



Parents Handbook

A Guide to Starting
Kindergarten
2009

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1. WELCOME

We welcome you to Oakleigh Primary School Kindergarten. The Kindergarten is situated in a separate custom-built building adjoining the school. It is very much an integral part of the school and we welcome you and your child to our community.

This handbook has been designed to provide information relevant to starting kindergarten. We hope it will answer most of your queries, but we welcome any other questions that you may have. Parents are welcome into the group at any time, and we encourage you to become involved in all aspects of your child's kindergarten year.

If at any stage you have any questions about your child's development or the curriculum, please feel free to speak to either of the teachers - Teresa or Naomi.

Kinder : 9568 6315
Email : kindergarten@oakleighps.vic.edu.au

2. CURRENT INFORMATION

2.1 STAFF - FOUR YEAR OLD KINDER

Teachers: Teresa McCann (Purple Group)
Naomi Pritchard-Tiller (Orange Group)

Assistants: Athena Samiotis (Purple Group)
Simone Glenn-Ward(Orange Group)

Lunch Time Reliever: Vicki Toliopolous

Friday Lunch Time Reliever: Tonia Clifton-Mills

STAFF- THREE YEAR OLD KINDER

Teacher: Teresa McCann (Yellow Group)

Assistant: Simone Glenn-Ward (Yellow Group)

2.2 SESSION TIMES

Orange Group

Mon: 8.45 - 11.45

Wed: 12.15 - 3.15

Fri: 9.00 - 3.00

Purple Group

Tues: 9.00 - 3.00

Thurs: 9.00 - 3.00

Yellow Group

Mon: 12.45 - 3.15

Wed: 8.45 - 11.15

2.3 TERM DATES 2009

Term 1: 28th Jan - 3rd April

Term 2: 20th April - 26th June

Term 3: 13th July - 18th Sept

Term 4: 5th Oct - 18th Dec

2.4 PARENT INVOLVEMENT

3. SUB-COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

A 'Sub-Committee of Management' which consists mostly of parent volunteers manages the Kindergarten. A PIE - Parent Information Evening is held each year to nominate new members for the following year's Sub-Committee. Every parent is encouraged and welcome to join the Committee and the teachers at monthly meetings.

Without people like you, the Kindergarten would not be able to operate. The role of the Committee is to ensure the smooth running of the Kindergarten and they are responsible for the decisions that affect the way that the Kindergarten is run. It is an ideal opportunity to have input into these decisions, and also to become involved in other aspects of the Kindergarten. Any matters that parents feel need discussing may be taken to a group representative or sent in a letter to the Committee.

3.1 SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2009

Convenor: Rachael Yanni

Deputy Convenor &
School Council
Representative: Helen Tonkin

Treasurer & Fees Officer: Gabrielle Darvell

Secretary: Tina Diamataris

Enrolment Officer: Raquel Floulis
(4 year old & 3 year old)

Staff Liaison Officer: Helen Tonkin

Purchasing Officer: Kerrie Sak

Fundraising Officer: Kirsty Thomas-Thoeun

Maintenance: Andrew Pritchard

Publicity Officer: Alanna Murphy

Group Representatives:

Yellow: Shirley Walker
Orange: Mary Harper
Purple: Alanna Murphy

General Members: Kate Mangos
Helen Tonkin

Fundraising Sub Committee:

Yellow: Sharmilla Abeyesundera

Orange: Liz Dally

Purple: Anna Noonan

Oakleigh Primary School Principal: Cheryl Sanders

3.2 **POLICIES**

Our Kindergarten has adopted the generic policies created by KPV (Kindergarten Parents Victoria) and personalised them to suit Oakleigh Primary School Kindergarten. A detailed policy binder is available for viewing and includes our policies for 2009. These are constantly updated and if you have any queries at any time, please contact the Convenor. Policies are available on the following:

- Anaphylaxis
- Asthma
- Behaviour Guidance
- Complaints
- Delivery & Collection of Children
- Enrolment
- Excursions
- Fees
- HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis
- Hygiene and Food Safety
- Illness & Emergency Care
- Inclusion of Children with Additional Needs
- Nutrition
- Parental Access and Involvement
- Privacy
- Qualified Staff
- Sun Protection

Please find copies of the following policies attached to this handbook:

Privacy Policy

Delivery & Collection Policy

3.3 **MAINTENANCE DAYS**

The buildings and gardens at Oakleigh Primary School Kindergarten are testimony to the hard work of many people over the last four years however regular maintenance is required. Therefore Working Bees are organised by the Maintenance Officer. We trust you are happy to help maintain these assets, through the Working Bees for your children and those who follow them.

Apart from normal cleaning, the majority of maintenance work is performed during Working Bees. The Working Bees tackle a variety of tasks - from basics like lawn mowing, pruning, painting, trimming edges, to specialised jobs like carpentry.

Maintenance days will be held once a term, all parents are asked to attend one day per year. You will receive a refund of your maintenance bond **only** after you have assisted for **3 hours** on a Maintenance Day.

Please remember we would rather have **YOU** than your money.

With regard to the Working Bees for the coming year, we ask the following, that you:

- Attend your rostered Working Bee at the set time
- Bring along any tools or equipment requested by the Maintenance Officer
- **Please** leave children at home (for safety reasons) because dangerous power tools/chemicals (varnish) are regularly used at these Working Bees.

3.4 PARTICIPATION ROSTER

Mums and Dads will be offered the opportunity to assist in the Kindergarten during each term. This provides an excellent opportunity for you to see your child and their group in action. If a parent is unable to attend, a close relative or carer is most welcome to replace them, otherwise please arrange with another parent to fill in on your rostered session duty (please refer to the parent contact details list). Minimal English language skills are not a problem.

Each family must attend two sessions per term to assist with the program and help maintain a clean and tidy environment. A list of duties is displayed and the teacher and assistant will involve the parent in any additional tasks that will be required that session.

Whilst on duty, spend some time interacting with your child and their friends, and enjoy observing him/her in their own environment. Children enjoy the times that their parent is on duty, so we encourage you to be involved in the various activities. Siblings are welcome to attend however their care is the responsibility of the parent on duty.

3.5 PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

If you, a member of your family or a friend have a special skill or talent that could be shared with the group, please speak to the teacher. Perhaps you know someone who can juggle, is an artist, sportsman, a chef etc. Children love these experiences and they enrich the curriculum.

3.6 LAUNDRY

The staff may request on occasions assistance with the washing of children's art smocks and tea towels etc. All help is greatly appreciated.

4. KINDERGARTEN PHILOSOPHY

At Oakleigh Primary School Kindergarten, we believe children learn best in a play based curriculum set in a safe and positive environment, free of competition and secured on a strong foundation of mutual respect.

Our educational program is based on a Holistic model of child development and aims to further develop your child's physical, intellectual, aesthetic, social and emotional growth.

We value children's individual and cultural differences and respond to their particular needs.

Our curriculum uses a 'hands on' approach to learning with a variety of teacher and child initiated play activities that are both developmentally appropriate, child-centred and relevant to the children's life experiences. We make use of a range of assessment methods such as collecting work samples, photos and observational records to track your child's development. Some of these records for the Four Year Olds will be kept in a Portfolio which will be taken home to share with families.

We encourage a strong partnership between the Kindergarten, the home environment and the local community. We welcome your interest and participation in all areas of the curriculum.

Most importantly we aim to stimulate your child's creativity and imagination, to build on their natural curiosity and develop a life long love of learning.

In our curriculum children will participate in a variety of learning experiences such as:

- A range of learning centres such as the dramatic play area, painting, block play, reading/writing corner, sand and water play and construction encourage creative self expression, social skills, language development, problem solving and imaginative play.
- Small group teaching activities such as language/number games to develop pre reading and number concepts.

- Activities to develop fine motor skills such as cutting and pasting.
- Outside play using equipment such as climbing frames, jumping boards and obstacle courses encourage gross motor development and problem solving skills.
- Music and drama activities including percussion, singing, dance, circle games and movement.
- Mat time where children come together for finger puppet plays, rhymes, songs, puppets, literature and oral story telling activities to further develop their language skills and encourage a love of literature.
- Quiet rest times where children can relax, listen to music and recharge their batteries.

5. **WHAT TO EXPECT**

Kindergarten is an exciting time for young children and it is often their first experience at becoming independent. To make the experience an easy transition, encourage your child to be enthusiastic about the new opportunities, activities and friendships that await them at kindergarten. During the first few sessions, take time to settle him/her into the new environment and always remember to say goodbye.

We have found a gentle introduction to Kindergarten works best to encourage a trusting relationship with staff and peers. Our orientation program allows children to attend Kinder in smaller groups. We have found that the effectiveness of this gentle introduction far outweighs any inconvenience to parents and staff. This builds confidence and allows staff to get to know each child. Parents are encouraged to stay until their children are settled.

We cater for a broad range of needs and expectations within our diverse multicultural community. We believe that each child will:

- Strive to reach their full potential
- Have a strong sense of self esteem
- Develop high standards of personal conduct
- Develop social skills that will enable them to work co-operatively with others
- Develop a caring and tolerant attitude towards others

5.1 **WHAT TO BRING**

Each child should bring a large, named backpack or similar bag, including the following items:

Summer/Spring (Terms 1 and 4)

- Hat - wide brimmed or legionnaire style (*no baseball caps*)
- Spare change of clothes
- Underwear

Winter/Autumn (Terms 2 and 3)

- Beanie or other warm hat
- Warm waterproof coat
- Change of winter clothes
- Underwear

Long Day Session (4 Year Old)

- Cushion for rest time
- Morning snack and lunch in separate lunch boxes
- A piece of fruit to share for afternoon snack

5.2 **HEALTHY FOOD (SMILES FOR MILES PROGRAM)**

In 2008 OPSK joined the Monash “Smiles for Miles” program which focuses on healthy eating / drinking habits and encourages proper dental care. To follow the program fully we need to ensure parents assist us with the following instructions regarding food / drink brought to the kinder for snack & lunch times. Each session, please provide a healthy snack in a lunchbox and a drink bottle of **water** only (no cordial or juices). Some suggestions to include are:

- Sandwiches with healthy fillings
- Fruit - fresh or dried
- Dry biscuits or rice crackers
- Cheese
- Yoghurt

We encourage healthy eating habits at Kindergarten. Please avoid pre-packaged foods, as the packaging is difficult for the children to manage. ***Also, NO NUTS, chips, chocolate, cakes or sweet biscuits. These foods only make the children restless and unable to fully benefit from the planned activities.***

Some children are seriously allergic to nuts, so please do not send nut products eg. Peanut butter, Nutella, whole nuts etc.

5.3 **BIRTHDAYS**

Your child's birthday is a great opportunity to bring along patty cakes or biscuits to share with the group. We sing "Happy Birthday" to help make it a special day for your child. Please let the staff know beforehand so they can make arrangements for those children who may have special dietary requirements.

Hats, lollies and balloons are discouraged as we do not have time to have a full scale party at Kinder.

5.4 **TOYS**

Toys are best left at home as they may be lost amongst the Kindergarten toys. Children will be asked to leave their toys in their bag during the session.

On occasions the children will be encouraged to bring along items from home of special interest to share with the rest of the group. The teacher will let you know if the child is required to bring along a toy to a particular session.

5.5 **CLOTHING**

Please dress your child in appropriate play clothes. Children will need to toilet themselves, so please ensure the clothes can be removed easily. The clothing should also be flexible for active play (climbing, running, jumping etc). We do provide smocks for messy play, but some children may get paint or other messy products on their clothing.

Flat shoes with covered toes are safest. **Please**, no thongs or clogs (Crocs) or gumboots, as these are dangerous when climbing equipment.

Remember to clearly label all of your child's belongings with his/her name so they can be returned if misplaced.

5.6 **SUN PROTECTION (SUNSMART ACCREDITED KINDER)**

Our Kindergarten is a "SunSmart" centre, so the children are required to wear a wide brimmed or legionnaires hat during the spring and summer months at kindergarten. Baseball caps or sun visors are not permitted as per our agreement with the "SunSmart" program.

No hat - Restricted play in the shade

Please remember to apply sunscreen before your child's kindergarten sessions. Staff, with your permission will reapply sunscreen on long days only.

6. ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Please remember to sign your child into the attendance book at the Kindergarten at the start of the session and sign him/her out again at the completion of the session.

Please tell the teacher if someone else is collecting your child from Kinder and make sure the appropriate authorization is in place prior to this. Children can only be placed in the care of people listed on the confidential form. (Please keep this up to date).

While on duty you need to sign yourself and any toddlers into the Visitors Book.

Please be **on time** when delivering and collecting your child from the centre. Arriving on time gives your child the benefit of a full program and being picked up on time avoids anxiety about being forgotten. If you do get held up, please give us a call so we can reassure your child.

Make some time to collect your child's artwork at the end of the session. This is really important to your child. Please do not worry if they have nothing to take home as there are many creative experiences that do not result in a finished product.

If you arrive late or need to pick your child up from a session early and the Kinder session is underway, please ensure the external kinder door, and the internal kinder room door remain locked securely at all times. This is a Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) licence requirement.

7.0 COMMUNICATION

We will provide relevant information, updates and notifications of special events via our monthly newsletter and other publications. Our noticeboards are a great way to let you know what is happening at Kinder, including our curriculum goals, activities and plans.

Please read the noticeboard and **empty** your child's kinder pocket regularly. Please also remind grandparents and carers to empty the child's kinder pockets if they are dropping off or picking up your child.

All matters relating to children are kept confidential and only discussed with the parents of the child. Please remember to observe this confidentiality of all at the centre while you are in attendance.

Custody/Court Orders

Please communicate all issues relating to your child to the teachers at the centre

Open communication is encouraged at all times. Please feel free to chat with the teachers if you have any queries. However, remember that teachers have over 20 children to handover back to parents/carers at the beginning/end of each session, and they may not have time to answer your query at a particular session. Instead it may be best to request an appointment.

7.1 APPOINTMENTS

These should be made with your child's teacher, who is always available if you wish to discuss your child. Minor points can be mentioned during daily contact, however if you need to spend more time than a few minutes, you should arrange an appointment time. Home visits are also available when necessary.

8. ILLNESS / INJURY

For the health and safety of your own child, other children and staff, a sick child must be kept at home to recover from their illness.

- If your child has required paracetamol for a fever, then keep them at home.
- If your child has vomiting or diarrhoea, then keep them at home.
- If they have an infectious illness (chickenpox, mumps, measles etc), please keep them at home until they are no longer infectious.

Please refer to the Victorian Government Health Information Schedule 6: Minimum period of exclusion from schools and children's services centres for infectious diseases cases and contacts on the Kinder noticeboard or website at http://www.health.vic.gov.au/ideas/regulations/id_regs.

If your child catches one of the infectious diseases listed, please notify the Kindergarten staff. Staff will decide if other parents need to be on the lookout for symptoms in class mates.

Please notify the teacher if your child is going to be absent from kindergarten either short term or long term.

If your child becomes ill or is injured at Kindergarten, you will be contacted to arrange for your child to be collected. Details will be recorded in the Accident/Injury book and must be counter signed by the adult collecting the child.

Please notify staff of allergies or illnesses that may require treatment whilst at Kindergarten.

8.1 MEDICATION

Staff **must** be notified if your child needs medication at Kindergarten. You need to fill out details in the medication book daily. All medicines need to be clearly labelled and handed to appropriate staff. Any medication given to a child is done so with written and verbal authorisation.

At no stage should any medication be left in your child's bag.

9. KINDER GATE CODE

The kinder entrance gate code will be issued at the start of the year and may be changed again through out the year. All parents and carers will be notified of the gate code change.

- The gate code is confidential, treat it like a PIN number
- Cover the code pad with your hand when entering the code
- Do not let the kinder children or older siblings know the code
- Do not ask you child to press the code number
- Please ask Grandparents ***not*** to lift children up to press the gate code

We have the security gate & code to keep the children safe within the kindergarten grounds. Please do not compromise the safety of the kindergarten children by letting other people know the code.

10. REMINDER - 2 MINUTE CAR PARKING ZONE

There is a **two minute** car parking zone near the school entrance, this is for the quick drop off / pick up of the **primary school children**. This Two Minute Parking Zone is enforced by the Monash City Council and they will issue parking fines for overstaying the limit.

Please be mindful and courteous of this parking area and do not park in this zone if you are going to be longer than two minutes. Kinder parents are required to sign their child in and out of each session, and as such should not use the 2 minute parking zone.

10.1 SCHOOL CROSSINGS

The school has two supervised pedestrian crossings which are provided for the safety and convenience of parents and children attending Oakleigh Primary School and Kindergarten. We strongly recommend that these crossings are used at all times to reinforce the importance of “**Road Safety**” for your children, please lead by example and use the crossings.

11. SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Our open door policy encourages a positive, mutually supportive relationship between members of the school community. The school believes education is a shared responsibility and works in partnership with parents and children to promote a supportive, caring environment. The school and the community seek to create an environment, which nurtures and values the individual child whilst pursuing academic excellence and achievement.

Parents are encouraged to actively participate in their children’s learning and those who can, work in classrooms with children, whilst others may be members of the numerous ‘Volunteer Groups’ which provide support, information or raise funds.

As part of our open policy with the school we run programs where students from the school interact with children at the kindergarten through the “Buddy” Program. A buddy will be assigned to both 3 year old and 4 year old kinder attendees.

Furthermore, specialist teachers like library, art and sport will be involved with teaching your child at the kinder as well as at the school, always under the full supervision of the Kindergarten teacher and assistant on duty.



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