Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Information Booklet

UNITY IS STRENGTH

MEL MARIA
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Excellence in Catholic Primary Education

#MakingADifferenceEveryday

Welcome from the Principal

Dear Parents

Welcome to our highly valued Early Childhood Campus, where excellence in Early Childhood Education takes centre stage with an unwavering commitment to fostering a nurturing, inclusive, and stimulating environment. At the core of our philosophy is the recognition that families are the foundational educators, and our mission is to collaborate seamlessly with parents to empower their child's holistic development.

Our dedicated team of highly qualified professionals, stand as pillars of expertise and passion, crafting purposeful spaces and classrooms, designed to cultivate curiosity, inquiry, exploration, and creativity. Learning through play, these elements lay the foundation for each child's flourishing journey within our school.

Understanding the paramount importance of strong family-school partnerships, we are proud to uphold our identity as a Catholic school guided by the principles of Jesus. We believe that unity between parish, home, and school, amplifies the potential for success. Our shared vision, rooted in Gospel values, permeates every facet of our curriculum and school life, creating a harmonious and purposeful educational experience.

Central to our approach is a meticulously designed facility that underscores a holistic approach to learning, with a special emphasis on well-being. Recognising the pivotal role of social, emotional, and physical wellbeing in a child's development, we are committed to providing an environment that nurtures these dimensions of growth.

Our mission is founded on **an unconditional belief in the potential of every child.** We aspire to not only **'ignite the heart'** with passion but also **'inspire the mind'** to reach its full potential, setting a trajectory for lifelong learning.

We understand that the selection of an educational environment for your child is a significant decision. To facilitate a seamless transition from home to school, we offer the guidance and experience of our Vice Principal, whose two decades of expertise in supporting young children and families, ensures a smooth integration into our community.

We strive to remain at the forefront of research and advancements in the pedagogy of three to eight year olds, demonstrating our unwavering commitment to providing the best possible start to your child's educational journey.

We invite you to join us in this enriching partnership, as we honour each child's individual strengths, interests, and experiences. Your trust in us is cherished, and we look forward to embarking on this academic voyage with your family, united in the pursuit of excellence.

Kind regards

Paul Hille

Principal
Mel Maria Catholic Primary School

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Our Philosophy

Mel Maria Catholic Primary School is a place where students receive an education based on Gospel values, which aims to develop their full potential and promote a spirit of inquiry and a thirst for knowledge.

By using holistic early learning and developmental approaches, we provide unique learning experiences that cater to the diverse needs of every student, utilising outdoor education and nature pedagogy to impart meaningful experiences. Drawing inspiration from play pedagogies, teachers create progressive educational experiences that challenge students to think critically and creatively.

Our core belief is that God's presence is everywhere and that 'EVERY child can succeed'. We aim to help our children express agency by providing rich environments and experiences of wonder and awe of God in their lives and in the world around them so they can learn to 'Make A Difference Everyday.'

Our goal is to create genuine and respectful partnerships with families; we honour parents as their child's first educators and value their input in decision-making.

Our teaching practice instils literacy and numeracy standards in a balanced manner. At the same time, intentional play promotes curiosity, memory, relationships, communication, and emotional regulation in students, encouraging them to be lifelong learners.

Our comprehensive approach to education and development empowers students

"Play is the highest form of research"

Albert Einstein

to achieve more success, efficiency, and innovation while promoting mental wellness, emotional intelligence and social skills.

Holistic education recognises the interconnectedness of various aspects of an individual's life, including spiritual, cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development, and by integrating these components, provides a comprehensive learning experience that engages the whole brain and reinforces neural connections, leading to personal growth and lifelong academic success.

Early Years Learning Framework

Educational Programs

The aim of education programs for three and four year olds are to:

- Encourage self-help and independence in young children.
- Enhance the development of the whole child across the physical, social and emotional, language, cognitive and spiritual domains.
- Assist children to develop a positive self-image and self-efficacy.
- Encourage parent participation and develop strong partnerships between children, schools and families.
- Provide an aesthetically pleasing environment that encourages learning in the young child.
- Create a safe, secure and nurturing physical and human environment.
- To acknowledge, value and celebrate each child's individuality.
- Support parents in relation to the child's development.
- Include flexibility in the program that allows for individual needs of each child.
- Provide a developmentally appropriate program for three and four year old children based on the current national requirements for early years.

Through each of these, we provide children with a foundation for successful and lifelong learning, supported by school and family partnerships.

Program Practices

- Holistic, integrated and interconnected approaches
- Responsiveness to children
- Play-based learning and intentionality
- Learning environments
- Cultural responsiveness
- Continuity of learning and transitions
- Assessment and evaluation for learning, development and wellbeing

Learning Outcomes

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

General Information

Parking and Driving Etiquette

We ask that parents exercise extreme care and caution when driving in and out of the school. Please be considerate at all times when dropping off and picking up. Please do not double-park, or park and leave your vehicle in the drive-through areas or on street verges.

- Please observe 'Staff' carpark bays, and 'Reserved' and 'No Parking' signs.
- School drop-off and pick-up times are very busy, and we ask that you are always mindful of our neighbours, and practice patience and courtesy to ensure the optimum safety of all our children.
- Parents may park inside the school grounds between the church and the school hall – the entry is via Evershed Street.
- Parents may also park in designated parking areas off Evershed Street and North Lake Road.
- It is recommended that Kindergarten and Pre-Primary parents use the North Lake Road Carpark.
- Parents are reminded not to double- park in the Kiss and Drive zones on Evershed Street. Double parking creates hazards and makes it difficult for traffic to flow.
- Year One and Year Two may use the drive-through system that operates each afternoon from 2.55pm.
- Please refer to our website for the most up-to-date information regarding parking and drive-through.

Arrival and Departure Times

Kindergarten

Doors open: 8.30am

Start time: 8.40am

Day ends: 2.50pm

Pre-Kindergarten

Doors open: 8.45am

Day ends: 2.50pm

Children must be dropped off and picked up at the classroom door by an adult.

If at any point in time there is to be a change in your child's routine (e.g. if someone other than one of the child's parents is picking up your child, or if you are picking your child up early), please notify us by completing the communication book located in their classroom. Siblings may not pick up children from Pre-Kindergarten or Kindergarten.

Please endeavour to arrive on time to pick up your child. We understand that unforeseen circumstances may arise; however, if this is the case, please call the school office on 6330 0550.

Absentee Notification

If your child is absent from school, please email the class teacher before 8.45am.

A phone call to the school office is acceptable but must be followed up by an email or written note to the teacher.

Signing In and Out

When a child arrives to school after 9.15am, please ensure the parent/carer signs the child in at the school office. If a child is picked up from school early, please ensure the parent/carer signs the child out at the school office.

Parents and Friends (P&F) Association

Our school P&F Association is responsible for fundraising to provide teaching aids and amenities, and to encourage parent involvement and creating a sense of community.

The P&F actively supports the work of Catholic Education Western Australia. All parents are members of the P&F Association, and your participation in monthly meetings, social and fundraising functions is greatly encouraged and appreciated.

Parent Roster

We encourage, welcome and appreciate all families to be involved at school through rosters and special events. Family helpers share in our planned learning experiences and are engaged in preparation for future activities. It enables you to observe your child in their learning environment and to share in their learning experiences.

It can be more difficult to spend this time with your child if siblings accompany you on roster, so we ask that families please make other arrangements for siblings when they are rostered on.

Birthdays

Your child will be celebrated in their classroom on their birthday by their class teacher. In addition, to help celebrate your child's birthday, parents are welcome to roster themselves as parent help on or close to their child's special day.

Please do not share sugary treats as part of your child's birthday celebration.

Parent - Teacher Interviews

Parents are always welcome to visit their child's classroom. Throughout the year, parents are welcome to ask for an interview with the teacher to enquire about their child's learning journey or progress. On some occasions, teachers may request a meeting to discuss their child's progress. All Kindergarten parents are invited to Parent-Teacher interviews in Term 1 and Term 4.

Allergy Awareness

We are an 'allergy aware' school. It is important that parents/carers inform the school of a child's allergies and the severity of the allergy (medical forms are available from the school office). Parents must ensure that these forms are updated annually and provided to the school office.

*Nut allergies - It is difficult for a school to be completely nut-free due to the widespread use of nuts in food production, but every effort is made to minimise the risk of exposure to known allergens.

Medical Conditions and Medications

Parents/carers must inform the school of a child's medical condition (medical forms are available from the school office).

If a child needs medication administered at school, families need to fill in the relevant medical form available from the school office. All medication, whether prescribed or non-prescribed, must have a pharmacy label with the child's name on it.

Sun Safety

Please apply sunscreen to your child before they come to school. Please note that our school has a 'NO HAT, NO SUN' policy.

Please ensure that your child has a wide-brim hat clearly labelled with their name on it that will remain at school.

Personal Belongings

The children are asked not to bring in toys or personal belongings except at the teacher's request (e.g. an item for news). Lost or broken personal items can cause unnecessary distress.

Shoes

As it is safer and easier to climb without shoes, we suggest the children take their shoes off for outdoor play. Please send your child in shoes that they can manage to take off and put on by themselves and are clearly labelled with their name.

Pre-Kindergarten Information

What to bring to Pre-Kindergarten

1. **Navy tote bag** (given out at Orientation)
2. **Wide-brim hat** (see Sun Safety)
3. **Morning tea** – pack a healthy snack (fruit, veggies, cheese, yoghurt) in a separate clearly-labelled container. Please do not include sweets/lollies/chocolates.

   **We are an allergy-aware school so please refrain from including nuts/nut spreads (see Allergy Awareness).*
4. **Lunch** – pack some healthy lunch items (sandwiches, crackers, cold meats, veggie sticks/salad, yoghurt, cereal bars, fruit) in a separate clearly-labelled container. Please do not include sweets/lollies/chocolates.

   **We are an allergy-aware school so please refrain from including nuts/nut spreads (see Allergy Awareness).*
5. **Insulated lunch bag** – please provide an insulated bag or an ice brick/pack to contain their lunch.
6. **Drink bottle** – clearly-labelled bottle with fresh water.
7. **Change of clothing** – clearly-labelled change of clothes and underwear in a ziplock plastic bag. This can remain in your child's bag until required.

Clothing

Children need to wear casual and comfortable play clothes that can get wet or dirty and allow them to participate fully in all activities.

Clothes should also be easy to manage for toileting. Please supply clearly-labelled change of clothes and underwear in a ziplock bag in their bag.

Note: We strongly advise that your child is toilet-trained before joining our program. However, if this is not possible, your child must wear pull-ups. Please send in extra pull-ups to each session.

Pre-Kindergarten Daily Routine

At the commencement of each session, all children will be welcomed at the door. Before entering, please assist your child in placing their bag on the assigned bag area located outside the classroom.

Children are encouraged to come into the classroom and feel free to choose where they would like to play.

It is important that each child feels happy and comfortable in the Pre-Kindergarten environment. Please feel free to stay with your child as long as they need you. The teachers will work closely with parents/carers to ensure that your child is given the best chance to settle at their own pace.

We have a flexible timetable with learning indoors and outdoors and mealtimes in between. If you have any questions or queries, please approach your child's teacher.

Kindergarten Information

What to bring to Kindergarten

1. **Navy tote bag** clearly labelled (available from the Uniform Shop).
2. **Navy homework satchel -** clearly labelled (available from the Uniform Shop).
3. **Morning tea** – pack a healthy snack (fruit, veggies, cheese, yoghurt) in a separate clearly-labelled container. Please do not include sweets/lollies/ chocolates.

   **We are an allergy-aware school so please refrain from including nuts/nut spreads (see Allergy Awareness).*
4. **Lunch** – pack some healthy lunch items (sandwiches, crackers, cold meats, veggie sticks/salad, yoghurt, cereal bars, fruit) in a separate clearly-labelled container. Please do not include sweets/lollies/chocolates.

   **We are an allergy-aware school so please refrain from including nuts/nut spreads (see Allergy Awareness).*
5. **Insulated lunch bag** – please provide an insulated bag or an ice brick/pack to contain their lunch.
6. **Drink bottle** – clearly-labelled bottle with fresh water.
7. **Change of clothing** – clearly-labelled change of clothes and underwear in a ziplock plastic bag. This can remain in your child's bag until required.

Clothing

To help provide your child with a sense of identity and pride, a Mel Maria Kindy T-shirt is available from the Uniform Shop located at the Pater Noster Campus.

Children need to wear casual and comfortable play clothes that can get wet or dirty and allow them to participate fully in all activities. Clothes should also be easy to manage for toileting. Please supply clearly-labelled change of clothes and underwear in a ziplock bag in their bag.

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