

INFORMATION BOOKLET



45 MEDCALF ST WARNERS BAY NSW 2292 02 4954 6058 (T) 02 49 566780 (F) BIDDABAH-P.SCHOOL@DET.NSW.EDU.AU WWW.BIDDABAH-P.SCHOOLS.NSW.EDU.AU

2024

TABLE OF

CONTENTS

- 03 Our Commitment
- 04 Principal's Message
- 05 Staff
- **06 School Hours**
- **07** Attendance
- **08** Arriving and Leaving School
- **09** Communication
- **11** Administration
- 12 Community
- 13 Uniform
- **15 Behaviour and Management**
- **16 Recognising Academic Achievement**
- 17 School Song
- 18 Learning
- **20 Additional Information**

OUR COMMITMENT

At Biddabah Public School, our priorities encompass:

- Nurturing the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and abilities of all our students.
- Ensuring the preparedness of our learners as they transition to high school.
- Fostering the lifelong success of our students as they become engaged and responsible citizens.

Our Vision

Biddabah Public School is a future-focused school where all students are: "Safe, Respectful and Responsible Learners."

Our Mission Statement

"At Biddabah Public School we believe that all children thrive when they feel safe, happy and connected to a learning environment focused on collaboration, creativity and confidence. We aim to foster individual success in all areas through innovative learning opportunities and a culture of high expectations."

In our school community, parents and teachers work together to build resilient, confident and caring students who:

- work purposefully as individuals and as members of teams;
- locate and manipulate information;
- communicate effectively;
- resolve problems;
- value difference; and
- set personal goals and work towards their realisation

2

P R I N C I P A L ' S M E S S A G E

STEVE GATELY



PRINCIPAL

On behalf of our dedicated and friendly staff, I am delighted to welcome you to our amazing school community.

At Biddabah we pride ourselves on providing an inclusive and supportive environment where every child has the opportunity to shine. Our strong commitment to all students reaching their academic, social and creative potential is the cornerstone of our daily work.

As principal of the school, I have an open-door policy and pride myself on being responsive to the needs of the school community. I encourage parents and carers to reach out to me at any time with any questions or concerns they may have.

Thank you again for choosing Biddabah Public for your child's educational journey.

Sincerely,

Steve Gately Principal





Staff

Principal: Steve Gately

Assistant Principals: K-2: TBA Stage 2: Nathan Leadbeatter Stage 3: Jade Filipcevic

Assistant Principal of Curriculum and Instruction: Julie Phillips

Teachers:

Olivia Cobbold Rachel Smart Tracy Ford Briony Michalak Amy Findley Hayley Maxfield Jo Wood Erin Bradshaw Kerry Broxom Justice Chilvers Jenny Barbour Tyler Smith Neive Osborn Danielle Dwyer Jo McKay Melissa McEwan Nicola Davidson Sarah Watson Kim Eve Carina Zissis

Support Staff:

Office Manager: Michelle Curtis-Allan Office Administration: Connie Hooey Office Administration: Julie Cavanough Office Administration: Fiona Ball Learning Support Officer: Kerrie Wallace Learning Support Officer: Nicole Harrison Learning Support Officer: Joanne Sandoff Learning Support Officer: Karen Adlington Learning Support Officer: Renae Craft Learning Support Officer: Alita Pietras Learning Support Officer: Jodie Page General Assistant: Reece Roffey



S C H O O L H O U R S



School Day:

AUBLIC SCHOO

BIDDABAH

<u>Supervision of students begins</u>: 8:30 am - 8:55am <u>Learning begins</u>: 9:00 am <u>Lunch</u>: 11:00 am -11:45am <u>Recess:</u> 1:45pm - 2:15 pm <u>Home time</u>: 3:00pm



ATTENDANCE

- Parents must make sure children do not arrive before 8:30 am. Children arriving earlier should quietly sit on the seats in the Covered Outdoor Learning Area (COLA).
- All students must arrive at school by 9:00 am for roll call. Late arrivals will be marked as partially absent. It's crucial for children to be on time. For late arrivals or when leaving early, students should visit the school office with a parent.
- The school sends an SMS notification to the parent's nominated number around 10:00 am when a student is marked absent without notification.

ATTENDANCE

In NSW all children between the ages of six and seventeen are legally required to attend school. Attendances are recorded daily and a roll call is conducted before the day's first lesson begins. For the benefit of all children, parents or carers should ensure their child attends school regularly. Any absence from school should be explained within three days of the absence. Schools must also inform parents immediately of any unexplained absences or suspected truancy.

Children who attend school regularly have better social skills and achieve better results. If family holidays can only be arranged during school time, please inform the school principal in advance and request leave.

- Only the principal can grant leave for a student's absence from school.
- Dental and medical appointments should be arranged outside school hours.
- Following any absence, a note explaining the absence should be sent in for your child when they come back to school. Alternatively, parents may reply via the School Bytes app, SMS, or email the school to advise an absence.
- Prior advice for any early departure from school is appreciated.

Where school attendance is a problem, Department officers from the Home School Liaison Unit work with schools, staff, families and students to improve a child's attendance record and general enjoyment of school.





ARRIVING AND LEAVING SCHOOL

- Children are required to use the pedestrian gates on Medcalf Street, Fairfax Rd, or Watt Street for both entering and exiting the school.
- Students on the Warners Bay side of Biddabah School must use the traffic light pedestrian crossing on Medcalf St when going to and from school.
- Bicycles, scooters, rollerblades, or skateboards must not be ridden within the school grounds. Students commuting with these must wear helmets, while electric scooters are not allowed on the premises.
- When bringing your children by car, please make an effort to park on the school side of the road when it is possible. If you park on the opposite side, please ensure your child's supervision when crossing the road.
- Many students are dropped off and picked up by car at the Watt Street entrance roundabout, which is a 'Drop and Go' zone. Please follow the posted parking regulations in this area.
- Parking in the staff and volunteer car parks are strictly prohibited for safety reasons.





COMMUNICATION

2023 Biddabah Public School Communication Policy

PURPOSE: Educational outcomes for students are enhanced when positive partnerships are established and valued between home and school. Biddabah Public School staff strive to promote and facilitate harmonious relationships through effective, open and timely communication. This ensures that parents/carers are well-informed and included in the learning process.

AIM OF THE POLICY:

• To provide clear, two-way communication guidelines that foster a strong community network and support student learning.

• To provide a structured outline for the ways information will be communicated by the school to the community as well as suggest the most suitable avenues for parents/carers to communicate with the school.

Means of communication at BPS

- Our newsletter is available via the School Bytes platform
- Or on our website <u>www.biddabah-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au</u>
- Or "opt in" for a paper copy by phoning the school on 4954 6058.
- Biddabah Public School Facebook page
- P&C meet 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7.00pm in the school library.
- · Our front electronic noticeboard is updated regularly (many classrooms have their own individual noticeboards).
- Phone, email, and face-to-face meetings

Communicating with your child's teacher or the Principal

Principal:

Mr Gately has an open-door policy. Unless he is already in a meeting, he will attempt to meet with you
immediately or otherwise by appointment at a time that is suitable to you. Please contact the office to request a
meeting.

Class Teacher:

- The Classroom Teacher is your first point-of-contact for any concerns you may have surrounding your child's learning. The best way to contact your child's teacher is via the office either by phone 4954 6058 or Email: <u>biddabah-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au</u> to ensure your message is promptly received.
- Teachers are unable to be interrupted during lesson time but if you make an appointment at the office to speak
 with them, they will be more than happy to meet with you ASAP. If there is an important message to be passed
 on to the teacher or your child, you may advise the office who will do their utmost to oblige.

Code of Conduct

All staff are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the NSW Department of Education's Code of Conduct. The code states that "All employees are expected to exercise sound judgement and live up to both the content and spirit of the Code." (NSW DoE Code of Conduct, updated July 15, 2021). Parents and carers are also expected to engage respectfully with BPS staff. Communication by all parties that adheres to the guidelines outlined in this policy will ensure the DoE Code of Conduct is upheld.

Concern Management at BPS

At times, concerns may arise surrounding your child's learning or wellbeing. Your child's classroom teacher is the best point-of-contact and will do their best to address these concerns promptly with empathy and compassion. The steps outlined below can be followed to ensure issues / concerns are resolved promptly.

- Contact the school office via phone or email stating your request for contact with your child's teacher with a brief outline of your concern or request. Our office staff will deliver the message promptly.
- Classroom teachers will contact you within 24-48hrs to organise either a face-to-face meeting or phone conversation.
- Classroom teachers will listen to your concerns with empathy and care. The teacher will develop a plan of action with you to resolve the issue.
- At times, issues may require involvement from Executive Staff. In this event, your child's Stage Assistant Principal (ES1 / S1 - TBA, Stage 2 - Mr Leadbeatter or Stage 3 – Mrs Filipcevic) may contact you to assist in the resolution process.

COMMUNICATION

Frequently Asked Questions

What I if forget to return a permission note?

- If we have not received a permission note, we may attempt to contact you to get verbal permission over the phone. However, if this is not possible, your child will be unable to take part in that excursion/school event.
- Replacement notes and other community information documents are available in the admin foyer and website.

How will I know if an event is postponed or cancelled?

 Postponements and cancellations will be made as early as practicable by either School Bytes notification, note home, on Facebook or via the newsletter (in less urgent cases). Or you may phone the office after 8.30am.

What do I do if my child is away from school?

- Short term absences can be notified in writing to the teacher via note or by phoning the office on 49546058.
- School absence can also be notified electronically via our School Bytes app (choose e-forms).
- If your child has an unexplained absent from school, you will receive an SMS.
- Applications for extended leave or school exemption need to be made in writing to the principal (forms available at the office).

When are the Assemblies on?

- Whole school Assembly is at 12.45pm every second Friday (Even Weeks).
- K-2 Assembly (12.45pm Friday odd weeks) Any changes to these times will be notified on school website.

What happens if my child has an accident or gets sick at school?

- Children who become ill or are injured at school are recorded as unwell and monitored and cared for in sick bay by
 our trained office staff. If the office staff believe your child is too unwell to remain at school, they will contact you or
 the next person on the contact list to collect them from school.
- If your child has an 'upset' or 'conflict' at school of a concerning nature, the Principal or Assistant Principal will make
 a courtesy call to you to advise you that this has happened.
- If your child becomes seriously ill or injured at school, you will be advised immediately, and an ambulance will be called straight away if deemed necessary.

What happens in the unlikely event of an emergency at the school?

- If the school needs to be closed due to an emergency either before or during school hours parents/carers will be notified by School Bytes, email, website, noticeboard and if possible, via announcement on local radio.
- The school will implement lockdown or evacuation procedures in keeping with our emergency management policy.

What are our school bell times?

- Supervision commences from 8.30am. There are no staff on duty prior to this.
- First bell is at 8.55am. School commences at 9am and finishes at 3pm.
- Lunch is 11am, Recess commences at 1.45pm.





Biddabah Public School

Future Focused Learners





MAKE & PAYMENT | ENROLMENT | NEWS | NEWSLETTER | EVENTS | GALLERY



A D M I N I S T R A T I O N

ENROLMENTS Local Enrolments

If you're a resident within our school's catchment area and are interested in joining our educational community, we encourage you to begin the enrolment process by submitting an online application on our website.

https://biddabah-p.schools.nsw.gov.au/about-our-school/enrolment.html

Non-Local Enrolments

Local students are provided with assured placement in their designated schools. While enrolment restrictions apply to students from different school zones, we do accept nonlocal students when vacancies permit. To explore non-local enrolment options, we kindly request you contact the school's principal on 49546058. For detailed information regarding our enrolment policy and access to online application forms, please visit our official website.

Financial Transactions

- Financial transactions are conducted online through School Bytes.
- In the instance that students may need to bring money to school please ensure the money is paid directly to the office.

Voluntary School Contributions

- The school asks parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the running of the school at the beginning of each year. This fee is designed to help cover the cost of resources used by children during the year.
- Parents are notified of the contributions at the start of each school year. The contribution fee for 2024 has been set at \$75 for Years 1 - Year 6 and \$150 for Kindergarten. There is a sliding fee scale to accommodate families with more than one child attending B.P.S.

First Aid/Emergencies

- When enrolling your child, you'll be required to fill out a personal information form that includes details of emergency contacts and doctors. If there are any changes to this information, please promptly notify the school office.
- If your child becomes sick or is injured while at school, our standard procedure is to contact parents or guardians, allowing them the chance to seek medical guidance.
- In the event of an accident at school, we will call for an ambulance if there are concerns about the child's condition. The school participates in an Ambulance Insurance Scheme, covering the cost if you don't have ambulance coverage in your health plan or through a government program. If we can't reach a parent or emergency contact, the school will take action based on the principal's judgement in the student's best interest.

Administration of Prescribed Medication

- All students, including those with a medical condition requiring the administration of prescribed medication during the day, will be able to enrol at Biddabah when attendance is practicable and in their best interests.
- There is a formal process we follow to ensure the safety and well-being of children who require regular continuing administration of prescribed medicine. Please let the school know if we will need to address these issues with your child.

COMMUNITY



Community of Schools Collaboration

Biddabah Public School proudly collaborates with neighbouring educational institutions, including Warners Bay High School, Warners Bay Public School, Eleebana Public School, and Valentine Public School, as part of the Bay Community of Schools initiative. This partnership facilitates shared professional development and resource allocation, leading to enhanced educational outcomes for all local students.

Parents and Citzens' Association

We strongly encourage all parents to engage in the events organised by the Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C).

- Our P&C Meetings are scheduled for the third Wednesday of each month in the school library, commencing at 7:00 pm. We extend a warm invitation to all parents to attend these gatherings.
- Parents play a vital role in various educational activities, such as assisting with reading, writing, mathematics, school excursions, and school sports. Your child's teacher will communicate with you when assistance is required and provide details on how you can get involved.

Before and After School Care

Our school is a proud host of the YMCA OSHC program, offering before and afterschool care services. The cost per child per session, which includes breakfast and afternoon tea, starts at \$21.50, with pricing varying based on income and potential Child Care Benefits discounts. For additional information, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at 0401 189 553 or via email at <u>oshc.biddabah@ymca.org.au</u>. You can also find more details on our website at <u>www.ymcansw.org.au</u>.

Canteen

The management of our school canteen is contracted to "Lunchkins." Their monthly rental fee for the space directly aids in acquiring new school equipment.

- You can find lists of available items along with their prices on the Lunchkins Facebook page and the BPS website. These lists are regularly distributed to all families or can be provided upon request.
- Additionally, we offer the convenience of online ordering through the Qkr app.





UNIFORM

The wearing of a full school uniform is encouraged and recommended at all times, in accordance with NSW DoE Uniform Policy Guidelines (2022). School uniforms promote a sense of belonging and ensure student safety. Biddabah Public School's uniform has been designed in partnership with our community and uniform items can be purchased through our P&C-operated Uniform Shop.

Girl's Uniform (Kindergarten to Year 4) · Green shirt · Green shorts / skirt / skort · Tunic dress · Green tracksuit pants · White socks







Boy's Uniform (Kindergarten to Year 4) · Green shirt · Green shorts · Green pants · Green tracksuit pants · White socks

Senior Girl's Uniform (Years 5 and 6) · White shirt · Green shorts · Green or check skirt · Green skorts · Green tracksuit pants · White socks · Year 6 Polo







Senior Boy's Uniform (Years 5 and 6) · White shirt · Green shorts · Green tracksuit pants · White socks · Year 6 Polo



UNIFORM



<u>Hats</u>

Sun-safe school hats are required whenever students are playing outside. Green hats can be purchased from the uniform shop for \$15. Please ensure hats are labelled.







<u>Shoes</u>

All students are required to wear enclosed, black shoes, preferably with black laces. On Sports Day, students may wear joggers.

<u>Sports Uniform</u> Students wear their Sports Uniform on Fridays. This includes their house colour polo, shorts / skorts or tracksuit pants. Students may wear their joggers.





<u>Hair Accessories:</u> Must match our school uniform. <u>Watches:</u> Analog and Digital watches are acceptable. Smartwatches that can make calls or record are unacceptable.

<u>Earrings:</u> Studs or small sleeper earrings are recommended for student safety.

Houses

Children are divided into "houses" for sporting and other activities. Members of the same family usually belong to the same house. The Awabakal names for these houses Minamba, Wombal, Baato and Kurang were chosen to reflect the Lake Macquarie environment and its Aboriginal culture and history.



BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Biddabah P.S. is committed to explicitly teaching and modelling positive behaviour and to supporting all students to be engaged with their learning. Key programs prioritised and valued by the school community are Peer Support, "I Am Strong Day", Hunter Life Education, Harmony Day, Stage/Grade camps, excursions and incursions, Kindergarten Orientation, Junior AECG, Student Leadership team, PSSA Sport, Green Team and other special interest groups. Biddabah P.S. has the following school-wide rules and expectations:



Partnership with parents/carers

Biddabah P.S. will partner with parents/carers in establishing expectations for parent engagement in developing and implementing student behaviour management strategies by holding parent/teacher interviews early in Term 1 to exchange critical information with parents, celebrating student achievement on our social media platform, presenting data and discussing whole school

<u>education.nsw.gov.au</u> approaches to student wellbeing at P&C meetings, parent workshops and whole school events. Parents are able to meet with their child's teacher or the principal on request.

Student Discipline

While a significant portion of our students consistently achieve recognition through reinforcing positive behaviour, our well-being strategy also encompasses four stages of teacher intervention for addressing inappropriate student behaviour. Our behaviour policy can be found on our website for further reference.

BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Biddabah P.S. uses the following strategies and systems to explicitly teach, recognise and reinforce positive student behaviour and behavioural expectations:

Focus of The Week

Each Monday students are introduced to the whole school 'Focus of the Week'. This focus is predetermined by the Wellbeing Team based on data collected via playground and classroom behaviour trends. The weekly focus is reinforced by staff via a prepared lesson to explicitly teach knowledge, skills and strategies to support the development of prosocial skills.

Behaviour Consistency Guides

Expectations of student positive behaviour and a three-tiered, levelled consequence chart for negative behaviours are visually referenced throughout the school on the Behaviour Consistency guides. These guides are frequently referred to by staff when reinforcing positive behaviour and when correcting negative behaviours. These guides are supplemented by signage throughout the school grounds and classrooms which highlight expectations of all members of the school community in those specific areas of the school.

Assembly and in-class awards

Students are recognised for positive behaviour at fortnightly assemblies with merit certificates and principal's awards being presented to up to three students from each class. Students in each class can also access a variety of positive reinforcers at the individual and whole class levels.

Learning and Support Teacher / School Counsellor

Students requiring individualised support to reach behavioural expectations or develop specific social skills may benefit from small group and individual sessions with the Learning and Support Teacher and/or School Counsellor. These programs are only undertaken with the expressed approval of the parent/ caregiver. Other whole school approaches are outlined below.

Preventing and Responding to Bullying

Biddabah Public School Implementation Procedures for the DoE Policy: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools. This document describes the practices to be undertaken by Biddabah Public School based on the DoE policy: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools which can be found at:

https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2010-0415

.

RECOGNISING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Assembly Awards

.

- Weekly Assembly Awards are presented to students who demonstrate excellence in our 4 key areas of "Safety", Respect", "Responsibility" or "Learning".
- Sports Awards are presented to students who win sports blues and championship awards for swimming, athletics and cross-country. Other sporting awards (place getters in swimming, athletics and cross-country) to be presented at school assemblies (awards for only one carnival to be presented at any one assembly).
- Premier's Reading Challenge award certificates are presented to students who read 20 books (K-2) or 30 books (Yrs 3-6) from a set list of high-quality texts.
- Certificates are also presented at whole school assemblies to students who achieve a High Distinction in external exam competitions.

Presentation Day awards

Students will receive awards for:

- Dux of the School, awarded to the student with the best academic achievements in Year 6.
- School Citizen of the Year, awarded to the student in Year 6 who best fits the criteria of striving to achieve quality work, helping others, wearing the school uniform, working and playing within the rules of the school
- Class Awards: Each classroom teacher selects one student for citizenship and three students for excellence, either in a key learning area or from a curriculum perspective.
- Sports Awards for outstanding achievement by female and male students in their chosen sport(s).
- Creative and Performing Arts awards including Public Speaking and The Michelle Metcalf Award.

Student Leadership

- The selection process for school captain, vice-captain, and prefects takes place during the weeks leading up to the Presentation Day Ceremony in Term 4. We will elect both male and female captains, and female and male vice-captains, along with four prefects.
- House captains and vice house captain elections occur at the beginning of each school year.

• • • • • • •

SCHOOL SONG

WE HAVE A DREAM

We searched this land, found time had turned. And dreams were made, where the black rock burns. A sacred place known as Nikeen-Bah We named our school - BIDDABAH. Now the children came, all nations strong. Our teachers too, have joined the throng. Our deeds are known, from near and far, We're number one - we're BIDDABAH.

Oh Biddabah, where children learn To trust your God and do good turns. Together we stand against hurt and fear Where we all learn from year to year We have a dream, we've come to learn, To help one another, from term to term. Through trust and hope, learn right from wrong. We show no weakness, for we are strong. And the way ahead is long and far. To guide us there, our BIDDABAH. Oh Biddabah, where children learn To trust your God and do good turns. Together we stand, against hurt and fear Where we all learn from year to year.





LEARNING AT BIDDABAH

Literacy and Numeracy Initiatives:

- The dedicated staff at BPS receive training in and employ the most up-to-date and effective evidence-based programs to ensure that every student can achieve their academic goals.
- Our literacy and numeracy initiatives are supported by our Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Instruction, who oversees the continuous professional development of our educators, enabling them to deliver optimal teaching and learning experiences tailored to each student's needs.

STEM Education

At Biddabah Public School, we are dedicated to catering to the requirements of future-focused learners. Our innovative approach to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) enables our students to engage in a variety of inspiring, hands-on learning opportunities. These encompass coding, robotics, electronics, and green screen technology, which not only prepare them for their high school journey but also for the exciting adventures that lie ahead.

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education

In our Personal Development, Health, and Physical Education lessons, students gain the knowledge, skills, and mindset to keep themselves and others healthy and safe in different situations. Physical education is crucial for learning how to move confidently, skillfully, and creatively in various physical activities.

Library

- We encourage children to borrow books from the library every week. To do this, they'll need a sturdy library bag that's big enough to carry larger "Quarto" sized books.
- Information skills lessons are a regular part of our school curriculum.

Religious Education (Scripture) and Ethics:

At Biddabah Public School, we offer religious education (SRE) lessons provided by local volunteers and organisations. Our SRE teachers are affiliated with approved providers, and these lessons are non-denominational.

We also provide ethics lessons conducted by community volunteers from the ::::: Primary Ethics program, depending on tutor availability.



LEARNING AT BIDDABAH

Visits and Excursions

Excursions are a vital part of the Biddabah learning experience and should be attended by all students. Parents facing financial difficulties can reach out to the organising teacher or principal for assistance. We also encourage parents to consider a regular payment plan for major excursions to manage costs over time. Stay updated on all excursions through our School Bytes app.



Extracurricular Activities

Biddabah Public School has a rich tradition of offering a diverse array of curricular and extracurricular activities. These include sports, public speaking, technology, and creative and performing arts, all designed to empower our students to thrive through a variety of experiences.





ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Sun-Smart Values:

To promote sun-smart behaviour and protect our students, we encourage the Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek, and Slide approach. Our school uniform includes sun-safe items like protective hats for the head, neck, and ears. School staff also encourage students to enjoy outdoor activities in shaded areas. Please note that our school has a "no hat, no play" policy, so your child should have their school hat every day to play outside with friends during recess and lunch.

You can help protect your child from UV radiation by applying sunscreen in the morning before school and making sure they wear a sun-safe hat. Additionally, children can wear sunglasses at school to shield their eyes from the sun.

School Maps



