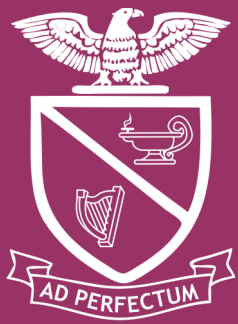


Parent Handbook 2023

**SWEET VALLEY
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



Welcome to Sweet Valley Primary

Our school was founded in 1957 with 24 children, 2 teachers and one principal. Today Sweet Valley takes its place amongst the best state schools in the country, providing holistic education for 900 children with a large complement of academic, administrative and support staff.

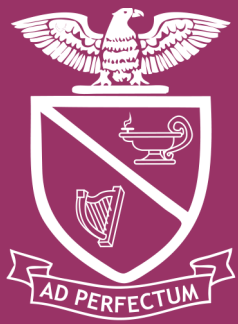
We welcome you into this community and into the Sweet Valley family. This Parent Handbook will assist you with much of the information you will need as the year progresses. Should changes to any of the information contained herein be changed during the year due to unforeseen circumstances, this will be communicated to you. We have tried to include as much information as we can while trying to be as succinct as possible. Please feel free to communicate with us for any further information you may require.

ABSENCE

All pupils are expected to be at school during term time unless they are ill or absent for compassionate or religious reasons. Please inform your child's class teacher (hard copy or email) if your child is absent from school. If parents choose to take their children out of school for other reasons, such as an extended holiday, they should understand this might negatively affect the education of their children. We may not give permission for your child to be away from school for elective reasons. Please note that work will not be set to make up the shortfall nor extra time/help given on return to school. An official letter (which may be emailed to the class teacher) addressed to the Headmaster explaining the reason for the absence must be sent before the absence or brought on the first day back at school if prior notice was unable to be given. This is a WCED regulation. Permission for brief absences for e.g. orthodontic visits will be given, provided a prior written request to the class teacher is made. You will need to sign your child out at the office in person.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Parents wishing to have awards for their child's achievements in activities outside of the school environment presented at assembly, may send these to the office or their class teacher, with an explanation of the award, a day or two before assembly. We cannot celebrate achievements in activities outside of the school without knowledge of them.



ACCESS TO SCHOOL GROUNDS

All parents entering the school after 08h00 are required to use the Dreyersdal Road gate and to sign in with the security guard. Parents need to report to Reception where they will be assisted. Parents may not go to classrooms while school is in session, unless by prior arrangement with the teacher. The teacher will inform the Reception staff of this prior to your arrival.

AFTERCARE

Aftercare is available for all children from the end of their school day until 17h30. Children are cared for in a safe environment and supervised homework is offered. Please contact our Head of Aftercare, Mrs Penny van Schaik, at pvenschaik@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za for further information. A full term's notice to leave Aftercare is required in writing (hardcopy or email), failing which a term's fees will be liable.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE FROM SCHOOL

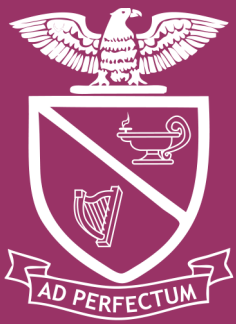
The safety of your children is our main concern. It is also important that we show consideration for our neighbours and other road users around our school.

We utilise four entrances around the school for departures and arrivals:

1. Main gate - Dreyersdal Road
2. Foundation Phase (FP) Playground gate - Dreyersdal Road
3. Vehicle gate - Ladies Mile Service Road (near cricket nets)
4. Pedestrian gate - Ladies Mile Service Road (near Bergvliet Methodist Church)

Please note that we encourage you to stop and drop in the morning to alleviate congestion in the roads. Parents may not proceed beyond the entrance gate to take their children to class.

Grade	Drop-off gate	Mon to Thurs Collection time	Collection Gate	Friday Collection time
R	Dreyersdal Road - Main gate	12h30	Dreyersdal Road - Main gate	12h30
1	Dreyersdal Road - Grade 1 gate	13h00	Dreyersdal Road - Grade 1 gate	13h00
2	Dreyersdal Road - Grade 1 gate	13h00	Ladies Mile Service Road - Vehicle gate	13h00



Grade	Drop-off gate	Mon to Thurs Collection time	Collection Gate	Friday Collection time
3	Dreyersdal Road - Main gate	Mon: 13h00 Tues, Wed, Thurs: 14h30	Dreyersdal Road - Main gate	13h00

ASSESSMENT

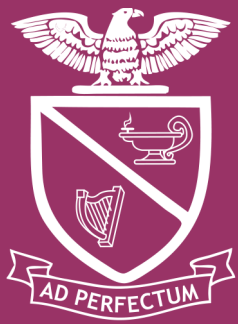
We use both formative and summative assessment throughout the year. Formative assessment is a continual process of assessing the children's learning through tasks, projects and other classwork. It is therefore imperative that children work consistently throughout the year and not just when there are summative assessments (tests and exams). They simply cannot rely on last-minute cramming for fact retention.

We issue four reports during the year. The first report will be followed by a parent/teacher interview during which academic progress will be discussed, as well as how well the child has settled into his/her new grade. The following three reports will reflect an accumulation of academic progress, performance skills, attitudes and values.

Please note that formal summative assessments missed due to illness or extended holidays cannot be made up. Pupils will be given an estimated mark according to their usual performance in relation to the class.

BIRTHDAYS

Should you wish to provide a treat for your child's class, please send it to school in portions that can be distributed easily without mess. Cupcakes are ideal. Birthday party invitations may only be handed out at school if the entire class is invited, to prevent distress to those not invited. Children may wear civvies on their birthday or the next school day if the day of the birthday was a non-school day. Civvies may not be worn on the first or last day of the school year.



BULLYING

Bullying is defined as intentional behaviour, which is typically repeated, that hurts, harms or humiliates another person, either physically or emotionally, and can happen at school, in the community, or online.

We do not tolerate bullying of any kind. If you suspect your child might be a victim or a perpetrator, please notify the class teacher immediately. Cases of suspected bullying are dealt with through intervention of our school counsellor, parents and the children involved. Our approach to bullying forms part of our Life Skills curriculum and Discipline Policy.

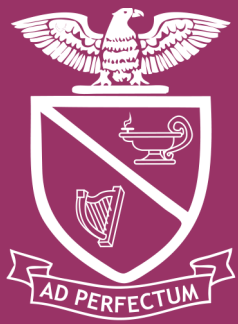
CAMPS

Our Foundation Phase children have the opportunity to attend the Campout held annually on our school field. Parents and children are invited to spend a fun-filled evening at school and to sleep over in tents on the field. This is a wonderful family event which we encourage you to attend.

Grade 4-7 children attend a camp annually. These are part of the holistic education offered by our school and form an integral part of the broader curriculum. Camps provide opportunity for personal growth and for children to discover more about the world around them. Attendance at camp is therefore compulsory. Should you not wish for your child to attend the camp, you are required to notify the class teacher in writing (hard copy or email). In the event that the camp fees are beyond your financial means, please let your class teacher know as we do not want any child to forego these experiences due to financial circumstances at home.

CIVVIES DAYS

These are held from time to time, often to raise money for various outreach programmes or causes supported by the school. Participation is voluntary. Civvies worn to school must be appropriate for wearing at school and must not contain any imagery or text which may cause offence to others or is in obvious contradiction to the values of our school.



CLASS DIVISION

Children are placed in classes after careful consideration of a number of factors. We will not entertain requests for placement with a particular teacher or friend. Children will also not automatically be placed with the teachers of their older siblings. Although some unease may be felt by some children who would prefer certain friends in their class, children settle into their new classes quickly and make new friends. We encourage the children to continue old friendships at break and after school.

Children will be placed in their new classes on their first day of school in the new year.

CLASS REPS

Each class is represented by a volunteer parent. The class reps meet with the Headmaster once a term to discuss school matters as well as parent feedback. They are the link between class teachers and parents. Class reps administer a WhatsApp group to ensure all parents are informed of time-critical and important information. We ask that those parents making use of the WhatsApp group do so respectfully and in line with the guidelines issued by the Class Rep. The Class Rep has the right to remove a parent who engages in negative and damaging behaviour on the WhatsApp group.

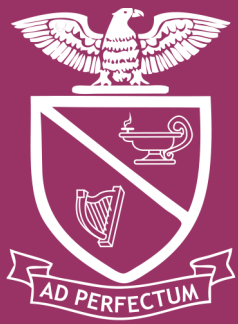
COMMUNICATION

It is vital that parents keep up to date with communication from the school. To this end, parents are encouraged to use both the D6 Communicator (download on PC/Mac or mobile - [d6 Communicator for Desktop \(Schools\)](#) , on the App Store or Google Play Store) and our broadcast-only Grade-specific WhatsApp groups (see the links and QR codes for all grades here: [Parent Letter - WhatsApp info \(18 January 2023\).pdf](#))

All general whole-school notices (academic, event, sporting and grade related) are placed on the School Communicator and WhatsApp groups even if they have gone out as a hard copy or via email.

Grade specific, class specific, club specific, sport specific or team specific information will either be emailed to you, sent on the Grade WhatsApp Noticeboards or sent out in hard copy.

SMS messages are used only when 'last minute' communication is deemed necessary. It is therefore vital that your mobile phone details are updated with the school when changed.



We recognise that e-mail as a form of communication, whilst valuable, is limited and can sometimes be misinterpreted. In light of this, we ask that you note the following:

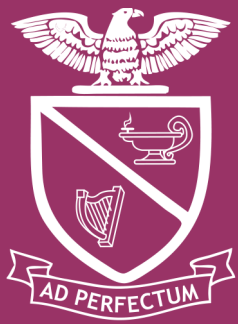
You are welcome to email staff as and when required. Our teachers will acknowledge receipt of a parent's email and will address the matter within 48 hours. Under no circumstances should email be used when matters require urgent attention. In such circumstances, parents should contact the school office by telephone.

- We ask that you appreciate that the teaching staff are focused on teaching and related responsibilities during most of the day and might check their email only when it is appropriate for them to do so.
- Time-sensitive information, such as changes in pick-up arrangements for pupils, should not be directed to teachers for the reason indicated above. Parents should contact the school office by telephone in this regard.
- In the event that the issue requires the teacher to research a concern or collect information, the initial email response from the teacher will be simply to acknowledge the concern. The resolution of the concern will be communicated either via email or in an arranged meeting as soon as possible thereafter.
- When matters are of a sensitive nature or when a parent wishes to have a detailed discussion about a pupil's performance, behaviour or a school policy, email should be used solely for the purpose of arranging a meeting at a mutually agreed time.
- Parents can be assured that the school treats complaints seriously. Confidentiality in all matters is of paramount importance to us. We ask that parents respect this fundamental principle and that individuals refrain from group or chain emails.

Should you have specific queries or concerns please approach the teacher/person concerned with the class or activity and attempt to resolve the difficulty. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, please contact the Grade Leader. The Head of Phase may be approached should the concern remain unresolved.

Concerns regarding sport should be addressed with the individual coach. If the matter cannot be resolved by the coach, please contact the teacher responsible for that particular sporting code who will address the concern. Should this not resolve your concern, please contact the Head of Sport to discuss the matter in more detail.

Queries regarding school fees and other financial matters can be addressed to the school's Finance Manager. These may be escalated to the Deputy Principal should this be required.



Should your concerns remain unresolved despite following the channels outlined previously, you are welcome to request an appointment with the Headmaster by contacting the school office.

COMPULSORY EVENTS

Certain events in the school calendar fall outside the normal school hours. These events will be made known timeously through the various communication channels of the school, including social media. All pupils are expected to be at these events. The dress code for each event will be announced in advance.

CONCERTS

Each phase presents a drama/musical/concert once every three years. All Foundation Phase children participate in their concert and auditions are held for the InterSen production.

Music and drama concerts and showcases are presented throughout the year and will be advertised on the year planner in the newsletter. All pupils in attendance are required to wear school uniform at these performances, whether they are performing or in the audience. Food and drink may not be consumed during performances.

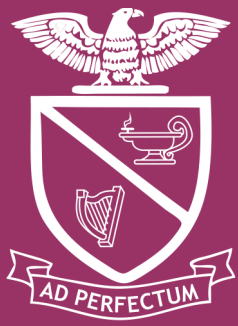
We encourage all pupils to support their peers by attending these events.

DELIVERIES

If your child has forgotten an item or her lunch at home, please avoid the temptation to rescue your child by bringing it to school. The temporary frustration and inconvenience will be an encouragement to exercise greater responsibility in the future. Please encourage your child to inform her/his teacher should they not have lunch at school. If we are aware that school lunch has been left at home, we will ensure that your child has a healthy snack during the day.

DISCIPLINE

Our school follows a positive and consistent approach to discipline. We encourage each child to take responsibility for their part in the smooth running of the school. While we expect families to set appropriate behavioural boundaries at home, the school will reinforce these limits at school through the application of our discipline policy.



EMAIL ADDRESSES

Administration Office: office@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

Admissions: admissions@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

Aftercare: pvenschaik@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

Arts and Culture (Head): awaugh@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

Deputy Principal: deputy@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

Digital Learning: lpresinger@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

Education Support Unit (Head): rbosworth@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

Events and Marketing: events@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

Finance Office: finance@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

Foundation Phase Head: jmcminn@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

Headmaster's PA: ncorin@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

Intermediate Phase Head: dhunt@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

IT Manager: jp@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

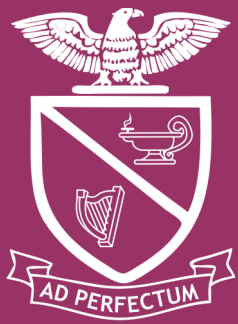
Learnership Programme: paltern@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

Sport and Extra-murals: sbatt@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

For any email addresses not listed above, please contact the Administration Office.

EMERGENCY/CONTACT DETAILS

Please ensure that the school has your current contact details, as well as the current contact details of an emergency contact. Any changes to your details can be emailed to office@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za



EVENING EVENTS

School uniform is to be worn by pupils attending concerts and other school events in the evening, unless otherwise informed by the school. This applies to siblings attending a concert in which their brother or sister is participating.

EXTRAMURALS

The school offers a range of activities which take place either before or after the academic day. A timetable detailing venues, times and other pertinent information is sent out each season and is available on the School Communicator and the school website. We encourage each pupil to participate in at least one extra-mural activity per term.

FUNDRAISING

Various fundraising events are held throughout the year and are managed through the school's Event and Marketing office. While we encourage the participation of our school community in these events, financial contributions to these initiatives are not compulsory.

GOVERNING BODY

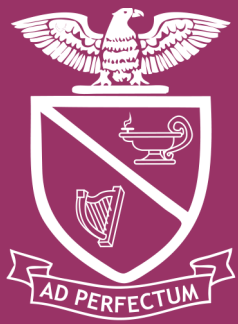
The management of the day-to-day activities of the school rests with the Headmaster and the School Leadership Team. The Governing Body is responsible for governance and directing the strategic vision for the school. The SGB compiles an annual budget which is presented to parents at a meeting in the fourth term, that determines the fees for the following year. The Governing Body consists of the principal, 5 parent representatives, 2 academic staff, 1 non-teaching staff member and co-opted members as required. Elections are held every three years. The SGB email address is sgb@sweetvalleyprimary.co.za

HAIR

Hair must be neat and not fall over the eyes. Further detail on the regulations relating to hair may be found in the Code of Conduct document. It is a WCED regulation that no child may be at school if he/she has lice or any evidence of lice. Please be vigilant in this regard. The discovery of lice or nits in hair will result in your child being sent home.

HOMEWORK

Homework is assigned from Monday to Thursday. A minimum of 20 - 60 minutes, depending on the child's grade level and work-pace, needs to be set aside for this purpose every day from Monday to Thursday. Consolidation, revision and reinforcement of concepts taught at school is the focus. Foundation Phase homework is published weekly under "Homework Rooms" on the Sweet Valley website. Please inform your child's class teacher should you be unable to access this online homework board.



HOUSES

Every child at Sweet Valley Primary is allocated to one of our three house teams. These teams are Disa (blue), Erica (yellow) and Protea (green). Various Inter-House activities are held throughout the year which contribute points to each house. The annual winning house is announced at the year-end Final Assembly.

ILLNESS

If your child becomes ill during the day, you will be contacted by the school to fetch him or her. It is important that you have a contingency plan for those times when you are unable to collect your child from school. Your child will need to be signed out of the school at the office. Please do not send your child to school if he or she is ill as this puts his or her peers, and our staff, at risk of also becoming ill. If your child is absent through illness for an extended period, please liaise with his or her teacher regarding work missed.

LATENESS

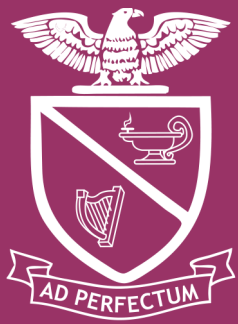
We are required by the Western Cape Education Department to monitor and record lateness. Arriving late disrupts the school day and has a negative impact on your child and the rest of the class. Emergency situations and unforeseen circumstances are taken into account as we realise that these situations may occur from time to time.

Grade 1-7 pupils are late for school if they arrive after 07h55.

Those arriving late must report to Mrs Alexander at Reception.

LEARNING SUPPORT

Pupils with specific academic, social or emotional needs are referred to the School Based Support Team to strategise appropriate support / intervention. Thereafter they may receive assistance from the learning support teachers during school hours. Our Education Support unit provides remedial / learning support and enrichment, on recommendation from the School Based Support Team. Counselling facilities are available from the school Social Worker/Counsellor and private therapy (at cost to parent) can be arranged with the Speech and Language Therapist and/or the Occupational Therapist, who have practices on our premises. It is recommended that parents ensure their child's vision and hearing are assessed.



MEDICATION

Should your child require access to, and regular intake of, medication due to a chronic health condition or short-term illness, the parent or caregiver has a duty to,

1. Notify the school, in writing, of the child's health condition requiring medication at school and request the school to administer such medication or assist in the management of the health condition.
2. Make the school aware of any relevant requests or guidelines from the medical practitioner, including potential side effects or adverse reactions.
3. Provide medication in the original labelled container from the pharmacy, community health centre or hospital, to the school. The label must include the direction for dosage and the date of prescription.
4. Ensure medication has not expired.
5. Notify the school, in writing, when a change of dosage is required (accompanied by a doctor's prescription).
6. Advise the school, in writing, when the medication is no longer required, and collect the balance of medication from school.
7. Where possible, administer all initial doses of medication at home prior to it being administered at school.

MONEY

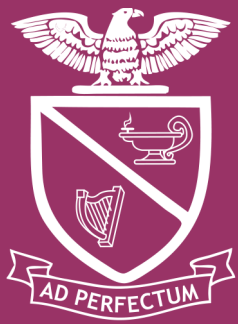
We would like to keep our school campus as cash-free as is possible. We therefore ask parents to pay school fees and other costs via EFT or through the Karri app when appropriate. Credit card facilities are available in the Finance Office. Please note that children may not bring cash exceeding R50 to school. Please ensure that appropriate references for EFTs are included in electronic payments.

The Karri App may be used for events and one-time purchases which are pre-loaded by the school. It cannot be used for the payment of school fees. For further information on how to use Karri, please visit

<https://www.karripay.com/faq/>

MYSCHOOL CARD

This is a loyalty card from which the school receives a fee in return for your support of participating merchants such as Woolworths. To register visit <http://www.myschool.co.za> and choose Sweet Valley Primary as the beneficiary.



MUSIC

Private music tuition is offered at extra cost to parents in a wide range of instruments. Individual tuition is offered from Grade 2. This tuition is offered during the school day in consultation with the class teacher. Only pupils whose school fees are up to date at the end of each term will be able to participate in music lessons. A full term's notice, in writing, addressed to the Head of Music, is required to stop music lessons, failing which fees for the following term will be levied.

NOTICE OF LEAVING

A full term's notice in writing to the Headmaster is required should you decide to remove your child from Sweet Valley Primary. Failure to provide official written notice will result in a term's fees being charged.

OUTINGS

We believe that learning does not only happen inside a classroom and so endeavour to provide opportunities for our children to discover and learn outside the school grounds through class outings. Permission forms are obligatory and must be returned to the school before your child may participate. Should you be able to assist with lifts, the school will require a copy of your current and valid drivers' licence. No child may travel unbuckled in a vehicle or sit in the front seat of a vehicle.

OUTREACH

Our Sweet Valley Outreach program creates a partnership between various communities and the school. The school supports different organisations throughout the year and over and above this, each grade chooses to support an organisation. Not only do we try to brighten the lives of others, but the children learn the significance of helping others. Outreach may take the form of a clothing, foodstuffs or coin collection, by making sandwiches or donating stationery.

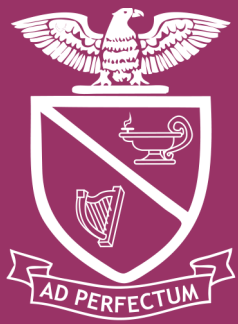
PUPIL LEADERS

Grade 7 pupils have the opportunity to serve as a leader in various portfolios across the school and to lead various aspects of the Intermediate/Senior Phase assembly.

A separate Leadership Development Programme is available to Grade 7s. Participation in this initiative is voluntary and involves the completion of five modules throughout the year.

REPORTS

Academic progress reports are emailed to parents at the end of each term.



STATIONERY

It is imperative that each child brings his / her own clearly marked / labelled stationery items to school every day. Grade specific lists are issued each year. Please refer to the School Communicator for copies of these. Stationery should be checked regularly, as some items will need to be replaced during the year.

SWIMMING

It is our aim that every pupil should learn to swim and be water-safe. All pupils are required, as part of the curriculum, to attend swimming lessons during Phys Ed unless they have a medical condition that precludes regular swimming, supported by a medical certificate. Reasons to excuse a children from swimming must be put in writing by parents.

UNIFORM

At the change of seasons, a period of overlap is usually given when either Summer or Winter uniform may be worn. This will be communicated through the school newsletter and on the School Communicator.

Please ensure that your child's school uniform is neat and clean. Shoes should be polished regularly. Items that are outgrown or are no longer in good condition must be replaced. When leaving the school grounds either full school or sport uniform must be worn. This applies at any time when school uniform is worn in public (after school, on outings and so on) as our uniform is an important part of our school's identity. At no time may a pupil leave the school grounds in uniform without wearing shoes. Permission to deviate from the regulation uniform on medical or religious grounds must be requested in writing to the Headmaster before permission is granted.

Our on-site Clothing Shop is open regularly. Times for opening are communicated on the School Communicator.