WOLLONGONG WEST
PUBLIC SCHOOL

Kindergarten Handbook
2013
Dear Parents,

We hope your child’s time at school will be a happy and positive experience, most importantly beginning with the first year.

The staff and community at Wollongong West work hard to ensure that your children receive the best possible education. We believe that together we provide a positive, supportive and challenging environment within which the children are able to develop their unique abilities and talents.

We hope that the parents of our new students will also feel a part of our community. If you have any questions about our school or its organisation we would be only too happy to talk with you.

Nadine Risi
Kindergarten Orientation Organiser

Cathy Reade
Principal
School Details

**Telephone** 4229 2096
**Fax** 4226 5057
**Email** wollongwst-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

**Principal** Mrs Cathy Reade

**Assistant Principals**
Mr John Akhurst
Mrs Nadine Risi

**School Administrative Manager** Mrs Carolyn Cunningham

**School Administrative Officers**
Mrs Jan Renwick
Mrs Brenda Gregory

**Major Dates 2013**

- **Tuesday 29 January** Teachers return to school
- **Wednesday 30 January** Years 1 - 6 return to school
- **Thursday 31 February** Kindergarten students begin
- **Friday 12 April** Last day of Term 1
- **Monday 29 April** School Development Day. Teachers only
- **Tuesday 30 April** Students return for Term 2
- **Friday 28 June** Last day of Term 2
- **Monday 15 July** School Development Day. Teachers only
- **Tuesday 16 July** Students return for Term 3
- **Friday 20 September** Last day of Term 3
- **Tuesday 8 October** First day Term 4
- **Wednesday 18 December** Last day Term 4
How can you help your child get ready to start Kindergarten?

The following suggestions will assist your child to settle quickly and easily into school routines.

1. Talk to your child about school as a place where he/she will make new friends, play games, sing, complete art and craft activities, as well as learn to read, write and participate in mathematics, sport, environmental education and drama programs. Always talk about school in a positive way!

2. Make sure that your child can identify his/her own property. (Label everything clearly.)

3. Please teach your child the following skills if it is possible to do so before school starts next year. (It will save a lot of tears!) It would be helpful if your child:
   - knows his/her given name and surname.
   - can put on coats and jumpers (first one sleeve then the other - you'd be amazed the number of children who either freeze or overheat because they can't perform this simple task).
   - can do up shoes and buttons (a must during the swimming season).
   - can blow his/her nose and use a handkerchief correctly.
   - can wash his/her hands before eating and after going to the toilet.
   - can unwrap and eat a packed lunch and manage a drink bottle or container. Can identify the food he or she is to eat at "big lunch", and the food he/she is to save for recess. (Many children get very upset when they discover they have eaten their lunch meal and their recess snack at recess and then have nothing to eat at lunchtime.)

4. A healthy lunch is vital to maintain the child's ability to remain alert and to increase endurance while at school. Some suggestions:
   - a drink (fruit juice or flavoured milk - no glass bottles please)
   - a recess snack (fruit, muesli bar or biscuit)
   - a sandwich or salad for lunch (if your child brings a salad please make sure that it does not need to be cut up and can be eaten with the fingers)
   - a small muffin or cake as a treat to accompany the main lunch item.

(No lollies or junk food please!)

Due to anaphylaxis awareness, foods containing peanuts or other nuts are not to be brought to school. Thank you.
5. Many parents experience concerns over their child’s development at one time or another. Listed below are some indicators that there may be a problem and what the parent can do to have the problem correctly diagnosed and treated:

- **Speech** - lack of words, some sounds missing, words unclear, stuttering, some sounds being substituted by others.
- **Hearing** - lack of response when spoken to or to noises, unclear speech.
- **Sight** - clumsy, falling, bumping into objects, holding books close to eyes, squinting.
- **Poor coordination** - difficulty in balancing, walking downstairs, afraid of being off the ground, unable to successfully carry a drink, clumsy, awkward, unable to catch and throw a ball.
- **Thinking skills** - not being able to follow directions (e.g. pick up the book, put it on the shelf and bring me the truck), not understanding concepts of behind, in, over, under, full, empty; not aware that an action has a definite result.
- **Behaviour** - aggressiveness and lack of respect for others, extremely shy and withdrawn, lack of concentration and extremely active.

There are things that you can do if your child exhibits any of these symptoms. The first step to solving a problem is realising that there may be one. For health-related problems contact the Community Health Centre.

If worried about your child’s readiness to commence school you can:

- approach the school
- ask the staff for their opinion if your child attends a pre-school centre
- consult the School Counsellor (Mr Jordan - ph 4229 2096)
- approach the Illawarra Child Development Centre (ph 4228 4177)

**Developing Independence**

- Give your child simple duties to do around the house.
- Allow your child to pack his/her own bag.
- Admire work brought home and display it for a few days.
- Read to your child as often as possible. Let them read to you and others in the family.
- Reward or praise your child for thoughtful behaviour.
- Try to understand their reasoning and the way they think.
- Realise the potential of your child, ask for their best and recognise when they are giving it, even if it is not all you had hoped for.
School Hours

School commences at **9.00am** and it is very important that children be on time. Children who are late must bring a note of explanation for being late and collect a late pass from the office.

**The playground is supervised from 8.30 am.**

**BELL TIMES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Morning Assembly</td>
<td>9.00 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lessons commence</td>
<td>after morning assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>11.00 - 11.35 am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recess</td>
<td>1.20 - 1.55 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish</td>
<td>3.00 pm</td>
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</tbody>
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**Going Home**

Kindergarten children finish school at **3 pm** and should be collected from the cement quadrangle near the flagpole and ramp leading down from the building. The children will walk in 2 lines down the path and will only be allowed to go if they can see the person who is collecting them. Teachers like to ensure that each child is collected by a known adult.

If for any reason you wish to collect your child before 3.00 pm please call at the office for a release form which needs to be handed to the class teacher.

If you need to organise for someone else to collect your child please notify the class teacher in writing and if possible introduce them to the person who will be taking your child home.

**Absences**

If your child is prevented from attending school through illness or any other reason then a note must be sent to the class teacher. Notes explaining absences are required for long and short periods.

Late arrival and/or early departure from school are considered as partial absence and will be recorded in the class roll.

If you are planning a family holiday or your child will be absent from school for an extended period of time, an exemption from attendance can be applied for. Forms are available from the office.
Canteen

The school canteen will operate every day to provide quality lunches to the children at reasonable prices. Recess snacks are also available for purchase from the canteen. Each year a canteen price list is supplied to each family.

Children may go to the canteen for further purchases after they have eaten their lunch.

The canteen operator is Mrs Erin Bedford.

Communication

The school newsletter, the Crown Street Chronicle, is published each Wednesday outlining most school activities. It is emailed out to all families who have registered via the school website. Hard copies are available to families that do not have email access.

Various other notes are given out about different activities happening at school. Please check your child’s bag every day to see if a note has come home.

Personal Possessions

Please label everything your child brings to school. All clothing (including shoes), lunch boxes, drink bottles etc, must be clearly marked with your child’s name. Unmarked clothing is difficult to identify and expensive to replace, so please take the time to mark everything.

We discourage the children from bringing expensive toys or games to school.
Painting Shirts

Children need a painting shirt to protect their uniforms during art and craft activities. The shirt will need to have their name written on it. The easiest and most effective paint shirt is an adult's old T-Shirt. If the sleeves are long they can be cut off to suit the child. Plastic or vinyl aprons are not as suitable as many do not have sleeves.

Despite the best intentions paint does get on uniforms. The following is the best possible way of removing paint from any type of cloth:

- Separate the stained garment from the rest of the wash and rinse in COLD water
- Soak overnight in COLD soapy water
- Rinse in COLD water
- Hand wash in lukewarm water using ordinary soap
- Gently rub soap into stain
- Change the water if necessary
- Continue this process until stain is gone

Library Bags

The back sack your Kindergarten Orientation information is in makes an ideal library bag. Children need a library bag to borrow books from the school library to read at home.

A bag can also be made at home, 45cm x 35 cm with a drawstring at the top. Please label the bag clearly with the child’s name and class.
Sick Children

If children are sick before school it is wise to keep them at home or arrange for their care elsewhere. Sending them to school usually means a visit to the Sick Bay and a telephone call to you to come and collect them. Sick children achieve little schoolwork and the possibility of spreading infection is increased.

If your child becomes sick at school or has an accident, we will make every effort to contact you. For this reason it is essential that you notify us of any change of address, place of work, home or mobile telephone number. You are also asked to nominate someone else we may contact if we are unable to reach you.

Medication at School

We generally discourage children from bringing medication to school but should it be absolutely necessary please remember the following:

- Teachers are not permitted to give medication.
- Medicine is not to be kept in school bags or under desks.
- Medication should be labelled with the child’s name and dosage and handed in at the office. A note must accompany medication stating the reason for the medication and the time it is to be taken. You will be required to sign an indemnity form.

Problems

Your child’s teacher or the Principal is an approachable person who is only too happy to discuss any problems you or your child may be experiencing both at school or home. Children are often affected by changes in home situations, such as separation of parents, sickness or absence of a family member. It is in the interest of your child that the teacher is made aware of these changes.

If you are experiencing problems at home please feel that you can talk to the class teacher and similarly the teacher will contact you if your child is having problems at school. Effective communication between parents and teachers is important.

If you wish to see the class teacher, please make an appointment. Calling into the classroom during class time causes disruption to children and teachers. Teachers will be happy to see you before or after school or during lunch times if an appointment is made before hand. Sometimes a problem may be solved by talking to a teacher on the phone. Please don’t hesitate to discuss any problems or the progress of your child with the teacher.
Custody

For children involved in custody cases it is vital that the school be sure which parent has legal custody and whether any restraining orders apply to the other parent. Any documentation must be seen by the Principal and a copy of all custody orders will be taken.

Written permission must be given if you want someone else to collect your child at any time.

Parking

If you are transporting your child to and from school by car, please park on Phillips Ave. The internal car parks are for use only by staff, trades people, delivery vans and parents who have a disability tag on their car.

Road Safety

A children’s crossing is located on Phillips Ave. When the orange flags are displayed during the school day, the crossing is in operation. This means that if a child is standing on the kerb, motorists are required to stop to allow the child to cross.

Children crossing Crown St at the end of the school day are supervised by the teacher on bus duty. If accompanied by a parent or carer, children do not need to wait for the duty teacher.
The First Day at School

You will be asked to bring your child to school at an appointed day and time in the first week. Please try to be on time as the smooth running of the first day at school will help your child to adjust to school life.

When it is indicated that it is time to leave, please do so quickly, no matter how upset your child may seem. Children usually settle quickly after their parents have gone and soon become involved with what is happening in the classroom.

Teachers are most sympathetic to the needs of children starting school and will do all in their power to ensure that your child settles into school life.

The First Weeks at School

Generally the first weeks run smoothly and your child appears to be happy at school. Occasionally some children become reluctant to leave their parents after several weeks at school.

It is then that the parents must be firm and deal with the problem quickly before it becomes a major problem for you, your child and the teacher. Often a brief chat with the teacher will see this resolved.