Pre-Primary Parent Handbook

2015
St Joseph’s School Prayer

Dear Lord,
We ask you to bless St Joseph’s School Community.
We pray that you guide us to be just and to see,
listen, speak and act like St Joseph.
May we be inspired by our Founders
to be the best that we can be.
May we always keep Jesus at the centre of all we do.

St Emilie       Pray for us
St Marcellin    Pray for us
St Joseph       Pray for us

AMEN
**Vision Statement**

*Founded on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, and as witnessed by our founders, St Joseph’s School, is a caring community committed to preparing all members to succeed through the promotion of Christian values from a Catholic tradition and the development of life-long learning skills.*

In the words of our founders, St Marcellin Champagnat and St Emilie De Vialar:

“To educate children well one must love them, and love them all equally”

“Go, and with what you have and will receive, do all the good you can”

**Fidelity**

Fidelity is the motto of St Joseph’s School. Its origin lies in the respective mottos of our founding Orders, The Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition and the Marist Brothers. Fidelity was chosen as the motto when the two schools amalgamated in 1971, as it was a characteristic shared by both Orders.

Fidelity is more than faithfulness. To the Sisters it means a commitment to the end and refers to the degree of engagement a person brings to a task when doing God’s will. For the Brothers it means persevering in all things whilst being true to the call of God.

Fidelity keeps alive the spirit of our founding Orders as we live as a school community committed to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

**Mission Statement:**

*Centred on Jesus Christ, we inspire and nurture our students to reach their full potential in a Catholic School Community*
Aims
The aim of St Joseph’s School is to offer the best education possible to its students. In the first instance, the endeavour is to create a school environment, following the spirit of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition and the Marist Brothers in order to:

- Develop and nurture the spiritual dimensions of each student; to enable each student to understand the truths of the Catholic faith and to bear witness to this by a Christian way of life; to provide an educational program which facilitates the integration of faith, life and culture.
- Develop fully the intellectual dimensions of each student emphasising inquiry, problem solving and the application of technology skills in learning.
- Help each student develop an awareness of social responsibilities with particular reference to the family, the Church and the community.
- Help each student to grow in appreciation and awareness of the values of his/her culture and of other cultures.
- Assist each student to develop the sense of vocation inherent in their nature and to assist each to acquire the skills necessary to achieve it, in order to enable them to attain personal growth and fulfilment in a constantly changing world.
- Develop each student’s physical fitness, skills, competitive spirit and sense of fairness in sport, and to expand capacity for the constructive pursuit of leisure through sport, physical recreation, community endeavour, cultural and social activities.

Pre-Primary Education
The transition from home to school can be very exciting, though sometimes daunting to uncertain young children. There are new environments, new people, new rules, lots of things to do and learn and no familiar, re-assuring parent immediately at hand.

Pre-Primary is now the first year of compulsory, formal education for your child and is an important time for conceptual development related to future school curricular. It is therefore, essential that the children are given time to absorb and reflect on experiences.

It is appreciated if you can advise us if your child is not going to be attending school, either verbally or in writing [an email will also be accepted]. A written note is a compulsory requirement for any/all absences. Any unexplained absence will result in a text message being sent to parents, advising of the absence. A text back with the child’s name and reason for absence is accepted as a written note as well.
Educational Aims
The Pre-Primary learning environment in a Catholic School aims to foster opportunities for each child to develop spiritually, emotionally, socially, physically and intellectually by providing and coordinating educational activities that will:

- Aid the development of a positive self-concept;
- Offer first-hand experiences in social relationships;
- Encourage independence and self-regulation;
- Promote the development of gross motor, fine motor and coordination skills;
- Develop auditory discrimination;
- Develop visual and motor perceptual skills;
- Provide stimulating experiences, which encourage the children to think, analyse problems and arrive at different possible solutions;
- Provide experiences which stimulate language development through hearing and using language;
- Provide learning through playing opportunities;
- Help each child develop an awareness and understanding of concepts necessary for on-going life and educational experiences within the Christian ethos and Catholic faith;
- Incorporate parents as partners in the educational process.

*The rate and extent to which these aims are fostered will depend on each child’s individual development.*
Starting Pre-Primary
In 2015, all Pre-Primary students will commence school full time, Monday to Friday, on Monday, February 2, for the school year.

Arrival & Departure Times
Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Fridays 8.30am-3.05pm
Thursdays [Early Close] 8.30am-2.30pm

Pre-Primary supervision will commence at 8.20am each day for bus children only. School times are 8.30am to 3.05pm. St Joseph’s School and all of the other Northam schools have Early Close on a Thursday, which brings the end of school time forward to 2.30pm.

Parents are asked to please wait until the teacher opens the door before you drop your child at Pre-Primary. The first 15 minutes is used to greet and settle the children so they are ready for a busy day ahead. Please feel free to come inside and settle your child with a story or puzzle before you leave. Parents are to ensure that an adult accompanies their child to the door so that the teacher can acknowledge his/her arrival.

Similarly, the children will not be allowed to leave the Pre-Primary room until an adult arrives to pick them up. Please inform staff if someone other than a parent is going to pick up your child. If for any reason you are going to be late to pick your child up, please phone the school to let us know. Children easily become upset and worried if parents are late or if they are always last to be picked up. Please make every effort to pick up your child on time.

Parents are asked not to arrive at school before 3.00 pm in the afternoon to collect their children. The sounds of parents talking and younger siblings playing can be very disturbing when teachers are saying final prayers and organizing students for home time. If you arrive earlier you will be asked to sit and wait in the undercover area of the school.

If you are late coming to school, i.e. after 8.45am, please report to the Admin Office first and sign your child in, bringing a Green Card with you to hand to the teacher. If for any reason you need to pick your child up early, again, you need to go to the Admin Office first to sign them out, then bring the Green Card to hand to the teacher.

The siren and bell times is provided at the back of this booklet. Please ensure you read this as there are variations in the normal school week.
Bags
All children are expected to bring a bag to Pre-Primary each day. All bags must be clearly labelled with your child’s name.

The children will be encouraged to be responsible for their own belongings and this is easier to foster if they have their own bag into which they can place all the things they must take home at the end of each day (for example: lunch box, jumper, paintings, box constructions, notes etc). Large bags are more suitable as they can usually accommodate these things! Bags may be purchased from the Uniform Shop.

Calendar
At the beginning of the school year, parents are issued with a Calendar outlining all major events such as student free days, assemblies, etc for the coming year, by term. Please keep this Calendar on your fridge or pin-up board for easy reference.

Canteen
Lunch orders from the Canteen will be available from Term 1. Menus are available from the Admin Office or can be viewed on the School’s website. Pre-Primary students bring a sealed envelope containing the money with the student’s name, class and order written clearly on the outside. Lunch orders are put into the class basket at the start of the day and delivered to the class at lunch time.

Classroom Books
Books will be available from Pre-Primary for home borrowing. The selection will include stories, simple readers with more complex readers added later in the year, if the need arises. All books need to be entered in a folder with the date they are borrowed and returned completed.

Clothing/Uniform
As Pre-Primary is now the first year of school, students will wear a uniform. The St Joseph’s sports uniform has been chosen for all Pre-Primary students to wear each day and is available from the School’s Uniform Shop. The summer uniform for boys and girls consists of their House polo shirt (Leonard - red, Marcellin - blue, Lenihan - green and De Vialar – yellow), black shorts, blue or black school sandals or predominantly white sports shoes and a school hat. The winter uniform is the school track suit, House polo shirt and hat.

Please check the weekly newsletter for Uniform Shop opening hours as we always advertise if there is a change to the times the Shop is open and additional times are offered during holiday breaks.
Communication Books
Students from Years Three to Ten are issued a blue St Joseph’s School Diary while students from Pre-Primary to Year Two have a Communication [exercise] book which is provided by the school, for teachers and parents to write comments, information or requests. Notes will also be glued into this book.

Crunch & Sip
Children need a piece of fruit or vegetable, whole or prepared (we expect fruits such as oranges and mandarins to be peeled or cut ready to eat), in a separate container to the lunch box, snacks and a freshly filled water bottle every day.

Fruit & Snacks
We recommend that your child bring easy or clean finger food like cheese, sultanas, natural popcorn or chunks of polony. Please do not supply yoghurt or fruit pots as a snack food.

Government School Bus Services
If you wish to send your child to school using the Government School Bus [orange] Service, then you will need to take a copy of the School Bus Services pamphlet “Log on before you hop on” and the SBS Conveyance Allowance Claim Form. Alternatively, you can access the website to register your child: www.schoolbuses.wa.gov.au

Hats
The School uniform hat is worn during outdoor playtime and for Physical Education lessons. This is compulsory throughout the year. The School has a ‘No Hat – No Play’ policy. If your child does not have a hat, they will have to sit on the verandah in the shade. Hats can be purchased from the Uniform Shop.

Hair
It is School policy that girls with longer hair are required to tie it back with black, blue and yellow hair decorations only. Boys are required to have neat short hair (not less than a number 4), no fashion haircuts and hair that does not touch their collar. The Head of Primary and the Principal may ask parents to cut or alter the style of their child’s hair.

Head Lice Information
Whilst your child may not be affected, head lice are extremely contagious. Parents are asked to inspect their child’s hair and scalp, looking for the following symptoms or signs, which could indicate the presence of head lice:
- General – child scratching his/her head excessively
- On the pillow – fine black powder or paler coloured material
- In the hair – nits (lice eggs) seen as cream to coffee coloured specks stuck near the hair roots.
- Lice – these are small white to greyish parasites about as big as a pinhead.

Should your child have contracted this condition, do not be alarmed. Although unpleasant, it is easily treated with specialised products available from your Chemist ~ OR by using the 10 day hair conditioner treatment. Any type of hair conditioner may be used by applying thickly to dry hair and combing through with a metal fine-tooth comb to remove live lice and nits. Ten days is recommended as researchers have found that some eggs may hatch as late as 9-10 days after being laid, and so this period enables the reproductive cycle to be broken. Advice on insecticide treatment is also provided by the Department of Health with a Fact Sheet, available from their website. Any article which may harbour lice, such as clothes, towels and all bed linen, combs, brushes and scrunchies should be washed in hot water and detergent.

**Helping Your Child Write Their Name**

If you are helping your child learn to write and recognise their own name, please be aware that at St Joseph’s School the required font is Victorian Modern Cursive. Names are written with only a capital letter for the first letter (never all capitals) and the capital letter is larger than the following letters.

```
Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm
Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
```

It is very hard for a child to “unlearn” incorrect letter formations.

**Labels**

Please ensure that all clothing, footwear, drink bottles, fruit and lunch boxes and school bags are clearly labelled with your child’s name so that lost property can be kept to a minimum. Any item that is misplaced will be placed in a tub located in the entrance of the St Marcellin Performing Arts Centre.

**Library**

Primary students borrow a book from the Library during their weekly Library lesson. Reading and Library books are taken home in the blue St Joseph’s bag (compulsory item on the book list). If the previous week’s book is not returned, the child cannot borrow a new book. Students who have lost their library book will be charged for a replacement book.

**Nail Polish**

It is School policy that students do not wear nail polish to School.
News or Show and Tell
Students are encouraged to bring to School interesting items which may prompt news telling and further discussion. However, this is limited to natural objects such as a bird’s nest or colourful rock, not expensive toys or electronic equipment.

Parent Help Roster
We welcome and greatly appreciate help from Mums, Dads, Grandparents and other family members in Pre-Primary. This is a very important part of our program. However, in the first two weeks of school parent help is not needed, as this time is spent getting to know the children and settling them into the Pre-Primary routine.

A parent help roster will be located on the door, for you to fill in. [A roster is also available to assist us with the laundry and play dough making]. Please write your name next to the dates you are available to help.

If you are able to spend any time with us in the classroom, please sign in at the Admin Office first and collect a Pre-Primary Helper badge.

If you have any special talents you could share with us please let us know. For example; musical talents, sewing or carpentry.

Pets and Animals
Occasionally, we have requests for pets and animals to be brought to School by parents. We welcome these visits but they must be sanctioned by the teacher, an adult must accompany the animal and they are to leave the School at the end of the visit. No animals are permitted to remain all day.

P & F
The St Joseph’s Parents’ & Friends’ Association (P&F) meet at 7.00pm on the second Monday of every month during school terms (but not during holidays). The P&F are active in raising funds to support the education of students at the School and are currently improving the playground equipment for our students. Please come and join the meetings or volunteer your assistance to this hard-working group of parents and their families.

Toys and Jewellery
All toys are to be kept at home as they may be lost at School. The only jewellery girls may wear is a cross on a chain, a watch and one pair of stud (not hoop) earrings. Boys may wear a watch but no ear decorations.
Rules and Limits

- “Hands Off!” is the rule at St Joseph’s School. Children are expected to keep their hands, feet any other body parts and objects to themselves.
- When in a group situation, the children are encouraged to raise their hand to speak.
- After using puzzles / activities, the children are expected to help pack away the materials and equipment.

- Children are to walk inside the classroom and on all hard surfaces such as under the verandah area and the walkways to prevent accidents.
- Children are encouraged to look and listen to the person speaking to them and to respond to greetings or requests.
- Children are expected to always use their manners.
- Children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating, cooking and after visiting the bathroom.

VALUES OF EACH LEARNING AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WRITING &amp; DRAWING CORNER:</th>
<th>PAINTING:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Expression of individual ideas.</td>
<td>• Eye to hand coordination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Confidence in the use of tools for writing and drawing.</td>
<td>• Manual dexterity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• An awareness of the conventions of print.</td>
<td>• Creativity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• An awareness that the written word conveys meaning.</td>
<td>• Appreciation of colour, form, design, rhythm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Spatial orientation – size, shape and direction.</td>
<td>• Emotional release.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Control of small muscles in hand and wrist.</td>
<td>• Independence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DRAMATIC PLAY:</th>
<th>LIBRARY CORNER:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Role-playing – imitation, identification and emotional release.</td>
<td>• Pre-Reading Skills – L to R eye movements, read from top to bottom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Language development.</td>
<td>• Text is spoken language that is written down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cooperation, sharing, inter-personal relationships.</td>
<td>• Prediction and projection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creativity and imagination.</td>
<td>• Use of picture cues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing knowledge of difference between fantasy and reality.</td>
<td>• Development of imagination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Concentration</td>
<td>• Respect for books for enjoyment and sources of information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Experimentation</td>
<td>• Beginning of library skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAINTING:</td>
<td>BLOCKS:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Eye to hand coordination.</td>
<td>• Creativity and imagination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Manual dexterity.</td>
<td>• Matching, comparing, classifying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creativity.</td>
<td>• Concepts of size, shape, number and equivalence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appreciation of colour, form, design, rhythm.</td>
<td>• Eye to hand coordination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emotional release.</td>
<td>• Problem solving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Independence.</td>
<td>• Cooperative play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Language</td>
<td>• Large and small muscle control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Development of small muscles of the hand and wrist.</td>
<td>• Language.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANIPULATIVE MATERIALS/PUZZLES:</th>
<th>SAND PLAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Perception of size, space, form, colour, pattern.</td>
<td>• Exploring and experimenting with texture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develops concentration.</td>
<td>• Constructing and building creatively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fine motor control and coordination.</td>
<td>• Dramatising experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Language development.</td>
<td>• Develops eye to hand coordination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Problem solving.</td>
<td>• Develops fine and gross motor coordination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accuracy and precision.</td>
<td>• Opportunity for communication/vocabulary extension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Matching.</td>
<td>• Absorption and attention in play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Number skills.</td>
<td>• Problem solving, investigation, observation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Creativity with construction sets.</td>
<td>• Acceptance of rules and limits – sharing – cooperative and collaborative play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Memory.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Awareness of colour.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WATER PLAY:</th>
<th>CRAFT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Provides exploratory and sensory experiences.</td>
<td>• Develops eye to hand coordination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Widens perception.</td>
<td>• Develops manual dexterity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is a soothing, relaxing medium.</td>
<td>• Creativity and imagination in construction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Makes no demands on a child who fears failure.</td>
<td>• Develops skills in using particular tools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develops hand to eye coordination.</td>
<td>• Emotional release.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is a solitary or social experience.</td>
<td>• Exploration of shape, size and texture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develops concentration.</td>
<td>• Creativity and imagination in construction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develops beginning mathematical and science concepts.</td>
<td>• Develops skills in using particular tools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develops problem solving.</td>
<td>• Emotional release.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stimulates language development.</td>
<td>• Exploration of shape, size and texture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Development of concepts: empty, full, float, sink.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Talk to your Child**

Children learn through talk. Talking is one of the most important things we do. It is a way of sharing our feelings and thoughts and helps us to form our ideas and react to new experiences. Children need time to talk, listen and ask questions to help them learn.

Young children learn about their world every day through play. When children play, they actively discover how things work, explore ideas, develop understandings, think creatively and practice new skills in a way that is fun, relevant and satisfying to them. When playing, they copy what they see around them in everyday life and use it to make sense of the world in which they live. Talking and playing are ways young children learn best. Parents who provide plenty of opportunities for their children to play and spend lots of time talking and playing with them each day are giving their children the best possible support for learning at Kindergarten, Pre-Primary and school.

### TALK PLAY LEARN

Take time to talk with your child.
Answer questions and encourage curiosity.
Listen to what your child is saying.
Keep track of things that interest your child.

Provide time and space for play.
Laugh with your child; let learning be fun.
Allow your child to take risks and experiment with new things
You support children’s learning when you value their play.

Let children feel good about themselves as learners.
Encourage your child to offer solutions to simple problems.
Accept your child’s uniqueness and pace of development.
Recognise that play is the way children learn.
Notice efforts and celebrate achievements.

### Hints on Reading to a Child

Build story-reading into a regular routine. Perhaps it can become part of the bedtime ritual that the child looks forward to and that can later develop into personal, quiet reading every evening before lights-out. Involve the child in selecting the story or book.
Relax. Sit the child on your knee or by your side, or make sure that he or she is lying comfortably in bed. Try to ensure that the child can see all the pictures. These help a young reader to follow and predict the story.

Talk about the cover, the illustrations, and the story's title before you begin. With a beginning reader, sometimes run your finger under the print to show that your voice flows with the line of type.

After the story, or when there is a natural break, for a minute or two, without destroying the magic, you might ask questions like these:
  Why do you think he did that?
  I would have liked to have seen that, wouldn't you?
  What would you have done if….?
  What would have happened if….?

Moving On
When your child moves on to Year One, they will already be familiar with the school environment. A transition program will be in operation later in the year.

Until then, let’s have a wonderful and exciting time, and make it as rich in experiences as possible for the children!

Questions and Queries
Please do not hesitate to speak to the school office staff, Pre-Primary teachers or Education Assistants if you have any questions or queries relating to your child. The staff may be approached either before or after school, or alternatively an appointment may be made after school if necessary.