School today, any school, is quite different to the one that you may remember. Educational philosophies and teaching methods have changed considerably.

Today's teachers have moved away from set expectations at the end of each year, realising that children have different skills and talents and learn at different rates.

Achievement is measured in Levels, from Early Stage One in Kindergarten to Stage 3 by Year 6. Classroom teachers will be happy to show parents further details of the Early Stage One Level within which Kindergarten children are working.

Your children will display increasing achievement along a continuum of outcomes in all the key learning areas of Primary Education. These are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative and Practical Arts, Personal Development, and Health and Physical Education.

**Children enter kindergarten with a range of abilities and maturity.**

Teachers will look towards these things to gain some initial idea of a child's level of achievement:

- self confidence with peers and other adults
- willingness to share and take turns
- curiosity and willingness to learn new things
- personal knowledge i.e. name, address, telephone number, birthday
- counting ability (up to ten objects)
- ability to write first name
- ability to communicate in sentences
- understanding of relationships such as colour, shapes, size
- steadiness on tasks i.e. ability to concentrate for 15-20 minutes on an activity
- social interactions and ability to play with peers
- ability to listen attentively
- ability to use pencils, scissors, paints, glue

**Ways parents can help their child’s positive transition to school:**

- talk to your child about school in a positive, exciting way where she/he will meet new friends, play games, sing, and make things
- allow your child to stay with relatives or friends for short periods, so that he/she will accept the fact it is not always possible to be with parents
- send your child to school on time each and every day when possible
- escort children who walk to and from school or inform the school if this is not possible
- ensure your child knows the safety rules for bus travel
- explain out of bounds, boundaries, never leaving school grounds
- teach your child his/her address
- encourage correct pencil grip
- use of lower case letters not capitals
- ensure your child has appropriate toilet skills including washing hands
- ensure your child can use a tissue independently
- practice putting on and taking off shoes - tying laces
- practice putting on and taking off a jumper
- encourage your child to reply in sentences
- expect them to do as they are asked and wait their turn
- encourage independence and confidence through things like setting time frames, expecting your child to pack away their toys and assigning simple household tasks
- clearly label your child's clothing including raincoats, lunch boxes, drink bottles, library bags and other equipment. If your child cannot read his/her name use a symbol with their name e.g. a red star
- purchase lunch boxes that are easy to open
- explain which is their 'little lunch' or recess and which is their 'big lunch'
- send adequate water in drink bottles (often frozen drinks don't defrost in time for recess) and show them how to drink from a bubbler
- ask the class teacher how you can help
- encourage your child by admiring work when it is brought home. Give paintings and craft work a place of honour for at least a few days
- help your child to clean out his/her school bag each afternoon - you might discover an important note or two
- select suitable stories, picture books, radio and television programs for your child and discuss them with him/her
- ensure that they come to school with a good command of language
- encourage your child to speak clearly - never baby talk to your child
- LISTEN to them when they talk to you
- READ aloud to them daily and teach them nursery rhymes, poems and songs
- ALWAYS let class teachers know if there is a change of routine for going home.
- ALWAYS be on time to pick up your child. A small child can become very distressed if you are even 5 minutes late.
- ALWAYS leave your child with a smile and a hug or kiss
Suggestions for Parents – The First Years of School

When a child first goes to school, there is great change for that child, and for his or her family. We believe that you, the child’s parents, are a most important link in the educational chain. We have reproduced the suggestions below with the conviction that together parents and teachers can make your child’s experience of school an excellent and enjoyable one.

PARENTS AND TEACHERS AS PARTNERS

The better the bridge between home and school, the better the education: that’s the message of recent research. We look forward to our partnership with you, and hope that you’ll really become involved in the life of the school. We will do our best to communicate with you about what we are doing in our school and why. We will try to answer your questions as honestly and completely as we can.

DON’T UNDERESTIMATE YOUR CONTRIBUTION

You were your child's first teacher, and even now that he or she is entering formal education, you retain that important position.

THE TRANSITION FROM HOME TO SCHOOL

Starting school is a big change for children. Often the hardest part is being away from the family and joining a group of 20 other children. Anything you can do now to help will make school a happier place for your child. Here are some ways in which you can support and build on the classroom experience:

- **Provide opportunities for shared language experience:**
  
  So many places to go... the city, the zoo, the sea shore, art galleries, concerts... So many things to do... paint, make, cook, share and discuss. Getting ready to go or do will mean making plans, and of course there will be many recollections to be discussed afterwards.

- **Provide opportunities for your child to spend some time away from the family.**
  
  This will help your child to become more independent and to build self-confidence. Why not arrange an overnight stay with Grandma, a friend or a relative? Teddy or a favourite toy should always act as chaperone! Take the time also to encourage your child to play with friends from a nearby street.

- **Encourage Questions**
  
  Five and six year olds are full of questions about why and how. They may annoy from time to time, but such questions are at the heart of investigating, and therefore learning. Listening to and answering these questions seriously will help your child remain an active and curious learner. Don’t be afraid to ask questions of your child. (Questioning isn’t easy, and parents, like teachers, need practice!). Parents need to be continually asking questions which require more than just a yes/no/don’t know answer. Don’t be put off when your child’s answer to “What did you do at school today?” is “Nothing”. Be more specific – ask about friends, craft, reading time, singing, games played, stories heard.
Encourage Children to Discover for Themselves

We all have to learn to take responsibility for our own learning. Young children are natural investigators. Don’t always tell them all the answers, but do provide the means for them to find their own answers. Much problem-solving is learnt through play. Child psychologist, Jean Piaget said that ‘..play is the child’s work.’ Encourage active imaginative play, through dressing up, playing shop or mothers-and-fathers or school. A special messy place, such as a verandah or rumpus room, will help here.

Share Reading Experiences

At five and six the bedtime story is as important as ever. After the bedtime story, allow some quiet moments for reading in bed. Share new stories and poems, perhaps borrowed from the local library, and rediscover the fun of old favourites. If in doubt about which books to choose, ask your librarian or your child’s teacher to recommend some.

Encourage Drawing and Writing at Home

When is a child ready to begin to draw and write? As soon as he or she is able to hold a crayon. Out of the scribble will eventually emerge pictures and words. Keep on hand a store of pencils, paper, paint, crayons, cardboard, safety scissors, etc.

Sometimes Scribe For Your Child

Write down a story (statement) as your child tells it, then read it back several times. Display the “story” for the whole family to share, on the wall, notice-board or fridge.

Put TV Viewing in its Proper Perspective

Most children enjoy watching TV, but they also need time for playing, reading, being out of doors, - time for doing lots of things. Choose carefully what and how much your child watches on television. Sometimes ask questions about the program. The ABC’s Play School gives lots of ideas for children to do and make at home.

Ensure that Your Child Has a Good Knowledge of the Route to and from School

Could your child find his or her own way home, if necessary? Can he or she say his or her name and address clearly? Learning these things can be made into a game – there is no need for pressure or drills.

Teach Your Child Basic Road Safety

Every child should have a basic understanding of road signs and road crossing procedures.

Get to Know Your Child’s Teacher as a Friend Whom You and Your Child Both Share

The benefits of a good relationship between teacher and parent are obvious. Don’t hesitate to communicate with the teacher as you see the need – before confusion arises or problems develop.

Support Children in What They Do at School

Display at home art and craft done at school, as well as stories written. Help children find things to take for school activities or themes – make-and-do-boxes, objects for the Science table, clothes and objects for dress up and imaginative play.
Homework and Study

BE INTERESTED

- Ask your children about their day at school.
- Ask your children to check their bags for homework.
- Ask questions that start with "Show me....", "Tell me...", "How was..." or "What did..." to encourage your children to talk about school.
- Listen to what your children tell you.
- If you have younger children, spend some time each day listening to them read, helping them learn their spelling words etc.
- Praise your children when they are successful.
- If your children do not do well at something, encourage them to keep doing their best.
- Find out if your school has access to an after school study centre.

ENCOURAGE HOMEWORK AND STUDY

- Homework is not compulsory for Kindergarten students.
- Kindergarten students may do 5-10 minutes per day, if they are willing to do so.
- Provide your children with a suitable homework and study area. This area may include:
  - a table and comfortable chair
  - good lighting
  - school equipment such as folders, paper, pens and pencils, a sharpener and liquid paper
- Try to keep noise and distractions to a minimum. If possible, turn off the TV.
- Encourage other family members to support these students where possible e.g. older brothers and sisters can help with homework, going to the library etc.
- Other good places to study are libraries, after school study centres etc.

BE ORGANISED

It is important for your children to use their time effectively when studying

- Help your children select a regular time for studying.
- Help your children be prepared for the next day by making sure homework is done and packed in the school bag.
- Remember to set aside time for regular breaks when doing homework and study during the school week.

It is important for children to have free time on weekends.

Supporting your children in homework and study lets them know their education is important to you.
How To Help Your Child....

Allow them to experiment with a variety of implements and surfaces:-

- chalk on chalkboard
- crayon on paper
- detergent foam on plastic
- paint on plastic or paper
- felt pens on paper
- felt pens on whiteboards
- fingers in sand
- fingers in paint
- charcoal on newspaper

Praise their scribbles, drawings, patterns and letter - shapes. Respond to this early handwriting as though it is real handwriting.

Encourage them to write on a daily basis.

Encourage drawing from as soon as the small hand can clutch a crayon or pencil - out of the scribble will eventually emerge pictures and letter words.

Sometimes scribe for your child - that is, write down a 'story' (any statement) as your child tells it. Then read it back several times, pointing to each word as you say it.

Supply letters or words or names at your child's request. Keep an alphabet and posters on the wall, make plenty of small books available and play 'writing' in every possible way.

Listening, talking, reading and writing together make up our language. For young children, development of effective talking and listening skills is likely to assist in the task of learning to read.

Some specific ways in which parents can help include:

- **TALK** about why and how you are doing things around the house.
- **TALK** about places you visit with your child. Talk about things you see, hear, smell, taste and touch.
- **LISTEN** to your children and encourage them to talk to you about their experiences.
- **READ** and **TELL** stories frequently. Try to use different types of literature - stories, nursery rhymes, poems, alphabet and number books.
- **GIVE** your children BOOKS for presents on special occasions.
- **ENROL** your children in the local library, and visit it regularly to keep up a varied supply of books.
- **GIVE** the family time to talk with each other by sometimes turning the TV off.
- **LET** your child “read - along” with you. By sometimes pointing to the words as you read, you are helping the child match what is heard to what is seen, as well as giving the idea of left-right direction.
- “**I SPY**”, played around the house or out in the car, is a useful way of developing awareness of labels for things and how words start.
- **READ** a single story or a story your child knows, and, as you read, leave out words that would-be easy to fill in the missing word. Help with those missed.
• CUT out comic strips from newspapers or magazines, past them on cardboard and cut them into individual pieces. Children can put them in an order which tells a story. The child’s story can be written on bits of cardboard and put underneath each frame of the comic strip.
• LABEL objects to help children match things they know as the printed names: cut out pictures of everyday things (tree, house, etc) and write a separate label in lower case letters. Your child can match each word to its picture.
  - label objects in the bedroom (bed, wall, etc). Occasionally take them down and play a matching game.
• AFTER an outing ask your child to tell you a little story about it. Write the story down. Afterwards you can read the story together or individually. Collect these stories to make a child’s book to be shared with family and visitors.
Children Learn What They Live

If a child lives with praise, He learns to appreciate.

If a child lives with fairness, He learns justice.

If a child lives with security, He learns to have faith.

If a child lives with approval, He learns to like himself.

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he learns to find love in the world.
Dear Parents/Carers,

To help your child to ease his way into "big school" we would like you to fill out the following information sheet and return it to one of the Kindergarten teachers on the date of your child’s first day of Transition. We will be using these sheets to get to know your child in order to better cater for individual wants and needs. We will also try to group children with friends if possible. Please feel free to discuss anything with the class teacher.

Child’s Name:_____________________________  Preferred Name: __________________

Parents/Carer’s Name: _____________________________________________

1. What pre-school/day-care centre has your child attended? __________________
   For how long did he/she attend? _________________

2. How does your child cope with pre-school/day-care in regards to playing with other children, being away from you and participating in the day?

3. Has your child formed a close friendship with another child/children who will be enrolling at our school in 2008 and who will attend the Orientation days?
   ________________________________________________________________ (child's name)

4. Does your child know any child who is in Kindergarten at our school this year?
   ________________________________________________________________ (child's name)

5. Does your child have a favourite pet or person?
   ________________________________________________________________

6. What are your child’s likes and interests? (eg Story-time, painting, fishing)
   ___________________________________________________________________

7. Are there any activities which your child dislikes or in which he/she lacks confidence? (eg Music, speaking in a group, puzzles etc)
   ___________________________________________________________________

8. Who are the family members in your household?
   ___________________________________________________________________

9. What are the ages and names of brothers and sisters?
   ___________________________________________________________________
10. Is your child allergic to anything? ________________________________

11. Does your child have any special needs which would be relevant to his time at school?
_____________________________________________________________________

12. Has your child been screened for speech, hearing, vision etc. Please list by whom, when and what was discovered. (Copies of relevant reports would be appreciated)
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

13. Was your child premature? ________________________________

14. Do you have any particular concerns about how your child may settle during the Transition sessions or at the beginning of next year? (eg very clingy, toilet accidents, doesn't always seem to hear you etc).

15. Have any of your other children been involved in special programs eg Reading Recovery?
_____________________________________________________________________

16. Any other comments? ________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

Thank you for completing this form. This information about your child’s stage of development will help us to program to meet your child’s needs and to ease your child’s way into school. We look forward to seeing you next year.

Kindergarten Teachers.
To help the teacher know and understand **your child** more quickly and to help him or her settle more happily at school, please complete the following list of statements, and add any relevant comments. Please answer honestly.

These response sheets are confidential, and will be used in the best learning interests of all our special new students.

Read each statement carefully and place a cross (x) under **Yes** or **No** as it applies to your child.

Thank you

Allyson Carey
Assistant Principal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Knows full name</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tells the name of the street where he/she lives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Recognises his/her own name in print</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Writes own name</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Understands the dangers of traffic, electricity, fire, water and high places</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Recognises his/her own belongings</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Talks in sentences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Makes people outside the family understand what he/she wants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Remembers little songs and rhymes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Dresses him/herself most of the time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Washes his/her face and hands by him/herself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Manages to visit the toilet by him/herself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Colours in a shape staying within the outline given</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Uses scissors at home and can cut out simple shapes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Is persistent and will finish a task</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Asks for help when required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Likes to help with little household tasks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Chooses his/her own TV program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Watches TV programs with interest and likes to talk about them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Demonstrates a sense of humour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Interested in looking at books</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Likes to have stories read to him/her</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 *</td>
<td>Seems to worry a great deal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 *</td>
<td>Cries very easily when upset</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Likes to play with other children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 *</td>
<td>Is very quiet most of the time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Likes best to play by him/herself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Manages to look after his/her own belongings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Is careful when using other children’s belongings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Often has temper tantrums when upset or corrected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Co-operates most of the time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Shows an interest in computer/technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Displays bullying/tendencies to dominate others</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>Readily accepts correction/guidance</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Has a positive outlook on life</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Makes friends easily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Maintains eye contact easily</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>Asks relevant questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Obey rules most of the time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Holds a pencil using the correct grip technique</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Enjoys learning new things</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Is very restless or active, never stays still for a moment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Is rather frightened of new situations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Is looking forward to school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Separates easily from parents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you would like to give the teachers any further information, please do so here.

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

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