Zeerust Primary School: Parents and Friends Information Booklet (2016)

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ZEERUST PRIMARY SCHOOL: IT’S WORTH THE DRIVE!
Wednesday, 25 February 15

Dear Parent,

Zeerust Primary School provides a friendly, safe and caring atmosphere. In 2015 we currently teach 14 students. Children are placed in evolving need-based groups for their learning and we exceed expectations at Zeerust.

Zeerust Primary School has a very proud history. It was officially opened in 1928 and many changes have taken place, but one thing stands out, the grounding for a solid education base the school has provided to it’s many students over the years. Past students have gone on to become QCS, doctors, psychologists, nurses, teachers, engineers, farmers, business owners, hairdressers, mechanics, some even making the richest men list.

Zeerust Primary School is acutely aware of the role it has to play in the community. The growth of your child academically, physically and socially is a large responsibility. Consequently, we not only require a commitment from the staff of the school, but also the full support of parents for all school activities. With all parties working towards the same goal, the chances of success are increased enormously. Parents are encouraged to visit the school to discuss their child’s progress or problems whenever the need arises. We also hope that parents will feel free to visit the school at any time and be an active member of the school community and it’s activities.

This Information Booklet was first prepared by the Parents and Friends Club in June 2009 and is an attempt to provide new and prospective families of the school with an insight into the day to day running of the school. It will also provide answers to the many questions you may have about our school. It is hoped that this booklet will be of some assistance in making your start at our school smoother and problem free. Why is it a draft – because we expect to update it regularly.

Please feel free to approach any member of our staff, a School Councillor or member of our Parents Club member if you have any further queries. Alternatively, check our website—we do try to keep it up to date, or our new Facebook page, which provides more of an insight into what happens at our place.

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. Peter Farrell, EdD,
MAppSc, BAppSc (Hons), GDipEd (Primary), PGCert Primary Mathematics Teaching,
Principal
### CONTENTS

**Teaching and learning**  
- **HOW WE TEACH**  
- **WHAT WE TEACH**  
- **SCHOOL GOALS**  
- **STUDENT GOALS**  

**Extra-curricular activities**  
- **AFFINITY PROJECTS**  
- **AUTHORISATION FOR EXCURSIONS**  
- **CLUSTER DAYS**  
- **CUBBY**  
- **DISCO**  
- **DISTRICT CAMPS**  
- **END OF YEAR TRIP**  
- **GUITAR AND KEYBOARD**  
- **INTERACTION DAYS**  
- **SPORTS DAYS**  
- **SAILING PROGRAM**  
- **SWIMMING PROGRAM**  
- **T-BALL**  
- **TEN PIN BOWLING**  
- **WHOLE-SCHOOL CAMP**

**Timings**  
- 2016  
- **SCHOOL HOURS**  
- **ATTENDANCE**  
- **BUS TRAVEL**  
- **TRANSITION**

**Organisation**  
- **STAFFING**  
- **PARENTAL PARTICIPATION**  
- **SCHOOL COUNCIL**  
- **JUNIOR SCHOOL COUNCIL**  
- **PARENTS’ AND FRIENDS (P&F) CLUB**

**Uniform**  
- **SUMMER**  
- **WINTER**

**School fees and payments**  
- **CONVEYANCE ALLOWANCE**  
- **PAYMENT TO SCHOOL**

**General information**  
- **ART SMOCKS**  
- **ASSEMBLY**  
- **BEING GOOD, BEING CLEVER**  
- **BOOK CLUB**  
- **BIRTHDAYS**  
- **CITIZENSHIP AWARDS**  
- **COMMUNICATION**
DAILY FITNESS 18
FRUIT BREAK 18
GRADUATION/CONCERT/AWARDS NIGHT 18
HOT LUNCHES 18
LIBRARY BAGS 18
NAMING OF PROPERTY 19
NEWSLETTER 19
PLAYGROUP 19
PHOTOGRAPHS 19
POLICIES 19
REPORTS 20
“SLEEPY” THE SCHOOL BEAR 20
WEARING HATS 20
Health 21
ADMINISTERING MEDICATION 21
ALLIED HEALTH SERVICES 21
ASTHMA 21
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES 21
FIRST AID & ILLNESS 21
HEAD LICE 21
IMMUNISATION CERTIFICATE 21
MEDICAL SERVICES 22
What people say 23
A GREAT START 23
A LONG ASSOCIATION 23
PEOPLE DRIVE OUT 24
PEOPLE DRIVE PAST OTHER SCHOOLS 24
About the principal 25
Teaching and learning

HOW WE TEACH
The greatest advantage of our teaching and learning environment is that we get to teach a group of students over a very long time frame and, we come to understand the children in our class very well indeed. However, there are challenges for the teacher in this situation. For example forming ability groups, as practised in many larger settings, is too impractical because there are too few students to make this worthwhile, and instead, the teacher must stretch and shrink their expectations around a particular task and adapt their approach to the small number of students.

We call this approach the Six Rs which are reading, writing, ‘rithmetic, researching, retelling and reasoning. We also think that running is very important too.

Many parents will know of the 3Rs and these are important but kids today need much more than these basics. They need to be able to ask questions and find things out, then tell people what they know in both orthodox and novel ways. And they need to reason – that is, argue a point of view and appreciate someone else’s.

Everything is explained in great detail in this PDF book:

https://www.academia.edu/7918295/The_six_Rs_Pedagogical_advice_for_the_very_small_school

WHAT WE TEACH
We are a Victorian government school and obliged to follow the curriculum developed by the government. However, with multi-age classes this is not always feasible especially for the senior class. We have reorganised the complex government curriculum documents into six ways of thinking. These are:

• Thinking scientifically – experiments!

Figure 1: We like to get hands-on at Zeerust. These students designed, then built a lifting machine to solve an engineering problem. The entire project incorporated many of the Six Rs.

Figure 2: With thinking systematically you have to think big. Here is a model of what we Shepparton will be like in 2053.
• Thinking systematically – the big picture (outside in)
• Situated thinking – the small picture (inside out)
• Thinking aesthetically – the beauty of a process or artefact
• Thinking with language – including history and foreign languages, and
• Thinking mathematically

These six ways of thinking have proved to be very useful approach to deal with an overcrowded curriculum. It is especially useful for integrating subjects. The Six ways of thinking are explained in great detail in a PDF book available at:

https://www.academia.edu/9068073/Curriculum_advice_for_generalist_teachers_in_very_small_schools_2nd_Edition

SCHOOL GOALS
We have two overarching goals for our students:

1. That they become self-sufficient learners, where they:
   • Will set realistic and challenging goals
   • Are resilient and authentic, and
   • Value effort and celebrate improvement

B. That they become civil people who:
   • Focus on issues, not individuals
   • Offer solutions, not blame, and
   • Practice kindness, generosity and gratitude

Specific plans can be found on the website. These include a four-year strategic plan (2015-2018) and a plan for the current year (Annual Implementation Plan or AIP). These can be found at:

http://www.zeerustps.vic.edu.au/page/70/Plans

STUDENT GOALS
Zeerust students set their own goals they would like to achieve in the next semester. These are discussed with parents in Term 1 and during parent teacher interviews at the end of Term 2. The goals are used to identify themes to personalise learning and finesse assessment.

These SMART goals are:
• Specific.
• Measureable.
• Achievable.
• Realistic, and
• Timely

Figure 3: At the end of each term our students check to see if they have achieved their personal goals for learning. These six children have done so, some achieving two!
Extra-curricular activities
We might be small but no one misses out – in fact, there are many more opportunities for younger students because of our size.

AFFINITY PROJECTS
Each year all of the students get a chance to choose their own project and manage for an entire term. The affinity projects undertaken by our students take many forms as the skills, knowledge, interests and aptitudes of each student is quite an individual thing. We have had artists, engineers, historians, writers and researchers. The children really look forward to this work.

Figure 4: This is a cubby built a while back but it was arguably one of the best!

AUTHORISATION FOR EXCURSIONS
One form is sent home at the start of the year for all local excursions. This convenient approach simplifies parent’s lives. Forms will be sent home during the school year seeking consent for your child to attend any camps or excursions outside of the local area. Likewise, our school fee includes all incursions and excursions and swimming.

CLUSTER DAYS
Zeerust Primary School is a member of a group of similar schools in the district called the Shepparton Small School’s Cluster. The children are given the opportunity for greater social
interaction by participating in larger group activities such as sports days, and group days. This interaction aids transition to secondary college and the teachers benefit from the collaboration with colleagues via joint professional development programs.

CUBBY
In Term 2 the children make a whole-school cubby. This means the burn pile gets recycled and the children get excited. It is a big deal!

DISCO
The disco is scheduled in the same week as the NAPLAN tests. It is a great way to celebrate finishing the tests.

DISTRICT CAMPS
Every 18 months, students in grade 5&6 also have the opportunity to attend a nine-day camp at Somers. Somers provides a challenging array of adventurous activities and includes a strong environmental theme. Grade 4&5 students also have an opportunity to apply to attend Woorabinda 5-day Camp. At both camps our students will meet with people likely to attend the same secondary college as them.

END OF YEAR TRIP
The P&F organise a whole school excursion or overnight camp at the end of each year. These have included trips to Sovereign Hill, Yarrawonga, Gumbuya Park, Luna Park, Queenscliff (beach) and Lake Mountain (snow), Funfields (lots of water). These have proven to be great whole school outings, and where numbers permit, parents and siblings have also been invited to attend.

GUITAR AND KEYBOARD
Music has a large place at Zeerust. In 2015 nine out of 14 students are learning to play guitar at lunchtimes. We also have an ex-parent who offers fortnightly lessons on keyboard music.

INTERACTION DAYS
The school has a special relationship with Waaia-Yalca South PS which is another very small schools and each school takes turns to host the other once a term.

SPORTS DAYS
Each year the East Goulburn Primary School Sports Association (EGPSSA) organise sport competitions on an interschool, zone, regional and state level. Our students have the opportunity to represent their school in Athletics and Cross Country running. Our students have been very successful at these competitions, with some students going on to become state champions at the Victorian State Track & Field Championships.

Figure 5: Here are Waaia-Yalca students at Zeerust for an interaction day. We are preparing for a concert performance at Eastbank in Shepparton.
Building Health in Mind & Body - Athletics Sports Day - Monday 23rd March 2015

Well done to the Zeerust students for the effort displayed competing at all the events. About 30% of the students (who were there) got a place ribbon. A great effort for Aden, Charli, Georgie, Jayk and Mia, and a special mention to Alice who won five place ribbons. Three students have been invited to the division athletics championships and they are Jayk, Charli and Georgie.

Our best event was the hurdles with 10 students achieving either an A or a B standard. Next was long jump with eight students achieving an A or a B standard. The sprint event saw half our students achieve an A or a B. We also did better than OK in the shot-put and 200m. One of the things I take from students getting more than a C is that that have been well trained, particularly if the event is a more technical event, or a distance event where the children have to be fit. Well done Mrs. Telford for the former case and thanks to daily fitness for the latter.

A great effort by the 800metre runners Jordan and Jayk (who came second in his age-group). Our relay team look slick and well-drilled and our captain ball teams tried their best.

A big thank you to Mrs. Telford and Lynda Ford for taking charge of running the Triple Jump event.

SAILING PROGRAM
Every year the grade 5-6s go sailing. It's a great activity.

Figure 6: One thing the children learn is what to do after you capsize the boat.

SWIMMING PROGRAM
As part of the Physical Education program, students participate in a comprehensive five-day swimming program conducted at Northside Health & Fitness Centre in Shepparton. The program is focussed on keeping kids safe around water. We usually schedule the program for early in Term 2. Parents are welcome to attend.

T-BALL
The parents versus students modified T-Ball match is an opportunity for the community to get together early in the school year (Term 1) and enjoy a game (which the students seem to win!) and a sausage and a catch up.
**TEN PIN BOWLING**
The ten pin bowling night gets the families out in Term 3 for the very social activity of bowling.

**WHOLE-SCHOOL CAMP**
All students, including Foundation, have the opportunity to attend an annual camp. The camp involves students from other very small schools like Waaia-Yalca South and Dhurringile Primary School’s. We usually go to 15 Mile Creek (Benalla) where there are extremely competent staff with great programs to look after us. It’s a great camp and the food is sensational!
Timings
This part of the information booklet covers timings and schedules.

Figure 7: We may be small but we have been around for quite a while.

2016
• Term 1: 27 January (school teachers start) to 24 March *
• Term 2: 11 April to 24 June
• Term 3: 11 July to 16 September
• Term 4: 3 October to 20 December

* The first day of Term 1 is a student-free day in all government schools to allow for appropriate planning to take place for the arrival of students. Each year government schools are provided with four student-free days for professional development, school planning and administration, curriculum development, and student assessment and reporting purposes. These days are approved by school council and published in the school newsletter.

SCHOOL HOURS
• School opens: about 8:10am the principal opens up the school
• Bus arrives: about 8:30am
• Assembly: 9:00am
• Recess: 11:00—11:30am
• Lunch: 1:15—2:15pm
• School ends: 3:30pm
• Bus pick-up: 3:45pm
• School closes: about 5:30pm when the teachers go home.
ATTENDANCE
Regular attendance is one of the major factors contributing to student success at school. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and are only absent if ill or if it is absolutely necessary. If your child is away from school at any time, a brief note or phone call is required. Advance warning about extended absences would be appreciated as it allows for changes in plans to be made.

BUS TRAVEL
There is a daily school bus route, which is coordinated by Tallygaroopna Primary School. Please consult the Principal or look at our website for details about eligibility.

TRANSITION
Kinder to Foundation
Transition visits are held in Term 4 for kindergarten children (usually on a Wednesday) and a departmental orientation Day is held in December from 9:00am-3:30pm.

For their first term at the school Foundation students commence schooling on the first student day in January and they observe the same hours as all other children, but only attend four days a week. This day can be negotiated with the school.

For a foundation enrolment your child should be turning five before May in the year of enrolment. There is an enrolment form available from our office and it will be necessary to photocopy your child’s immunisation record and sight a health care card if claiming financial hardship.

Year 6 to Secondary College
A teacher from each secondary school visits the Grade 6 students giving a brief overview of their school. The students are also able to visit public secondary schools at allocated times to help make their choice of secondary education. Zeerust students go onto Wanganui Park SC, SEAL @ McGuire SC, Notre Dame and GV Grammar. The secondary schools host information nights and families are advised about these in our weekly newsletter. An official orientation day is held in December.

Transition at other times
Parents with students moving between schools from outside the Shepparton area or from the independent of Catholic sectors should visit the school, make a decision to enrol, and complete the necessary paperwork.

Parents of students transferring between government schools within the Shepparton area mid-semester are subject to a protocol agreed by the Shepparton Network of Schools. See:

Organisation
While the school is small it does contain a number of people-based structures. Ranging from the official (teachers), to the formal (school council) and less formal groups in the school (P&F and the JSC). There are also informal people-based structures where individuals or families take care of particular matters around the school.

STAFFING
For 2015 the school is organised into 1.5 classes. Glenda Telford is the school’s literacy coordinator and works at the school 0.6. She attends the school three days a week where she teaches early years and physical education. Peter Farrell is the principal of the school and teaches fulltime. Our bursar, Lyndall Roberts, works each Wednesday. Three specialists provide lessons in visual art, library and Japanese. A music tutor attends once a fortnight and teaches keyboard.

The school also has access to a speech pathologist, educational psychologist and social worker. These services are free.

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION
Zeerust Primary School welcomes and encourages parental participation in school activities. Your involvement and participation might include assistance with classroom activities, attending excursions, helping out at working bees, participation in special events like the Biggest Morning Tea, mother and father’s day stalls, or becoming a member of the School Council or Parents’ Club.

SCHOOL COUNCIL
The school council is a voluntary body consisting of parents, staff and co-opted community members. The council sets policy and oversees the financial management of the school. Copies of the policies are to be found on the school website. Many school procedures and practices are set out in this information booklet or the school website. The school council meets twice each term and parents are welcome to attend. Elections are held at the beginning of Term 1 and councillors are elected for a two year period. In 2014 the school council is:

- **Executive Officer:** Peter Farrell
Jodie Willmott

Primary School.
time when they can, to help the P&F run additional activities to support the curriculum at Zeerust.

Breakfast at Friar’s Café. With most parents now working, time is often hard to come by. By helping in small ways, we are able to benefit our children greatly. I encourage everyone to give a little of their time when they can, to help the P&F run additional activities to support the curriculum at Zeerust Primary School.

Jodie Willmott Parent’s & Friends Club President (2012-2015)
Uniform

Wearing uniform is seen as a safety issue as it allows Zeerust Primary School students to be readily recognised by supervising staff. It also develops a sense of identity as part of the school community and promotes a positive image. Unless otherwise directed students will wear uniform to school and whilst on out or school activities. A new school uniform is available for purchase through the P&F. When available second-hand uniforms are provided free. An embroidered school hat is provided to all new foundation students.

SUMMER

- Red polo shirt
- Black shorts or skirt
- Red and White checked dress (girls)
- Closed Shoes
- Red broad-brimmed hat or bucket hat

Please ensure all items of clothing and other belongings are clearly named.

WINTER

- Red polo shirt
- Black trousers/track suit pants
- Red polar fleece vest/jumper or jacket
- Closed Shoes
School fees and payments

We are a low-fee school. School council set the school fee for 2015 at $200 for each F-4 student and $250 for each grade 5-6 student. The higher fee for senior students reflects their higher cost.

These fees include the $40 ‘voluntary levy’, which covers all stationary, notebooks, on-line subscriptions, photocopying and a variety of materials.

The remaining funds cover all cluster days, interaction days, other local excursions and incursions, plus a third of the cost of swimming.

The fee may be paid all at once or by instalments. EMA is no longer paid to parents but schools are funded directly based upon their socio-economic profile. Zeerust receives little funding by this method. Families claiming hardship should discuss this with us and present a current health-care card.

Please note camps are charged separately and are very reasonably priced.

CONVEYANCE ALLOWANCE

A student may be eligible if he/she resides not less than 4.8km by the shortest practicable route trafficable by car from the nearest appropriate school. A form is available from the school.

PAYMENT TO SCHOOL

All money or cheques should be enclosed in a envelope with the child's name, what the money is for and how much is enclosed (cash or cheque). The child must always place this envelope into the plastic box in the school entryway.
General information

ART SMOCKS
All children in the school are asked to have an art smock (an old shirt is quite suitable for this). These are to protect the children’s clothes when they have art. The art smock should be named. Please make sure that your child can put on and do up his/her own smock.

ASSEMBLY
An assembly is held every morning. On Mondays this includes raising the flag and singing the national anthem, we also celebrate upcoming birthdays and share student sports reports. Assemblies provide a great opportunity to share information, celebrate achievements and continue to build our school culture. Parents are most welcome.

BEING GOOD, BEING CLEVER
Being Good, Being Clever is a student recognition program that promotes character development, self-esteem, and perseverance. Students caught being good or being clever are given a raffle ticket that goes into a fortnightly draw. The winner of the draw is presented with a certificate and a giveaway. The Being Good, Being Clever program provides teachers with a tool to reward students for special achievements that may otherwise go unnoticed.

BOOK CLUB
The school offers Scholastic Bookclub to the children who offer a wide range of books at reasonable prices. There are usually two issues per term. If you wish to order from the book club the money can be sent in an envelope (or if paying by cheque, please make it payable to Zeerust Primary School). The school in turn sends a cheque to the company.

The school receives commission on bookclub sales in the form of book credits. This is usually between 10-30% of the children’s orders and is used to obtain books for classrooms.

BIRTHDAYS
At Zeerust Primary School sending a birthday cake to school to share is something that commonly happens. The teachers are highly skilled and work out fractions like 17ths but individual cup-cakes are easier.

CITIZENSHIP AWARDS
A student from Year P-3 and Year 4-6 is chosen to receive this award on their academic and social skills displayed in all different circumstances throughout the year. The students are presented with their medallion at the Christmas concert and their names are inscribed on an honour plaque which hangs in the school's front foyer.

COMMUNICATION
From time to time issues do come up which need to be resolved. Our process is described in our communication policy which is available on our website. If, after following this process, you are still not satisfied you should contact our regional office in Glen Waverly on 8392 9300.

In a nutshell the principal is responsible for operational matters while school council sets policy.

A lot of issues relate to the children and we encourage Zeerust students to resolve their own problems. Our school captain and vice-captain become particularly skilled at resolving issues in a fair way. Bigger issues should be brought to the attention of a staff member. Please encourage your
child to resolve a problem as quickly as possible. On the day is preferred so that it can be properly investigated. Remember, there are always two sides to a story.

**DAILY FITNESS**
As part of our commitment to raising the health standard of all our students, each morning the students participate in a daily fitness regime that includes stretches, running and other exercises. Our students participate in a number of local sporting activities.

![Figure 9: Jayk is being encouraged by Alice during the 800m at the 2015 Athletics Day. Jayk came second.](image)

**FRUIT BREAK**
Students are encouraged to eat fruit. Each class provides time, usually 10.00 am, for a fruit break.

**GRADUATION/CONCERT/AWARDS NIGHT**
At the end of each year an event is held in which students are able to display their musical and dramatic talents in front of an audience. The night is also used to review the years events, farewell the Grade 6 students and present the Junior and Senior Citizens of the Year awards.

**HOT LUNCHES**
During Terms 2 and 3, children may heat food in the pie warmer. The food should be wrapped in foil and clearly marked with the child’s name. Staff are unable to microwave food or provide hot water.

**LIBRARY BAGS**
Children are asked to have a material library bag with a drawstring at the top to protect their books. The library bag should be brought to school on the allotted library day.
NAMING OF PROPERTY
All jumpers, coats, hats, bags, lunch boxes and possessions should be clearly labelled.

NEWSLETTER
Newsletters are sent home every Wednesday with the eldest child in the family. Should you require an item to be printed in the newsletter, please have it to the office by Tuesday.

PLAYGROUP
The school operates a weekly playgroup for pre-schoolers. Check the school website for details. The cost is a gold coin per child and parents are asked to bring a piece of fruit to share. The session lasts about 90 minutes to two hours. All children in the community are welcome.

PHOTOGRAPHS
To meet the legal requirements of current privacy laws, parents must give written permission for their child’s photograph to be published via the internet or any other publicity source (newspaper).

The official school photos are usually taken mid-year. Please ensure your child is in proper school uniform for these photos.

POLICIES
School council reviews all policy documents every two years; half one and half the next. All our current policies are published on our website.

REPORTS
Each year the school generates an annual report about the whole school that is presented to school council and then published on-line.

Student reports are produced each semester and a student-free day provides time for the teachers to complete this task. After the report is sent home parents have the opportunity to discuss the report at a parent-teacher interview.

Parents are welcome to make arrangements to speak about their child with us at anytime.

“SLEEPY” THE SCHOOL BEAR
As part of the literacy program, Sleepy the School Bear is a teddy bear that every student gets to take home for a week. Students are required to look after him and keep a diary of his adventures during the week.

WEARING HATS
Our policy requires that children wear a red broad-brimmed or bucket hat when outdoors in Terms 1 and 4 for sun protection and their own safety. These are available from the P&F. Children will be requested to play in the covered areas if not wearing a hat. Parents are encouraged to send along sunscreen for their child’s use. Sunscreen is available in the staff room.
Health

ADMINISTERING MEDICATION
No medication is to be administered by staff without the written permission or consent of the child’s parent or guardian. Such permission or consent should be accompanied by written instructions.

ALLIED HEALTH SERVICES
The school can call upon psychologists, social workers, speech and occupational health specialists.

ASTHMA
If your child has Asthma, an Asthma Management Plan must be completed. All asthmatics must carry their asthma medication with them.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
Under Schedule 7 of the Public Health and Wellbeing Regulations schools are legally required to exclude students infected by particular diseases or not immunized for particular diseases. See the following document from the department of health for specific information.


FIRST AID & ILLNESS
Every care is taken with children, but if they are not well in the morning please keep them home.

If a child has a minor accident or feels too ill to remain at school, the class teacher will attend to him/her and every endeavour will be made to contact his/her parents/emergency contact.

A parent will be notified if their child experiences any type of head injury.

If staff, in charge of your child, feel that an ambulance needs to be called we will do so immediately, regardless of whether you have Ambulance Cover/Health Care Card.

HEAD LICE
Checks are made of all students by School Staff at various times throughout the school year. Where head lice are observed at school a note will be sent home with the child at the end of the school day. Regardless of who observes head lice (staff or parents) the affected child is to remain home until appropriate treatment is commenced. The school community will be advised when it is observed so all families can work together to eradicate the problem.

Families are expected to consent to their child being inspected. Parents are encouraged to keep a regular check on their children at home.

You may feel embarrassed if your child gets head-lice. Think about this—headlice love fine clean hair. Please share information, then everyone can work on the problem at the same time, preventing re-infection.

IMMUNISATION CERTIFICATE
All children starting in Foundation need to provide a School Entry Immunisation Certificate. This certificate will indicate whether your child has been immunised against diphtheria, polio, tetanus,
measles and mumps. This does not mean your child has to be immunised. Children will be excluded from school according to the following guidelines.

**MEDICAL SERVICES**
The School Nurse does Foundation assessments and assesses any other child as necessary. Parents will be notified when this service is available.
What people say

A GREAT START
My family’s association with Zeerust Primary School began long before I was born. My mother’s family all attended school there, as did my brothers and sister. I remember fondly the School Disco’s where we dressed up as KISS, the camps to Corop, The Grampians, Canberra and Somers, sports days at Shepp East and Congupna and turning the little room into a chicken hatchery. Being such a small school, we all seemed to bond like a big family. Even when you left to go to high school, the bond between students was strong, with Ex-Zeerust students helping you through the transition to high school. I even credit Zeerust Primary School as being the catalyst for my teaching career, through the cross-age tutoring I was involved in during my time there. Zeerust Primary School has provided me with wonderful childhood memories and I know my children will look back on their time there as fondly as I do.

Jodie Willmott
Student 1976

A LONG ASSOCIATION
In 2009 I feel proud to drive past and see the appearance of my old school. It was 1948 when I first hopped on my little bike (which had taken my sister and seven brothers before me) and peddled along with my brother along the quiet gravel roads to the small one-room, one-teacher school where we were one big family and happy with the basic facilities. We all sat in that small room learning to read and write and reciting our tables parrot fashion. Recess came and we ran out to play rounders on the sealed area between the school and the shelter shed, and to kick the footy around on the oval in the footy season. Drinking from the enamel mug hanging by the rainwater tank quenched our thirst. We all had our cut lunches wrapped in newspaper or perhaps a brown paper bag, which was carefully folded up to take home for tomorrow’s lunch. Definitely there is no comparison to the school of today. In 1975 the eldest of our three sons was driven to school, not only on his first day but also for almost every day for seven years. The roads were sealed by then with more local traffic than in my day. By then there were two rooms, two teachers and a strong parent involvement. This played a vital part in the provision of additional facilities and care of the school grounds. The pie warmer for winter lunches, radio and television, sports equipment and playground facilities funded by grants and the support of the Mothers Club and the School Council funds, and working bees to improve and maintain the school grounds safety and appearance. Interaction with other schools in the district had commenced, swimming lessons at Numurkah, and regular excursions were all part of the students learning.

The third time I was at the school gate [was] to see our next granddaughter walk into school on her first day. A very happy and pleasing moment to pause and think of how education has changed over the years and the strength of Zeerust School remaining when other small schools have closed. This small school is proving that it provides the academic and social environment required, enhanced by the fact that children from outside the local area are and have been enrolled in past years.

As a past president of the School Council I congratulate the present members of the Council who have continued to work to provide a well-equipped school, set in pleasing surroundings for the enjoyment of the students. A lot of changes have occurred in the 81 years of the schools existence, hopefully with continued enrolment and support the school will remain for future generations.

I have looked on Zeerust School as having been a very, very good school as I am happy with the grounding I received to go on to secondary studies and our three sons who all succeeded in the studies
they followed. Our granddaughters impress me with the progress of reading being taught compared to the learning of my day. Many students have gone on to all walks of life in both professional and practical fields, one even making Australia’s Rich List in recent years.

Don Dempster (2009)
Student 1948

PEOPLE DRIVE OUT
I was introduced to Zeerust Primary School in 2005, when I started attending their weekly playgroup sessions. The staff and children immediately welcomed us. Because of the friendliness of the school community, my husband and I decided that this was the school our boys would be attending. Our eldest son started prep in 2008, and our next child joined him in 2011. We live at the north end of Shepparton in the vicinity of the hospital; it takes only 10 minutes to get to Zeerust and 10 minutes to get home again. The short drive to Zeerust is worth it, with no traffic or parking hassles. We have no regrets sending our sons to Zeerust and are very pleased with the way they both progressed. Our eldest son has made a smooth transfer to secondary college this year.

Emma Makin
Parent

PEOPLE DRIVE PAST OTHER SCHOOLS
In addition to the Makins we have families that drive past other schools to place their children with us. We have families from Wunghnu, Tallygaroopna, and around Lemnos.
About the principal

I have been working at Zeerust since 2002 and I feel privileged to have done so. My teacher, Glenda Telford, has been with the school for about a decade longer than me. It is a special place to be.

I came to the school after just one year as a beginning teacher at Swanpool, but I learnt everything about how to be a teacher and a principal at Zeerust. I especially learnt to be a small school specialist. Before this I had been an aquaculture technician, an erector of industrial sheds, a fulltime mature-age university student, a worker in the motor trade, and an army sergeant.

My approach to education is novel. I believe students should be active agents in their own learning and that a school curriculum should be based on needs and interests rather than a pre-determined unchangeable plan. Sure you can have long-term goals, but kids need to be coached. A good coach is continually looking to re-enforce basic skills and embed sound game strategies. A good coach looks to get their charges up to the next level and this is what we do here at Zeerust. We can do this because we are small.

I would describe myself as a reflective professional teacher-researcher and I write about what I do. Some of my stuff is published. See: https://independent.academia.edu/PeterFarrell

My passions are writing, playing guitar and sailing. I love sailing.

So there you are, a couple of things about me.

Dr. Peter Farrell
EdD,
MAppSc,
BApSc (Hons),
GDipEd (Primary),
PGCert Primary Mathematics Teaching,
Principal