurance cover for students

Some school activities and physical education, particularly contact sports, carry inherent risks of injury. Parents are advised that the department does not have Student Accident insurance cover for students. If your child is injured at school as a result of an accident or incident, all costs associated with the injury, including medical costs is the responsibility of the child, parent or caregiver.

Monies sent to school

Any money sent to the school must always be in an envelope and marked with your child's name, class and reason for the payment. Correct cash would be appreciated at all times, however if paying by cheque, please make cheques payable to Balaclava State School. The School Administration Office does have EFTPOS facilities but please note there is no cash out.

Student Travel

Bus Travel

Contact Queensland Transport for information on local bus schedules.

Car Parking

There is no parent parking on the school grounds. Vehicles are NOT permitted on the school grounds from 7:45am till 3pm.

Bicycle Travel

Riding to school is a popular choice for students at Balaclava State School. To ensure the safety of our students, we maintain the following expectations:

- Before starting to ride to school, children should know road safety rules and be competent riders;
- Wearing safety helmets is compulsory;
- Students are not permitted to ride their bikes inside the school grounds; and
- Students use a locking device to secure bikes to the racks in the bike enclosure.



Student Health

First Aid

Members of our school staff are permitted only to provide basic First Aid. This is immediate, temporary treatment given by the staff in case of an accident. Should medical treatment beyond First Aid be required, parents are notified immediately whenever possible and/or the necessary treatment arranged.

In the case of a serious accident, an ambulance will be called to transport the injured child to the hospital. It is understood that it is not always possible to notify parents immediately of the action taken, however every endeavour is made to contact parents as soon as possible. It is essential that you keep your contact details up to date with the school for emergencies.

Administration of Medications

All medication to be taken by children at school should be brought to the School Administration Office to be administered under the supervision of the Administration team. Parents must bring medication to the School Administration Office and complete the 'Permission to Administer Medication'.

All medication must be labelled in the name of the child with a pharmacy prescribed label. This includes cough medicines, Ventolin and aspirin, eardrops etc. No medicines can be accepted without a completed 'Permission to Administer Medication' authorisation from the parents/guardian. *Non-prescribed oral medications (such as Panadol) should **not** be brought to school and will **not** be administered by any staff.*

Parents of children who suffer from any health conditions are to advise the School Administration Office of details. Details of any children who self-administer approved medication is required (e.g. medications for Asthma, Diabetes and Epilepsy). Asthma Management Plans signed by your doctor must be provided to the school annually.

Infectious Diseases

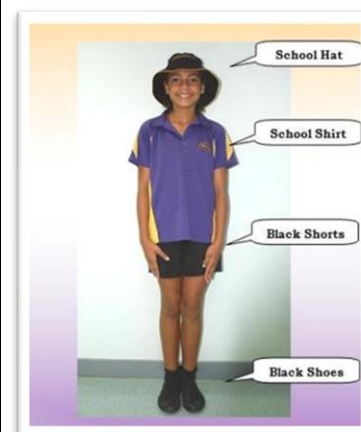
Balaclava State School follows the exclusion guidelines provided by the National Health and Medical Research Council. Please refer to the table below for exclusion periods.

Chicken Pox	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least five (5) days after the first eruption.
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased.
Head Lice/Scabies	Re-admit the day after appropriate treatment has commenced.
Ring Worm / Hepatitis A	Exclude until medical certificate of recovery is received.
Measles	Exclude for at least four (4) days from the onset of rash.
Mumps	Exclude for nine (9) days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).
Rubella / German Measles	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash.
Impetigo / School Sores	Exclude until sores have fully healed.
Whooping Cough	Exclude the child for five days after starting antibiotic treatment.

Uniforms

All students of Balaclava State School must uphold our Dress Code Policy. This policy not only encourages equity among students but also promotes the school's Sun Smart Policy. Full school uniform must be worn by all students participating on excursions.

	GIRLS	BOYS
Shirts	Balaclava School Polo Shirt	Balaclava School Polo Shirt
Pants/Skirts	Black shorts, black bike pants or black sports skirt	Black shorts
Hats	Black wide brimmed hat	Black wide brimmed hat
Sports Uniform	Mudskippers—Orange shirt Pythons—Green shirt Stingers—Purple shirt	Mudskippers—Orange shirt Pythons—Green shirt Stingers—Purple shirt



Our school uniform including our shirt, hat and shorts can be purchased from the School Administration Office. Black jumpers and long-sleeved shirts (for wearing under our uniform shirt) can also be purchased.

Footwear

For personal safety and general health, students must wear covered shoes at all times, both during the day and when travelling to and from school.

Jewellery and other accessories

It is acceptable for students to wear a small and plain pair of sleepers or stud earrings to school. Hair accessories should be kept to a minimum.

Inappropriate clothing

Items of clothing with inappropriate wording/pictures, thongs, scuffs, flip flops, slide-ons and caps/beanies are not permitted to be worn.

Hats

Students must wear an appropriate hat when working and playing outside the classroom. This includes broad brimmed, legionnaires or bucket hats in black. Caps are not accepted.

Sunscreen

All students are encouraged to apply sunscreen before school. Sunscreen is supplied to students on sports days only.

Water bottles

All students are encouraged to bring a water bottle to school. Water bottles filled with water are able to be used in all classrooms.