

ST AUGUSTINE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kindergarten Parent Information Book



Our Motto

For God and Country

Our Mission

St Augustine is a welcoming Catholic school community, committed to fostering faith-life development.

Children are nurtured and encouraged to reach their full potential in an environment fostering respect, responsibility, tolerance and self-worth.

Our Vision

At St Augustine, the school community works together in providing spiritual guidance for its students. Inspired and enriched by the teachings of Jesus, students are encouraged to attain 'great heights' in all they do.

Our Values

Nurture

Assist

Guide

Live

Embrace

Contact Details:
34 Gladstone Road Rivervale
Phone: 08 9260 3200
Fax: 08 9362 4775
<http://web.staugustines.wa.edu.au>
email: admin@staugustines.wa.edu.au





Welcome!

The School Board welcomes your family to St Augustine Primary School Kindergarten. This handbook outlines general information regarding the Kindergarten program. We look forward to your involvement throughout the year and we hope you and your child will have an enjoyable, educational and rewarding year with us as they continue their learning journey.

We are an extended family where your child will be valued, respected and nurtured. Our qualified teachers encourage every child to grow, learn and develop in their own time. Each child will learn to *spread their wings* and continue their journey into their schooling life feeling confident and prepared.

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Why Kindergarten?

Kindergarten endeavours to help children develop in the following ways:

Socially

Children will develop so that they can interact with their peers and adults in a confident and respectful way. They will also come to an understanding of the community and the world in which they live.

Physically

Children will develop their large and small movements to help them use their bodies to their full potential and to assist them in control needed for 'formal' education next year.

Emotionally

Children will become secure in their Kindergarten environment and become independent members of the group.

Intellectually

Kindergarten is an ideal environment for the stimulation of your child's language and thinking processes. We hope to increase your child's auditory, visual & problem solving skills.

Experience

Life is made up of experiences and the more you have the better you are able to cope with life and its joys and problems. Your child's ability to learn to express him/herself both in oral and written areas is determined to some extent by the variety of experiences he or she has both before and during formal education. Kindergarten gives children the chance to try a large variety of experiences, in the company of children the same age and at similar stages of development.

St Augustine Kindergarten Key Principles:

- Children are recognised as being powerful human beings who have come into life equipped with a lot of rich potential
- Children are listened to and respected
- Children's work is authentic and meaningful to them
- Children's deeper level of thinking is encouraged and celebrated
- Children and teachers are both learners
- Children inspire and respect each other
- Children use many forms of expression to communicate their ideas– such as through music, art, construction or building
- Children, Parents and Teachers form the community of learners.

The classroom is set up into learning areas that provoke curiosity, inquiry and exploration. The children have the opportunity to engage in play situations individually or in small groups with the emphasis placed on social interaction and conversation.

The Kindergarten Educational Program

Belonging, Being and Becoming

The Kindergarten Educational Program is guided by a national Early Years Learning Framework mandated by the Australian Government which, through a series of principles, practices and learning outcomes, sets out key ideas about the ways in which we work with young children in our care. Fundamental to the Framework is the view that children's lives are characterized by three important ideas—that of *Belonging*, *Being* and *Becoming*.

Belonging is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they belong because of the relationships they have with their family, community, culture and place.

Being is about here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just “be”- time to play, try new things and have fun.

Becoming is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.

The goal to provide the highest possible degree of childhood education and care is a priority at St Augustine and in striving to achieve this, the school is working towards attaining set qualities as set out by the new National Quality Standard. This initiative is divided into seven areas and consists of guiding principles, quality areas, standards and elements. These areas have been identified by research as being the most important to ensure that the safety, health, well-being and educational and developmental outcomes of children can be met.

The quality areas of **Belonging, Being, Becoming** are:

1. Education Program and Practice
2. Children's Health and Safety
3. Physical Environment
4. Staffing Arrangements
5. Relationships with Children
6. Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities
7. Leadership and Service Management



At St Augustine Kindergarten, we aim to create a warm, caring and supportive environment for all children. We acknowledge that building safe and secure relationships is important for successful learning. We want your children to get the most from their Kindergarten experience and to grow up as happy, caring and independent people. An important objective for the year is to build your child's self-confidence and esteem. In order for children to develop and grow they need to feel good about themselves and feel confident enough to attempt and experience new and different situations. Educational objectives can only be fulfilled when a child feels happy and secure whilst they are here at the Kindergarten. Our educational objectives compliment the most important, our

Catholic ethos of respect and love for one another and thus, develop the values of a Christian Community.



Relationships Matter!

More About the Program

The Kindergarten Program consists of a blend of intentional and unstructured play based on the needs, interests and abilities of the children. Learning experiences are both child and teacher initiated and takes place in an exploratory way through children participating in a wide range of hands on' activities. Children are encouraged to learn through doing, listening, making mistakes, experiencing and trying again.

In our program, there is a predictable routine to the day which provides the children with a sense of security. There are certain materials that are always available for the children to choose such as playdough, books, paints, blocks and equipment for imaginative play. In addition to these set materials there are organized teaching experiences planned to challenge and stimulate children to become effective learners.

Early Numeracy and Literacy skills are targeted in our Kindergarten Program; a focus learning area is used to enhance the children's interests and develop key concepts and skills that are appropriate to the children's age and readiness.

St Augustine Kindergarten program aims to:

- provide a smooth transition from home to school
- create a happy, secure and motivating environment
- develop the child's ability to experience wonder and awe and reflect on God
- help each child develop a positive self-image
- encourage children to become self-reliant and to be able to make choices
- encourage parent interest and participation.

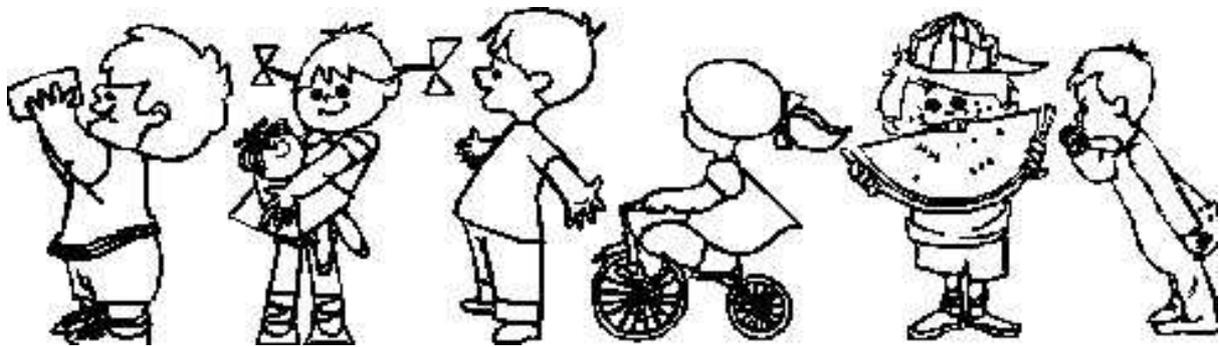
Learning Through Play

The Kindergarten program endeavours to provide a playful and educational experience that is concerned with the development of each child as a whole person. It is planned and flexible and takes into consideration the children's prior experiences and builds on their current knowledge. It recognises that learning can occur at any moment and so fosters an environment in which all interaction, experiences, routines and events, planned and unplanned are utilized to promote children's learning and development.

Importance of Play Based Learning

Play features prominently in the Kindergarten environment at St Augustine's and is of significant value for the child. Play is the vehicle through which learning takes place and serves to develop a range of skills. Play provides the opportunity for children to explore and learn to understand the world around them as they come to communicate, discover, imagine and create. Play enables the teacher to observe what a child can do, their social interaction, their way of thinking and their language development and, provides the opportunity for the educator to scaffold children's learning and growth. A variety of play opportunities are provided in a variety of Learning Centres inside and outside in session times.

Types of play evident in the Kindergarten environment include: sensory, construction/deconstruction, dramatic, exploratory, manipulative, physically active and creative.



Important Information

Staff

At St Augustine Primary School Kindergarten our team is made up of a dedicated Kindergarten teacher plus 2 teachers' aides, and we pride ourselves on our caring, professional and dedicated staff. All children will be treated with respect, love, kindness and understanding. Building unity and teamwork among staff through in-service programs ensures a happy, joyful, stress-free environment where staff look forward to coming to work each day which then has a positive effect on the children. The Centre is staffed in accordance with the Child Care Regulations and to the levels of staff Qualifications required in each room. Staff will continue to stay up to date with current research, trends and information within the Early Childhood field through various in-service training courses as often as possible, and are encouraged to further their qualifications. All staff hold the following:

- Working with children check
- First Aid Certificate
- Asthma & Anaphylaxis Training

Mat Session

This is a time when routines are practised, good listening and speaking skills are reinforced, new concepts are introduced, literacy and numeracy skills are developed through discussion and activities, group participation is encouraged, stories are read and children are involved in music and movement activities.

Indoor Activities include:

Blocks, manipulative materials, imaginative play (dress up and home corner) reading area, drawing, colouring, cutting, pasting, collage work, box construction, painting (using a variety of mediums) modelling with play dough, sorting, threading, puppets, puzzles, games and use of technology.

Do not always expect your child to bring work home from Kindergarten. Socialising with peers through play is even more important. Some of the work produced will be placed in a work sample folder which your child will take home at selected times during the year.

Outdoor Activities

Include opportunities to develop gross motor skills through the use of the playground/climbing equipment, sand and water play, ball skills and games.

Packed Lunches

Please ensure that the children's lunches contain an amount of food that the children would normally eat for lunch. Morning tea is at 10.50, for morning tea your child requires a packed morning tea in a small labelled container. Suggestions include a piece of fruit or suitable raw vegetable (e.g. celery, carrot); dried fruit; cheese and crackers. Lunch is at 12.50. Your child requires a labelled water bottle.

Hats & Sun Protection Policy

The school has a 'no hat-no play' policy. Please ensure that your child has a labelled hat with a large brim at school every day. SPF 30+ should be applied prior to dropping off your children. If for some reason your child requires a specific sunscreen protection please ensure you supply it, and please advise your child's educators of this requirements.

Personal toys

Personal toys are to be left at home as the loss or accidental damage to them can be upsetting for the child. They can also prove to be a distraction in class. There may be opportunities in the year when the children will be asked to bring in an item and talk about it to the class. Your co-operation in this matter is important.

Dress

It is important that children feel comfortable and free to play so appropriate 'play clothes' are recommended.

Clothing will need to be suitable for "messy play" (sand pit, play dough, painting) and

climbing activities. Clothes should be manageable for the child to go to the toilet without adult assistance. Please have spare clothing available in your child's bag.

Optional Kindergarten T-shirt available in the Uniform shop.

Closed in shoes or sandals are recommended; sports shoes on allocated sports day. Jackets, jumpers and hats are to be labelled with your child's name. Please no lace up shoes.



Birthdays

On their birthday children are welcome to bring patty cakes or another individual treat for each of their classmates. Please check with Kindergarten staff as to how many children are in the class and if there are any allergies. For children with specific dietary needs, parents please speak with the Kindergarten teacher early next year.

Health Management

Accidents/Injuries

All accidents/injuries will be recorded on an accident form noting specific detailed information about the accident/incident. Depending on the nature of the injury, parents may be notified by phone, prior to pick up. In the case of major accidents an ambulance will be called. It will be the parent/guardian's responsibility to cover any ambulance fees. Please ensure you state clearly on your enrolment form your private health cover details if applicable.

Illness

Children should be kept at home if they have not fully recovered from viruses, coughs, colds or infectious diseases.

Small children interact closely together and are likely to pass on bacteria and viruses. If your child is absent, please phone the Office. All absences of more than three days need to be covered by a written note.

Immunisation

We encouraged all parents to keep up to date with immunisation schedules. However we also respect that it is a personal choice as a parent to not immunise your child. If there is an outbreak of an infectious disease within the centre and your child is not immunised they will need to be excluded from the centre for a period of time. Centre management will consult health professionals if the need arises.

Government Benefits; It's important to remember that some Government payments such as Family Tax Benefit Part A supplement, Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate will only be paid for children who are fully immunised or have an approved immunisation exemption.



Allergies

A School based form will come out early in Term 1 for you to complete regarding allergies to food or other health concerns. This is important, as we do like to 'cook' in Kindergarten.

Please be aware that St Augustine Primary School is an 'allergy aware' school.

Medication

All medications must be given directly to the teacher who will ensure parents complete an Authority to Administer or Self Administer Medication from the School Office. Prescribed medication will not be administered if the child's correct details are not on the label or if the medication has expired.

Parent Information

School Parent Communication

The weekly newsletter is available on the School's website. The newsletter contains items of whole school and individual class news, coming events, community notices and school policies. A Term Calendar is also published at the beginning of each term, on the website which advises the school community of the important dates during this period.

Kindergarten notices are also issued outlining special activities and other relevant information pertaining to Kindergarten.

The weekly program and daily highlights are displayed on the class notice board.

Parent Responsibilities

As Kindergarten is often the first big step away from home all day for a child, it is very important that there are strong communication links between parent and the Kindergarten staff.

You can make a positive contribution to your child's Kindergarten year by: -

- Encouraging independence – over the Christmas holidays, practise putting on shoes and socks, dressing themselves, opening their own lunchbox & drink bottle, open their own food wrappers, pack and carry their own bag
- Help teach life skills – learning to play fair, accepting disappointments, responding in an appropriate way and waiting their turn. As your child is now part of a much larger social network, individual needs of the child remain important, however, there are also rights of the group to consider
- Encourage daily courtesies – morning greetings, using individual's name
- Encourage your child to recite poems or sing songs that have been learnt at Kindergarten
- Ensuring you are punctual in collecting and delivering your child to Kindergarten each day

Children should be delivered and collected by an adult at all times. We do not allow older siblings to collect children from Kindergarten. If you are unable to collect your child, please write in the communication book located near the entrance door who will be picking your child up for that day/week. This will allow the teacher to dismiss your child to someone other than yourself.

- Helping in rostered duties is an opportunity for you to spend some time in the class with your child and their peers and emphasises to your child that school is important. We recommend that younger siblings do not attend roster if possible. It is important to remember that your time at Kindergarten is for the benefit of the child attending. Anything seen or heard in the Kindergarten regarding other children must remain confidential. Please support the teachers in this matter
- Please inform the school and teacher of any change of address or telephone number as they occur
- Taking an active interest in Kindergarten activities. Try and spend some time with your child after his/her day at Kindergarten and if possible display some of your child's work at home
- Children at this age can be very literal and take everything as 'word', as a result of this misunderstandings can occur. If this is happening and you are unsure about any matter, please see the teacher directly
- Kindergarten children often come home with lots of stories about their day. Please encourage your child to share their experiences. If you find your child speaking about another child, please ensure it is always in a positive light.

Keeping the Classroom Teacher Informed

There are opportunities for an informal chat with the classroom teacher before and after the Kindergarten session. If you have any concerns or questions regarding your child and would like to have a more in depth conversation, please make an appointment.

The teaching staff is unavailable for discussions and meetings on Wednesday afternoons due to staff meeting commitments.

Furthermore, we acknowledge that parents know their children best. Please keep the staff informed of matters concerning your child's health, well-being and changes at home that could affect his/her participation. As Kindergarten is often the first big step away from home for a child is very important that there is a strong communication link between parents and the school. If we reciprocate in keeping communications open and up to date, then we can ensure Kindergarten is a positive experience for your child.

Delivery and Collection

Educators will welcome families and children on their arrival and seek to engage them in the day's activities. We encourage the parents/guardians to stay for the first 20 minutes of the session to reduce separation anxiety and ease your child into the day's activities.

Please don't hesitate to hand over any other information about your child that the

teacher may need to know in regards to caring for your child throughout the day.

Authorisation and collecting children

The names and contact numbers of all people authorised to collect children from the Kindergarten must be included on the enrolment form. Any changes to these authorities must be advised to the administration staff by the enrolling parent/guardian as soon as possible.

Absences

Please ensure the school is notified as soon as possible if your child is unable to attend.

Orientation Play Date

Orientation & transitions

Starting childcare can be a difficult transition for the family. We aim to make the transition for you and your child as easy as possible. Families are asked to come into the centre for an "Orientation" where you will be informed of services we provide, meet the staff that will be looking after your child and so we can answer any questions or concerns you may have. We will then begin the "Transition" process so that your child can start to become familiar with the environment, staff and other children. We advise that you and your child attend a minimum of 3 transition sessions, each session up to an hour & a half, free of charge. We encourage a comfort toy/blanket during this time as something familiar your child can use for security in their new environment. This process will make it easier on your child to move into our centre environment. Once the transition process is completed your child is now ready to begin their new journey. This is only a guide and transitions into the centre should be planned to cater for the individual needs of each child and their family.

Separation Anxiety

"Separation anxiety" is the distressed reaction children have when parted from their parents or guardians. It's common and a completely normal part of Early Childhood development. It can start as early as 6 months of age and continue throughout the Early Childhood years when a child is introduced to new environments. This behaviour should stop once your child has developed a sense of security, formed bonds with educators and developed an understanding that you will be returning to collect them. If at any time you have any concerns in this area please do not hesitate to speak to our staff, as they have many years of experience and knowledge within the Early Childhood profession.

The St Augustine School Board

The School Board is an important institution in the school and carries out specific functions in accordance with a Constitution issued by the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia and with the authority of the Bishops of Western Australia. These include:

- planning for the present and future operation of the school
- assisting the Principal in the financial management of the school

- serving on selection panels for the employment of staff
- liaising with the Principal with respect to school policy and matters.

The election of Board Members is made at the Annual School Community Meeting in accordance with the School's Constitution.

St Augustine Parents & Friends' Association

The St Augustine Parents and Friends' Association (P&FA) is an integral service which relies on voluntary members, and is open to all parents of students attending the school and any other interested persons. Meetings are held once a month, and are listed on both the term planner and advised via the newsletter. The P&FA aims to:

- foster co-operation and bring about harmonious relations among all members of the school community
- assist in the development of school facilities
- assist in the conduct of any functions organised in connection with the school
- assist the Principal and staff of the school in carrying out their functions.



2017 Term Dates

Term 1	Wednesday 1 February – Friday 7 April
Term 2	Monday 24 April – Friday 30 June
Term 3	Monday 17 July – Friday 22 September
Term 4	Monday 9 October – Friday 8 December

Student Free Days will be confirmed at the beginning of 2017

The School's Google Calendar contains all important dates & is updated regularly

2017 Kindergarten Session Times & Classes

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 8.50am to 2.50pm

Weekly Specialist Learning Classes:

Music – 30 mins

Sport – 30 mins (Please wear sport shoes)

Physical Education – 45 mins (Please wear sport shoes)

A class timetable will be sent home early in Term 1 to inform you of the days and times for each Specialist Learning Area.

Days for these will be confirmed at the beginning of 2017

Throughout the Year

In Kindergarten, new things are constantly introduced into the classroom to create an environment of curiosity and exploration. The children will attend whole school activities when they occur on Kindergarten days. All of these things you will find out more about as the year progresses.

Useful Things to Collect

We need a variety of everyday materials, which the children can use and turn into creative masterpieces. Any recyclable item has a use.

cardboard boxes (small)

ice cream/yoghurt containers

cardboard cylinders

wrapping paper

magazines

bottle tops/corks

coloured wrapping paper

greeting cards

buttons

wool



What Can Play Do?

Play is serious business which should never be frowned upon by adults.

Play allows children to develop new skills through observation, exploration and discovery.

Play allows children to practise skills they have already learned.

Play develops language understanding, expression and concept formation.

Play gives children practice in conveying, reporting and discovering information, it can also be used to describe incidents and tell stories.

Play enables questions to be asked.

Play can relieve boredom and frustration and allow for the release of physical energy.

Play can let children experience and express feelings of achievement, failure, satisfaction, pleasure and frustration.

Play allows children to act out other people's roles.

Play helps children form friendships and gain cooperation. It also allows children to learn how to cope with themselves and other people.

Play allows children to be creative and independent.

Play is one of the best ways for children to learn how to communicate and to get along with others.

Welcome to you and your child.
May the year be full of enjoyment and success.

