Upper Swan Pre-Primary

Parent Information Booklet

2014
We welcome you and your child to Upper Swan Pre-Primary and look forward to a very happy and productive year ahead.

Thank you for choosing our school. We hope that your family has a long and happy association with Upper Swan Primary School. This information booklet has been produced to acquaint you with the operations of our Pre Primary.

AIM
The aim of Pre Primary is to provide your child with a safe, happy and secure learning environment which will develop their social, emotional, physical and intellectual ability.

SCHOOL BACKGROUND
Upper Swan Primary School has a long and proud one hundred and seven year history. The first school in the area was opened in 1857. It closed after four years. The school then existed in various forms off and on up until 1904. Upper Swan Primary reopened in 1905 and the school has existed continuously on this site ever since. None of the buildings are original, with the school having modern facilities in most areas.

Our professional and caring staff provides contemporary and inclusive learning opportunities. The school also boasts a vibrant community spirit and strong partnership between parents and teachers.

We are committed to building a quality relationship with you so that together, we can ensure our school is a happy and enriching experience for all children.

OUR VISION
Upper Swan Primary School aims to provide a positive and safe environment that enriches each individual child’s desire to learn, encouraging them to become happy, responsible, confident members of our community.

OUR VALUES
All people who learn, work and interact with Upper Swan Primary School share an educational environment founded on these key values:
- being the best we can be;
- showing respect for ourselves, each other and our environment;
- acting with honesty and integrity in all we do;
- taking responsibility for our actions;
- embracing and respecting diversity;
- demonstrating empathy for others;
- pride in our school and community;
- acknowledgement and Valuing of Australia’s first people, our shared history and our multicultural society;
- being active and valued members of the community.
As we enact these values in our daily lives we strive to achieve the following goals:

**Students aim to:**
- show responsibility in the applications of skills, knowledge and values in order to make appropriate decisions;
- learn constructively by participating fully in all class activities;
- demonstrate care and respect in the way they deal with others, particularly towards those who are perceived as being different.

**Staff aim to:**
- be responsive and approachable;
- recognise and care for the individual needs of all students;
- create an enthusiastic and positive learning environment.

**Parents, care givers and family members are encouraged to:**
- participate actively and constructively in their child’s education;
- show respect and support for the endeavours of staff in recognition of their position as dedicated professional role models;
- co-operate with the school in meeting the challenges and opportunities of educating our children.

**OUR BELIEFS ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING**
In the early years of schooling at Upper Swan, we have a strong focus on the ‘Whole Child’ and how he or she learns. Learning occurs across four domains of development – social, emotional, physical and cognitive.

At Upper Swan Primary School we monitor each child’s development in all four domains, recognising the growth and learning of the whole child.

Learning is developmental and occurs at varying rates from child to child, and in a relatively orderly sequence. We provide individual and small group learning plans to meet each child’s developmental needs, building on to acquired abilities, skills and knowledge.

Children are active learners, drawing on physical, social and cultural knowledge to construct their own understandings of the world around them. We encourage children to explore and investigate their own hypotheses, to find out and process new experiences and information.

**IMPORTANCE OF PLAY**
Play is an important vehicle for children’s social, emotional, physical and cognitive development and learning.

At Upper Swan Primary, learning is developed through daily opportunities to select and pursue both structured and unstructured learning and play experiences of their own choice. Children learn best in the context of a community where they are safe, supported and valued.
Upper Swan Primary is a ‘Friendly School’. Caring teachers and education assistants provide a nurturing and safe environment which focuses on teaching friendly behaviours to reinforce respectful and positive interactions and create a community of happy and caring learners.

We aim to help your child develop five friendly behaviours:
- speak in a friendly way;
- listen to others’ ideas;
- care about others’ feelings;
- share;
- take turns.

**OUR EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING PROGRAMS**
The early childhood curriculum focuses on the four domains of development, and includes seven of the eight learning areas:
- English;
- Mathematics;
- The Arts;
- Health and Physical Education;
- Science;
- Society and Environment (including history);
- Technology and Enterprise.

The Learning Areas are not always taught as stand alone subjects but are integrated within learning opportunities, experiences and activities. Our emphases are always going to be literacy, numeracy and social development.

The eighth learning area is Languages other than English (LOTE). At our school, Indonesian is taught to the older primary aged children.

**The Pre-primary program**
- The focus is mainly on the development of processes and skills that will underpin future learning.
- It is a planned program which values play and activity because young children learn best through experiencing and experimenting. Children develop skills within the play environment that provide a sound basis for learning.
- Literacy, numeracy, socio-emotional and physical development are the key emphases.
The program is planned in a way which provides experiences and activities that are suitable for children of this age group and developmental stage. Children will be given the opportunity to pursue activity, revisit and solve their own problems at their own pace. There is a balance of indoor and outdoor play as outdoors is considered an extension of the indoor program.

It values the continuing involvement of parents – it is especially important while children are still making the transition from home to school that parents are involved with and feel welcome in the Pre-Primary Centres.

PARENT SUPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT
There is a strong sense of community at Upper Swan. Parents enthusiastically support assemblies, sports carnivals, parent evenings, whole school learning events, excursions and parent/teacher meetings. They are actively involved in the school through a variety of ways. Many assist in classroom learning programs or provide support out of the classroom.

The School community is enhanced by the elected School Council that play a major role in contributing to school policies. An energetic and active Parents and Citizens Association plans and holds fundraising activities, community events and coordinates sub committees which have ensured that the school environment is being improved. Our school community looks forward to welcoming you to our school and having you involved in your child’s place of learning.

PARENT SCHOOL COMMUNICATION
At Upper Swan Primary, we are focused on building positive relationships between the home and school, enabling open and accessible communication. In February, your child’s teacher will invite you to an information session to discuss the specifics of the learning program, class processes and intended outcomes.

It is important to discuss any concerns you have regarding your child with the teacher as soon as they arise. We need to be aware of issues so we can address them.

We will also inform you of achievements and difficulties that your child is experiencing and special interests or friendships they may develop. Individual meetings to discuss your child's progress are always available and can be arrange at a suitable time throughout the year. Parents are required to keep the school informed of any change to address or care givers’ phone numbers. This is essential to allow quick contact with parents in an emergency situation.
ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

School days commence at 8.45am and finishes at 2.45pm. (Children brought to school prior to this time need to wait in the under cover area where they are supervised until 8.30am. Parents are responsible for arranging a reliable person/child (only year 7 children to pick up) to bring your child to the classroom to do a puzzle or read a book. Punctuality is very important so children are able to feel secure in their environment. Parents or nominated carers are expected to leave and collect their pre-primary children from school at the correct times.

Pre-primary Message Book
Please let us know (if it is not you or your partner) who is picking up your pre-primary child after school. We require parents to either write a note with the relevant details for your child’s teacher, or else fill in the message book in your classroom.

Collecting Children During School Hours
When collecting children early or when arriving late, parents are required to complete the classroom sign in book. This helps us keep track of all children we have in our care. It is appreciated if you keep early pick ups to a minimum as they can be disruptive.

ENROLMENT – KINDY AND PRE PRIMARY

The “application for enrolment” process that you followed to get a position for your child in to Kindy is repeated in Pre Primary. Acceptance into our Kindy program doesn’t guarantee automatic entry in to Pre Primary. The main rule that applies when working out who is offered places is the distance from the school “as the crow flies”. Children who live within our designated boundaries are guaranteed entry. The suburbs of Baskerville, Brigadoon, Millendon and Upper Swan fall within our boundaries. People who live in The Vines have a choice of schools that includes Upper Swan. If you are not sure of your status in relation to our boundaries, please check at the office.

Attendance Days
Attendance at Pre Primary is compulsory. Regular attendance is expected as it will ensure your child gains the most from this critical year of development. It is important that a regular attendance pattern is established as this sets the trend for future years. If your child is absent, please provide a short written explanation on their return. Punctuality is important. It would be appreciated if your child could arrive by 8.30am so they are ready to start school at 8.45am.
Term Dates
Term 1  Monday 4 February – Friday 19 April
Term 2  Monday 6 May – Friday 5 July
Term 3  Monday 22 July – Friday 27 September
Term 4  Monday 14 October – Thursday 19 December

ROSTERS
A morning parent roster will operate in each centre. Participating in the roster enables parents to observe the program in operation and also to observe their own child’s participation and progress. Your support makes a difference to all children.

It is anticipated that parents will be able to assist sometime through the term from 8.45am – 12.00pm (approximately). This assistance is greatly appreciated as it allows for smooth operation of the program for all the children. Please see the Pre-Primary notice board for more details.

FOOD
Children are asked to bring one piece of fruit or healthy snack each day which will be shared at “crunch and sip” time.
When the children attend full-time pre-primary a healthy lunch will also need to be placed in the container with an ice-brick on hot days.

We actively encourage healthy foods and therefore ask that NO lollies, chips or soft drinks are sent along.

PEANUT ALLERGY
Since 2005 the school has been working with parents and children over the issue of peanut allergy and anaphylactic shock.

Unlike some other allergies, anaphylactic shock has the potential to kill the child. The teachers have worked closely with parents to educate children about this.

Students: to be educated by parents and staff about the needs of children with allergies and how inappropriate actions could have a dramatic negative effect.

Staff: to engage students in regular discussions about this allergy the importance of awareness and vigilance. The teacher will encourage the students to develop the skills of self monitoring the foods and drinks they bring to school. Staff will remove food with peanut products if they are unsure. A simple replacement will be supplied through the canteen and the original food sent home.
Parents: to encourage their children while shopping to check labels carefully. Make sure that peanut associated products are not sent to school. Please endeavour to regularly remind children of the dangers for those with peanut allergies. Make sure other members of the broader family (if involved with their children AND the school) about the need to monitor the food products coming to school.

If you consume peanut products at home, please make sure your children wash their hands and brush teeth before they come to school. Check their uniform as well.

CLOTHING AND BAGS
It is expected that all Pre-Primary children wear the appropriate school uniform. This is available through the normal school channels with a parent being available on Wednesday mornings for ordering and collection of uniforms.

All children are expected to wear a hat during outdoor play. The school has a “no hat – no play” policy.

Each child will require a large bag for their work and notes. We ask that a spare set of clothes are kept in this bag as children sometimes get wet at the water trolleys or have the occasional toilet accident.

Please ensure all your child’s belongings are clearly labelled.

LIBRARY
Children will be involved in borrowing library books from the School Library in term 1. This will occur on a weekly basis. To borrow a book your child will require a material bag large enough to hold a big picture book approximately 30 x 40 centimetres and needs to return their book in good condition the following library day in order to be issued with another book or renew their book again.

SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS OF CONSUMABLES
A list is available from the Pre-Primary.

LAUNDRY
We will need assistance with the washing of towels, tea towels, dress up clothes, etc. Each week, one child will be given a bag of washing. Please wash and return the washing within the next couple of days.
ABSENCES
It is important that you inform us if your child will be absent from pre-primary due to illness or holiday – if your child is absent for longer than two weeks without notification he/she may be taken off the roll. If the reason is reluctance to attend or a problem of transport, please see the teacher about it as we may be able to assist.

HEALTH SERVICES
During the year the Health Sister attached to the school will see the Pre-Primary children to check on their general health and to diagnose any problems related to sight or hearing.

The Middle Swan Dental Therapy Centre (situated at Middle Swan Primary School) offers a free service to all primary school students.

NEWSLETTERSB
School newsletters are emailed every alternate Tuesday, so please make sure the school administration office has your current email address. If you do not have an email address, hard copies are available from the school office. The P&C also send out The Grapevine newsletter via email. Newsletters are also posted on the school website and facebook page.

PHOTO PERMISSION
You will be given a ‘photo permission’ sheet to complete seeking your approval to use your child’s photo on the school website, facebook page, in school publications and the year book. Children are only identified by their first name.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS AND CHARGES
Each year the Education Department makes available a grant that is spent on the day-to-day running of the school. There are times however when there is a need to provide extras, particularly in the areas of Art and Craft, Sport and a host of other activities for which equipment needs to be purchased. Therefore parents are asked to pay a nominal amount which helps us to defray these costs. This sum of money is classified as a voluntary contribution and is payable according to the following scale: Voluntary contributes for 2013 have not been set. As a guide, the contributions for 2012 are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One child at school</td>
<td>$50.00 per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two children at school</td>
<td>$100.00 per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three or more children at school</td>
<td>$150.00 per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P&amp;C Fundraising Levy (per family)</td>
<td>$52.00 per year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Charges
Charges are compulsory and must be paid in order for your child to participate. Charges are requested on a needs basis via a note from teachers and may include things like participation in excursions, watching visiting performers and additional resources for special activities such as cooking.
EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM
Upper Swan Primary School recognises that all children have different starting points, learning rates and previous experiences. Children learn to crawl, walk, talk and ride bikes at different rates. When children are learning to read, they too, progress at different rates. Our Early Intervention Policy allows us to cater for the individual needs of individual students through the development of Individual Education Plans. These plans allow work to be adjusted to suit individual needs. Parents will be notified if your child requires an intervention plan.
THE LAST WORD

It is important that the school and family work together to give each child a sound beginning to her/his learning cycle. To this end teachers and parents need to communicate to each other matters of concern and just as importantly, matters of praise. The school has a variety of Support Services available, ranging from Medical to Therapy and also related to learning. These services can be utilised if and when the need arises – however the need must be recognised and communicated in the first instance.

This booklet covers some of the aspects of pre-primary education. Do not hesitate to contact the pre-primary teacher concerning any matter relating to the pre-primary program or to your child.

We believe that a close relationship between parents, children and the Pre-Primary staff is essential to gain the best possible education for your children. To this end we welcome your interest, questions and involvement in the Centre. Together we can ensure that both you and your child have a successful and rewarding year.

You will be notified of the Pre-Primary meeting between parents and teachers in the first weeks of school.

How Parents Can Help to Develop Skills at Home

1. Independence
   a) Encourage children to dress themselves. It is desirable that all children wear school uniform.
   b) It is desirable that you allow your child to pack/unpack his/her own belongings to get ready for the day.
   c) Help your child to remember his/her library day, i.e. notice on fridge, bedroom door, etc.
   d) It is important that children are read to.
   e) Encourage children to do as much as possible for themselves.

2. To Improve Visual Skills
   a) Tidy their room. Learning to spot things out of place.
   b) Help in the supermarket – find matching labels.
   c) Hobbies – collect flowers, leaves, shells. Note size, shape.

3. To Improve Motor Skills – manage body skilfully and use hands in precise movements
   All kitchen activities – peeling vegetables and washing / drying dishes are excellent for motor skill development.

4. To develop left to right discrimination
   a) Table setting.
   b) Organise shoes in cupboards with ‘mates’.
   c) Sorting socks and arranging in pairs.
5. **To Strengthen Auditory Skills**
   a) Train your child to listen to – clocks, timers, whistles to signal events.
   b) Answering the telephone and identifying different voices.
   c) Listening to the radio – children brought up on TV find it difficult without the visual clue.
   d) Reading aloud to your child.

6. **To help Concept Development**

   **Categorising**
   a) Sort laundry – light/dark clothes, cottons/woollens.
   b) Put away groceries – sorting into goods for the refrigerator, or the pantry, fruit/vegetables, fresh/canned.

   **Learning about numbers**
   a) Table setting.
   b) Cutting up a cake.
   c) Helping with shopping.
   d) Playing games.
   e) Numbers in magazines, books, signs, prices, packaging and number-plates.
   f) Sort, organise and count collections of things like: clothes, toys, books, shells, rocks, birthday candles.
   g) Ask questions such as: How much is there? Will there be enough? How big is it? How many? Does it fit? What might happen if…? Which way will I go?
   h) Talk about time – How long will it take to get there? Time to get up / time for lunch / time to tidy up / time for dinner.

**To help children develop a clearer picture of the world**

   a) When visiting shops, banks etc, explain their functions.
   b) Learn about their neighbourhood – allow them to see that 1 or 2 routes may lead to the same destination.
   c) Teach days of the week by linking to specific activities.

**Literacy skills**

   a) Provide books for your children to read.
   b) Read with your child and encourage them to join in with favourite books or favourite parts.
   c) Ask children to predict what might happen in the stories being read.
   d) Ask them what their favourite part was.
   e) Provide children with pencils and paper for their own use.
   f) Encourage children to have a go at writing.
   g) Provide opportunities for children to write cards, thank you notes or letters to friends or relatives.
h) Play games using letter names and sounds.
i) Find words that start with the same letter as your child’s name.
j) Ask questions and encourage full sentence answers.
k) Play with rhyming words, nursery rhymes, finger plays and action songs.
l) Encourage your child to recount experiences or talk about their drawings, writing and favourite books.
m) Draw attention to print in the environment, e.g. point to the stop sign and say “This says stop”.