



Esperance Christian School

We Learn, We Serve, We Pray, We Believe



Kindergarten and Pre-Primary

Parent Handbook

A Message from the Principal

Mrs Anne Tonkin



We are pleased to introduce you to the Esperance Christian School, and in particular our Kindergarten and Pre-Primary program.

We are privileged to have teaching staff who are highly qualified and experienced in Early Childhood Education and who use their skills and knowledge to provide an excellent play-based learning program suited to the needs of each child in their care. The national *Early Years Learning Framework* and *Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines* are adhered to, ensuring that a holistic academic and social/emotional structure of learning is in place.

It is my desire that each child in our care is provided with a safe, secure and nurturing environment in which to grow and develop across all the domains of learning. I personally believe that ***a happy child is a learning child*** and we do all in our power to assist children to be happy while they are in our care.

Relationships are key to all educational endeavours, so I love to see the parents and caregivers of our students become involved in our school community and to feel welcome and accepted. We are always mindful to take into account diverse family, cultural, linguistic and community influences in our students' lives and acknowledge that all these impact on the way they learn as we work in partnership together.

I endeavour to connect with parents and children as often as possible, and am always happy to speak with parents about any issues or concerns they may have about their child. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

I look forward to partnering with you as we work together to grow and develop your child.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "A Tonkin".

Anne Tonkin
Principal
Esperance Christian Primary School

If, after reading through this booklet you have any questions regarding our school we will be happy to speak with you.

You can contact our school on **(08) 9071 2703**. The best time to contact the class teacher is after school hours.

Principal

Mrs Anne Tonkin

Kindergarten and Pre-Primary Teacher

Mrs Anri Bezuidenhout

Educational Assistant

Mrs Lee-anne Chambers

Application for Kindergarten (4 Year Old Kindy)

Your child will need to be four before the 30th June of the school year for which they have enrolled.

Application for Enrolment forms can be obtained from the school office.

Once completed, please send it to the school with a non-refundable one-off application fee of \$150.

KINDERGARTEN

There is one group of Kindergarten students and they attend 3 days a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

As we understand that your child may be tired during the first couple of weeks, you are quite welcome to have a half-day phase-in period for your child for the first two weeks of school if you feel that is necessary. A half-day will conclude at 12.00pm. Just let the teacher know accordingly.

We offer four two-hour settling-in sessions in the fourth term leading up to the year before your child commences Kindergarten. These sessions start with you staying most of the time. By slowly reducing your presence, we hope that by the fourth session your child will happily stay independently.

PRE-PRIMARY (5 Year Old)

There is one group of Pre-Primary Students. Pre-Primary is a compulsory school year. As a result of this new legislation Pre-Primary students **MUST attend five full days** of school, with no phase-in or settling-in period in Term One.

Although 3-year old Kindy attends on the same days as Pre-Primary, the two classes will be run and operate as two very separate units.

*** By Term 4 in Pre-Primary, the students will have their own personal piece of fruit for morning tea on their PP only days. This is in preparation for the independence required in Year 1. Pre-Primary aged children are renowned for wobbly teeth. If your child is experiencing difficulty in peeling oranges or struggles to bite into their fruit, e.g. an apple, please send it already sliced up.

Typical School Day Routine for Kindy and Pre-Primary

8.45am	School day commences		
	Bible lesson	Play based learning activities	Music
10.30am	Fruit time		
10.45am	Outdoor play and Perceptual Motor Activities		
12.00pm	Lunch and rest time		
12.50pm	Play based learning activities		
2.00pm	Outdoor play		
2.30pm	Story time (PATHS program)		
2.50pm	School day concludes		

Your child will need to have the following equipment on Day 1 and beyond.

Item	Daily	Semester 1	Semester 2
Back Pack	✓		
Donation of a bottle of anti-bacterial hand wash gel		✓	✓
Donation of a large packet of baby wipes		✓	✓
Donation of a box of tissues		✓	✓
Reading folder PP only (Supplied by school)	✓		
Songbook (Supplied by school)	Returned once a week		
Library bag	Returned once a week		
Lunch box	✓		
Piece of fresh or dried fruit/vegetable***	✓		
Rain boots and rain coat for our "bush days"		Stays at school All Term 2	Stays at school All Term 3
School hat	✓		
School uniform	✓		
Water bottle	✓		

EXCURSIONS (K/PP)

There may be excursions or incursions during the year. As the cost of these is not included in the standard school fees we aim to give as much notice for the outing as possible. The cost will not normally exceed \$15 per term.



CHILD DROP-OFF and COLLECTION

When you drop your child off at school, you are welcome to leave them in the care of the morning duty teacher from 8.30am.

Because we care about the safety of your child we require parents or caregivers to **notify the school (preferably in writing)** regarding alternative pick-up arrangements from school.

Children will NOT be allowed to leave with any person other than a parent or nominated carer without your permission.

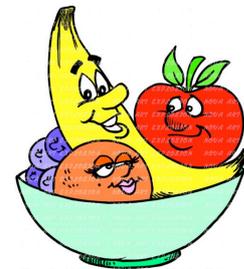
All K/PP students must be collected from the class by his/her parent or nominated carer. Occasionally we'll allow an older sibling to collect, but only if the parent has already arrived at school.

GETTING SETTLED

It is our aim to settle your child in at school as quickly and as happily as possible. You will find that your child is often most comfortable if you drop him/her off just before starting time, instead of allowing them a big wait in the morning before the class is open. Arriving late can be daunting too. Remember, the smallest thing may make a big difference to your child's happiness at school.

To help children become independent at school, please encourage them to take responsibility for putting their own

- Bag on their hook,
- Water bottle in the tray
- Fruit in the fruit basket
- Songbook / reading folder in the allocated places on the relevant days



They will also need to record their attendance. The way we do this changes periodically.

At 8.30am parents and any younger siblings are most welcome to start the school day with us. Please come in, share a book; do one of the free choice activities; play a board game or build a puzzle together.

If, however, you would like to stay a whole morning or afternoon session and be a much-appreciated K/PP class helper, please look out for a roster on the notice board at the beginning of the 2nd term. It is important that you liaise with the teacher to organise these longer visits to the classroom to help make this time profitable for everyone.

SUCCESSFUL START

The commencement of Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten begins a new era in each child's life. It is a period of transition between home and school. The first few days at school can be a very overwhelming experience. We will endeavour to gently help this transition to be as smooth as possible for your child.

Following, are a few suggestions for you to help in this process:

Book an optional home visit

During this visit we hope to meet both you and your child in YOUR environment, where your child feels most comfortable.

We will have a general chat about any likes or dislikes your child has, so we can make those first few days as memorable as possible. You might have some educational / family concerns that you would rather discuss in the privacy of your own home. The visit will be for no more than 20-30 minutes and does not require any special preparation from your side.

We believe the school and family needs to work as a team to create the best learning environment for your child. The slightest change in normality can easily upset the apple cart. If we are kept informed about any changes, we are so much better prepared to help your child.

Acquaint yourself and your child with the school

Before school commences, arrange a suitable time for you and your child to visit the school. Point out the playing areas and the different buildings.

In addition to your own visit, we also aim to have an annual "**Transition Meeting**" session towards the end of each academic year. On this day, we would encourage ALL current and new Kindergarten students to come along to explore their future Kindy / Pre-Primary class, meet their class adults as well as their new classmates.

Discuss starting school

Help your child to feel happy and relaxed about starting school by talking about it during the few weeks beforehand. Explain that there will be many new friends to meet and that the learning will be fun and exciting.



Names

Please ensure that all of your child's belongings have been labeled. This will save a lot of time and confusion when looking for missing items. If you, like most of us, believe in the invention of hand-me-downs amongst siblings – just label with their **surname**.

Independence at School

Coming to 'Big School' can be very exciting for some children, yet for others school can be a big change. To make school a happy place, children need to be prepared and know what to expect.

Be cheerful when saying goodbye

Separation can be an emotional experience for both the child and parent. Remember that children take cues from their parents, so try to be cheerful and positive. This attitude will flow through to your child. If your child does have difficulty, allow the teacher to intervene while you leave. As a rule, children settle quickly when they discover new toys and friends in the classroom. Rest assured that we will contact you if there are any problems and your child will be dealt with in a kind and gentle manner.



Support your child by supporting the teacher

The teacher will become an important influence on your child's life. Give the teacher your support. The teacher only wants the best for your child. The early years of schooling are important ones. It is the time when the foundations for the understanding of language, reading and numeracy are laid down. Children also learn to share and to belong to a group. Attitudes that may influence future school years are acquired at this time. In the first year of school your child will also begin to develop a sense of independence and confidence by taking responsibility for certain tasks.

Helping your child learn

Parents are children's first teachers and children come to school with a huge amount of knowledge. Although they are now starting school, the role of parents as teachers of their children is still of prime importance. Your child learns so much about our world and how to live in it from the experiences they share with their family.

Making a positive start to school

These suggestions will help your child have a more positive start to school:

- Always find time to talk with your child
- Listen to your child
- Let them know that you are interested
- Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep
- Well-balanced meals will assist in learning
- Never use school or homework as a threat/punishment
- Do not speak of the school/staff in a negative light where your child(ren) can hear you

Drop off and Pick up

School begins at 8.45 and finishes at 2.55. However, the duty-teacher commences duty of care from 8.30am until 3.15 pm or until the last child has been picked up. Please collect your child promptly at the conclusion of each day. If you do find yourself running considerably late, PLEASE contact the school at your earliest convenience.



Save the school's number **(90712703)** on your mobile phone, so you always have it on hand. Most young children worry very quickly if they see all their classmates leaving at home time and there is no sign of their parent/carer.

To help your child settle quickly into school give them some practice in how to:

- Open and eat from a lunch box
- Undo his/her water bottle
- Know how and when to use a handkerchief or tissue
- Take off and put on own footwear and jumpers
(as a general rule a child under the age of 5 does not have the fine motor skills to tie shoe laces. Please try and find Velcro fastening shoes)
- Finish a task and tidy up afterwards
- Play cooperatively with other children

Children need to be independent in:

- Going to the toilet
- Making requests of the teacher



Communication



Every second week there is a **school newsletter** to keep you informed about school happenings. We distribute this via email and by hard copy (given to the eldest child in the family).

Please keep an eye on the **notice boards, class diary, personal pigeonhole** and the **songbook**. The information in/on them keeps you informed of what's happening around school.

The School has its own Facebook page and once you “like” it you’ll receive automatic updates and information from time to time!



The school's website is <http://esperance.adventist.edu.au/>

If you have queries about your child's well being or progress that you wish to discuss at any stage, please contact the teacher to make an **appointment** so that we can allocate the necessary amount of time. We appreciate any information about your child's health and needs or situations at home that may have an impact on their school experience.

Progress Reports

Throughout the year we will communicate with you on your child's progress. This will be in one of the following formats:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| Term 1 | 15 minutes evening parent/ teacher interview |
| Term 2 | Written report |
| Term 3 | Learning journey portfolio |
| Term 4 | Written report |



Food

Your child will need to bring his/her own **lunch and water bottle.
The lunchtime drink can be either milk or water. NO juice/cordial.

We very much believe that a balanced, familiar, satisfying, healthy lunch will help keep them alert for more learning in the afternoon.

We suggest a combination of

- Sandwich/pasta salad/wrap;
- Yoghurt/cheese;
- Fruit (fresh, preserved or dried)
- One small treat such as a biscuit or some chips is ample for their limited appetite and time.

****ONLY one processed treat please e.g. biscuit/chips/muesli bar**

Make sure your child's lunch is familiar, quick and easy to eat. School lunchtimes are not the best time to try out new recipes. Only pack what you know your child will eat.

From time to time we adjust our timetable slightly at short notice, e.g. eating lunch earlier than normal. To avoid a mad rush, please ensure your child arrives at school with their lunch, rather than dropping it off at lunchtime.

All Kindy and Pre-Primary students are expected to sit at the table and chairs provided to eat their lunch. The children are encouraged to eat all that you have sent during their 20 minute lunch time, but more often than not they will only manage their sandwich. The healthiest items will be eaten first.

During the fourth term in Pre-Primary the students will sit on the veranda in preparation for Year 1.

Canteen

Our school canteen operates on a regular basis. You will be notified ahead of time what the canteen days are, the food available, costs and ordering facilities.

Immunisations

It is important that your child is up to date with his/her immunisations. It is compulsory for the school to view your child's up to date immunisation records prior to enrolment.

Sun Safety

The school encourages the use of sunscreen, especially during terms one and four. If you would like your children to use their own sunscreen feel free to provide it. The school will provide sunscreen for those who do not have their own for school outings.

Hats

We have a strict NO HAT - PLAY IN THE SHADE policy throughout the year. Therefore it is compulsory for children to wear regulation school hats before school, every recess, and lunchtime and during outdoor class activities. Regulation uniform hats are available from the school's uniform shop.

Food / Skin Allergies

Please advise the school of any particular needs your child may have regarding allergies or food requirements. We do have cooking activities at times, and of course birthday cakes that are sent in from home and we wish to meet your requirements for your child's health and well-being. Currently ECPS is an 'Allergy Aware' school.

From time to time, when administering first aid we may apply a *Band-Aid* to a wound. Please notify the school if your child's skin cannot tolerate plasters.

Illness

Although it may be inconvenient, please do not send children to school if they are infectious. If your child is sick or absent from school, please send an absence note with your child on their return.

The following conditions require exclusion from school: chicken pox, head lice, vomiting, school sores, conjunctivitis, diarrhoea, ringworm, measles, whooping cough, rubella and mumps. (see the school handbook for details)



As a general rule, if your child "needs" *Panadol* to "get through the day", he/she probably is not well enough to be at school.

We can administer anti-biotics at lunchtime, provided we have written consent.

UNIFORM (For more details, please refer to the school handbook)

Uniform requirements for Kindergarten and Pre-Primary students are as follows:

Term 1 and 4 - Summer Uniform

Burgundy monogrammed polo shirt, black rugby shorts, and **WHITE, Velcro fastening** sports type shoes with **WHITE** socks.

Term 2 and 3 - Winter uniform

As above, but with additional two-piece burgundy monogrammed tracksuit. Please note that the K/PP uniform becomes the sports uniform for Year 1 onwards. So, shop wisely ☺

Jewellery

No jewellery, apart from small stud earrings is allowed. In Kindy and Pre-Primary we discourage students from wearing watches. This is mainly because the children or the children near them are easily distracted by it...and in most cases they cannot tell time yet.

Hair

Only burgundy hair accessories are allowed. In the case of long / longer hair, please note that it needs to be tied up when it starts touching the collar. This is because it looks neater, becomes less irritating when working and playing, but mostly it lessens the chance of being contaminated by head lice. PLEASE NOTE, that upon head lice

discovery at school, you will be contacted to collect your child to commence treatment straight away.

Head lice treatment information is available by visiting www.kidspot.com.au

Footwear

- Good quality sport shoes are the best choice, as the students in K/PP do a lot of running and climbing during the day. NO shoes that light up or make noises will be allowed.
- **Velcro** fastening is a **must** and by far the most appropriate at this age. Alternatively you will need to teach your child how to tie shoelaces. Most often children only get the hang of tying shoelaces by the age of 6. Before then, they just don't have the dexterity to get the job done. As you can appreciate, tying 20 pairs of shoelaces several times a day, can be quite time consuming.

Free dress days

- From time to time we allow a free dress day, be it for fundraising purposes or just for the fun of it. Please use your parental judgement on your child's choice of clothes for this day. Choose something that will not cause distress when it gets dirty (because it probably will) or prevent them from being as active as they normally are.
- ALWAYS wear closed in shoes 😊

Bush Walks

We visit our school' bushland at least once a week during Term 2 and 3. Please send in a pair of rain boots and a raincoat on the first day of Term 2. These items will remain at school until the end of Term 3.

School bag

This backpack (**no** trolley cases please) needs to be large enough to hold your child's:

- Lunchbox and piece of fruit/vegetable,
- A spare set of uniform (for occasional moisture related accidents😊);
- Jumper (as Esperance's weather is unpredictable at best)
- Water bottle (preferably in an upright position)
- PP – reading folder
- Songbook
- School hat
- Library bag

Lost property

Please ensure that ALL property – bags, bottles, and lunchboxes, clothing... EVERYTHING is labelled. Check the labels throughout the year, as some do tend to rub off or wash away.

If any item is still missing, please check our class' pigeon hole OR the Lost Property Box, which is kept near the school office.

Birthdays

Birthdays are pretty special, especially at this young age. We are happy to provide you with a class list of all the students in class. If you choose to invite only a select few – that is fine too, but we ask that you please hand out the invitations discretely.

We welcome birthday cakes. We normally sing and celebrate around 2.30pm if you were to bring a birthday cake to school that day. Please provide your own candles, paper plates/serviettes and matches☺

Top Tip! Parties on a Friday afternoon are often ideal, as many of our families attend church on either a Saturday or Sunday and as a result won't be able to attend the party.

ALL ABOUT ME Every Kindergartener is given an **All about me** booklet before they start school. Each student who returns his or her booklet is given an opportunity to share the content with us.

WHAT WILL YOUR CHILD LEARN IN KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-PRIMARY?

Firstly and most importantly your little one will learn to be away from you and this may take some time.

He or she will also learn to...

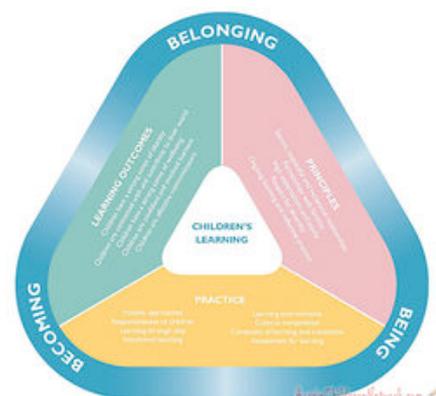
- work with others and alone
- work with teachers and other adults
- share and cooperate
- have a go at new activities and areas of play
- complete an activity or task at his/her own level / ability
- ask and answer questions
- explore the world through all his/her senses
- be independent but confident enough to ask for assistance if he/she should need to.
- share his/her experiences with his/her friends and other adults



Sometimes when children are asked what they did at school, they will give the response, “We did nothing all day”, or “We just played all day”. This is a common reply. In class the children do many different things, which may involve “play” because children learn best through “playing”, that is having “hands on” experience.

We work closely with Belonging, Being & Becoming
- The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.

“The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) is designed to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to five. The Framework supports and provides guidance for educators working with children in all early childhood education and care settings. It forms the foundation for ensuring that children experience quality teaching and learning with a specific emphasis on play-based learning.”



Below are some of the activities that your child will be participating in:



Worship/Bible Each day starts and ends with prayer. A Bible story and singing will be enjoyed daily!

Developmental Play This includes various play centres like building, play dough, painting, drawing, puzzles, games, creative art, sand and water.

Pre-Maths This includes number work using drill and games and mathematical concepts using “hands on” experiences. Pre-Primary students will work from the *Go Maths* program.

Language We make use of a wonderful language program called *Jolly Phonics*. This program associates sounds with actions, music and stories. It also involves craft activities. It is an invaluable way of teaching children sounds, writing and reading.

Pre-Reading and writing This will be done through shared reading, sequencing activities and matching skills. Phonics is introduced at a slow pace when your child is developmentally ready. We use *Jolly Phonics* to get your child off to a flying start. Mark-making activities are always available to provide opportunity for fine-motor development and early writing.

Writing Children will begin the early stages of story writing. Children at this stage usually illustrate and then dictate their stories to the teachers to write.

Craft/Art Art and craft activities are often integrated with the theme being studied.

Library All children are given the opportunity to borrow a book. Please ensure that your child carries their library book inside their library bag. Other activities may include show and tell, learning of rhymes and jingles and listening to stories. Unfortunately, we do not allow a library book to be borrowed if students do not have a library bag. Students also need to return one book, before borrowing another. As books are precious and expensive to replace, any damaged or lost books will incur a fine.

Information Technology - Computers Each week the **Pre-Primary** students use the computers in the computer lab at least once. They learn valuable skills during this time.

We like to use an online computer program called *Study ladder*. This is designed so that each student has his or her own unique username and password. They work at their own pace in all areas of the curriculum to consolidate prior learning in class. The class teacher also sets homework tasks that can be completed at home.

Physical Education Students participate in a daily fundamental movement skills program. A variety of activities are planned to enhance the development of gross motor skills, which in turn help our fine motor development.

We have a sport fun day once a year, often at the end of Term 3 or beginning of Term 4, depending on the weather. Currently the Kindy/Pre-Primary students do not

compete in the whole school's sports carnival.

Pre-Primary Students also take part in a 2-week swimming block at some point during the year.

During Term 2 or 3, the Pre-Primary students also participate in a weekly tennis lesson.

Show and Tell Students are most welcome to share news that matter to them. We tend to steer clear of showing off birthday or Christmas presents, fancy toys and tooth-fairy deposits. We especially enjoy news that has a link to our current theme, or a topic we discussed in the past. It can even be a book review and recommendation. As most of the students are excellent at showing their news, we do encourage your input in helping them prepare for what they will tell us about their news.

HOW CAN I HELP AT HOME?

Often parents want to give their children a head start, but sometimes this is like learning to run before you can walk.

I've had to re-teach certain concepts to children, and for some children this can be very confusing and a hard habit to break.

Some common mistakes made are:

ABC's Please refrain from using alphabet names for the letters you "read", as we teach the children the letter sounds according to *Jolly Phonics*.

Capital letters Please do not teach your child to write letters as capital letters, especially not their names. At school we learn to ONLY use a capital letter at the start of names and sentences. The word "I" on the other hand has a special licence to be a capital in the middle of a sentence.

Please familiarise yourself with the correct Victorian Modern Cursive style letter formation below as it is best if children begin to use correct letter formation as soon as they begin to experiment with writing.



Homework As the year goes on, the students will be taking home readers, super sounds and tricky word cards home. Please remember that “little, but often” is far more effective than now and again and heaps at a time. Homework is optional for Kindergarten and Pre-Primary students. So anything that is sent home is to be done with enjoyment. Please NEVER, EVER use homework as a punishment or a threat.

Reading Read with your child every day. Let them sit with you and enjoy. Create a love for reading! HAVE FUN!

Some of our other definite **ANNUAL EVENTS** you can look forward to include:

Class Assembly Once a Year our K/PP has the privilege of leading the whole assembly/chapel service. We have an assembly practically every week. You are most welcome to attend every time. It starts at 8.45am and may hold a surprise of your child earning a student-of-the-week award!

Mother’s Day This can be anything, from a tasty afternoon tea to a pampering session. Our main focus for this special occasion is to help mum know that she is totally loved and appreciated.

Dads for Dinner Near Father’s Day we enjoy an evening filled with fun and food. Mum cooks Daddy’s most favourite meal and we have the opportunity to spoil Dad!

End of Year Concert Every year our whole school takes to the stage...not just any stage...the Esperance Civic Centre Auditorium! We alternate our concert themes between a Nativity or a Bible Based story. At times the Early Childhood presents their very own little show. On other occasions we help the Upper Primary present a BIG show. Whatever the case may be...you will not be disappointed!

Award Ceremony Every student in Kindy and Pre-Primary is presented with a certificate at our annual Award and Graduation Ceremony.

Christmas Party We will conclude EVERY academic year with a Christmas Party. Like most of our events you will be most welcome to attend and join in the fun!

HELPING OUR SCHOOL to HELP YOUR CHILD

There are a number of ways that you can do this:

In class help (see Parent Information, Getting Settled p 7)

At home help

There are sometimes preparation activities that can be done at home such as book covering, cutting out, sorting and collecting. Please keep an eye on the newsletter, as requests for these tasks will be advertised.

Extra activities

- If you have a **special talent** (e.g. painting, woodwork, sewing, cooking, sport, singing, drama) and you would like to help out in the class by taking a special lesson please let us know. We would love your involvement.
- Join the **Home and School Committee**. This committee is run by parents, for the benefit of children. With the help of all the parents, we can achieve so much more! As the old saying goes – Many hands make light work.