



St MARY'S
CATHOLIC SCHOOL
BOYUP BROOK

Welcome to Kindy 2024

Courtesy Kindness Respect Pride

School Vision Statement

St. Mary's Catholic School is committed to the education of the whole child based on Gospel values and the person of Christ.

We strive for excellence in all areas and involve the parents and community in the education of the children of our school.

We hope to lead the children to an integration of faith, life and learning and in doing so assist them to prepare for their place in society.

This we do in a caring atmosphere where individual needs are catered for in a spirit of compassion, understanding and encouragement.



Principal's Message

Welcome to St Mary's School

Dear parents of the 2024 Kindy class,

It is my absolute pleasure to welcome you and your child to this class. For many of you this is the continuation of a partnership that began when your eldest child started school here. For others, this is the beginning of what we hope will be a long-standing partnership between school and home.

Here at St Mary's we value every child and we aim to create an environment which enables all children to experience joy and fulfillment throughout their primary school years. This starts in Kindy and for this particular group of students will conclude at the end of the 2031 school year! At this point in time this seems so far away but believe me, it will come around before we all know it. I am very impressed with the facilities here at St Mary's, especially the newly redeveloped Early Childhood area and I believe that this space lends itself really well to positive learning outcomes for our early learners

Mrs Jane Wheeler will be our Kindy/Pre Primary teacher for 2024. Mrs Wheeler has a wealth of experience teaching and has worked here at St Mary's for over 20 years. I have no doubt that her warm, caring nature and years of experience teaching in early childhood will ensure a great start for all students. Mrs Wheeler will be assisted by Miss Deb Corp, or just "Miss Deb" as she is affectionately known. Miss Deb works as an Educational Assistant in our current early childhood classroom and together they make a great team.

I can fully appreciate that this can be a daunting time for children and their families. In this booklet we aim to provide parents with all the necessary information they need to stay informed and prepared for the start of school. If there are any further questions that you require assistance with, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

We look forward to welcoming the children to our school next year. We will work hard to ensure they adapt to their new surroundings and new routines and we truly believe that this will be the beginning of many happy years for them at this St Mary's School.

Sincerely,
Phil Rossiter
Principal



A welcome message from Our 2024 Kindy Teacher, Mrs Wheeler

Dear Kindy Parents,

Welcome to St. Mary's Kindergarten. My name is Jane Wheeler (but I also answer to Mr. Wheeler and Mum at times). I have been an early childhood educator at St. Mary's since 2001 and in that time I have been blessed to be part of many of the school's youngest students' lives and learning adventures.

As a parent and now a grandparent (and I am happy to admit to that) I appreciate the important role parents and families play as children's first teachers and I look forward to establishing warm and respectful relationships with you all. This will ensure the most positive outcomes for all our kindergarten students.

I am an energetic, enthusiastic and empathetic teacher and I am passionate about facilitating exciting play-based experiences for the children in my care. Play based learning provides the perfect vehicle for practising social skills, offering each child a sense of agency and developing the 'whole child'. I also recognise the importance of setting up engaging early childhood learning environments so that they act as a third teacher to the students and I particularly enjoy creating varied dramatic play areas that support a multitude of literacy and numeracy outcomes.

I have a significant personal interest in speech development in young children and so I place an emphasis on scaffolding speech and developing programmes with a strong oral language focus. Research shows that oral language capability is the foundation that underpins early literacy and numeracy skill acquisition.

With a background in teaching Art as a specialist subject I love to link experiences in the visual and performing arts across all learning areas and I am never afraid of messy sensory exploration or joyful singing and acting. I like to be very 'hands on' so if you walk into the classroom one day and can't find me I might just be down on the floor with the children, crawling around as we sing 'I'm a Great Big Tiger'.

I am very excited to be working with your children in 2024 and recognise that it is a privilege, indeed, to share in the earliest part of their learning journey at St. Mary's Catholic Primary School.

Yours Sincerely,

Jane Wheeler



Mrs Jane Wheeler



Miss Deb
Educational Assistant

Welcome to St Mary's Catholic Primary School Kindergarten

Our Kindergarten program focuses on the balanced development of the child. We aim to develop not only the academic talents of the children but also to foster the social, emotional, spiritual and physical development of the child. The program is diverse and all topics and concepts are explored in an integrated way. Through play the children will be given the opportunity to learn basic skills and concepts, and to learn social skills and develop friendships.

At St. Mary's we recognise and honour the uniqueness of each child and it is within this culture of respect for individual talents and diversity that we strive to create an environment where authentic relationships with familiar adults are developed. We provide opportunities for children to explore, imagine, investigate and engage with the joy and mystery of our created universe in a learning environment that is aimed at developing the whole child.

Informed by the Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines, The Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Schools standards, kindergarten programmes include meaningful play, hands-on learning and a variety of student groupings to provide a rich and varied learning environment. Play promotes creative opportunities that are well planned and scaffolded by teachers with direct links to literacy and numeracy development.

We link intentional teaching to discovery through children working within a number of carefully planned, print rich investigation areas which include:

- Science/nature area
- Collage area
- Painting area
- Mathematics discovery area
- Construction area
- Writing area
- Dramatic play area (which changes regularly)
- Small world play area
- Sensory area
- Fine motor skill development area

These centres are updated and changed around regularly to suit the changing interests of the children.



Literacy and Numeracy Development in Kindy

In Literacy we follow the Letters and Sounds synthetic phonics programme which in Kindergarten is aimed at 'tuning' children into the sounds that make up our world and our language. This is supplemented with Diana Rigg programmes in oral language, phonemic awareness, fine motor skills and handwriting. The 'Animal Fun' and 'Moving on with Literacy' programmes develop fine and gross motor skills and link movement to literacy and numeracy.

Through interaction with others, children develop their social skills as they are given opportunities to work individually, in small groups and in larger groups. The children will work with the pre-primary children at times and on occasions with children from higher year levels.

Our Kindergarten Maths programme, based on the 'Kindergarten Curriculum Guidelines' will develop number recognition and sense, measurement skills and knowledge of geometry and probability through the use of 'hands on' activities, play scenarios and games. At this age we do not follow a scripted Numeracy/ Maths programme but instead aim to build basic mathematical knowledge to give the students the foundation they need to develop this further as they progress through to Pre-Primary.



Getting Started in 2024

Week 1 & 2 - Half Days

Your child's first day in Kindy will be Friday February 2.

For the first day of Kindy we are asking parents to pick their children up at 12pm. From week 2 onwards Kindy students will attend at the normal times which are outlined below.

Week 2 Onwards

Term one, Kindy students will attend on Wednesdays and Fridays. From term two onwards, Kindy students will attend on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

School begins each day at 8.50 and concludes at 3.15. Parents and school buses begin to drop their children off from **8:30 a.m.** While this seems like a very long day for young children please rest assured that plenty of opportunity for play time, rest and relaxation are incorporated into the program.

****Please note that the school closes early on Wednesdays at 2:30 p.m.****



Sample Day in Kindy

Below is an example of a typical day in our Kindy class. Obviously aspects of this change and adapt as the year goes on and as the children's interests change but structurally many of the key times remain the same. Kindy children also take part in some specialist subjects such as Art, Science and Music.

- 8.30 - 9.00 am: Inside table top activities – fine motor, numeracy and literacy linked
- 9.00 - 9.20 am: Welcome song, calendar etc.
- 9.20 - 9.50 am: Letters and Sounds activity
- 9.50 - 10.05 am: Morning tea – inside at tables
- 10.05 - 10.45 am: Outside time
1. Obstacle course
 2. Outside play
 3. Gross Motor Skill activity – including fundamental motor skills
- 10.45 - 11.20 am: 'Hands on' maths activity
- 11.20 - 12.10 pm: Investigation time
- 12.10 - 1.00 pm: Eat lunch and outside play – eat inside
- 1.00 - 1.25 pm: Rest time – books, story tapes etc
- 1.25 - 1.50 pm: Religious education – linked to a 'hands on activity'
- 1.50 - 2.40 pm: Investigation Time – including a HASS focus activity
- 2.40 - 2.50 pm: Pack away
- 2.50 - 3.05 pm: Outside play
- 3.05 - 3.15 pm: Closing songs and prayer (Wednesday early finish at 2.30pm)

Morning Routine and Separating from your Child

On arrival the children should place their bags on the hooks outside of the classroom and place their water bottles and lunchboxes in the designated cupboard. The children can then choose a table top activity to engage with before the day starts.. Parents may want to spend this time with their child to settle them and to make the separation less traumatic.

If your child cries, leave them with the Teacher or Teacher Assistant. Please leave quickly, as for some children the initial separation is hard, and staying with your child will only prolong this. Usually children only cry for a few minutes. When they see their parents are definitely gone, and they see that other children are playing happily they will settle down to enjoy themselves. We will contact you by phone if there is a continuing problem with separation.

Attendance

Attendance at kindergarten provides continuity of programmes and is advantageous to children. However, sick or tired children do not learn well or interact positively with others, so please don't hesitate to keep your child at home in these conditions. **Children who have bad coughs and/or coloured nasal discharge should be kept at home as it is difficult to prevent the spread of these with young children and young children often struggle with nose blowing.**

While attendance at Kindy is not compulsory the school has a legal obligation to know where children are if they are not at school. All absentees must be recorded via the Skoolbag App. Please see the front office for assistance with setting this up on your phone. Alternatively the front office can be notified of the absence by emailing the details to admin@stmarysbbk.wa.edu.au.

Communication with your Child's Teacher

At St Mary's we use the school communication app 'SeeSaw' in the early years. This app is free to download and provides daily updates of children's work, a direct messaging service to the teacher, video and picture updates from class and a digital portfolio of all of your child's work. Information on how to access your child's individual account will be sent out in the opening days of school.

Should you have any concerns, queries or problems regarding your child's progress and participation at school please do not hesitate to let me know as soon as possible. I am happy to take calls as early as 7am up until school commences and as late as 7pm after school finishes. My mobile number is 0427 717 095 alternatively messages s can be left during the day on the school number 9765 1333.

My email address is jane.wheeler@cewa.edu.au . I have provided these contact details so that all queries are directed to me, as the teacher. It is not within our Education Assistant's role to answer queries or comment on concerns you might have.

Please do not use any other messaging system (Facebook messenger etc).

Parents will also receive regular feedback about children's activities and learning through the SeeSaw app. SeeSaw is a free educational app that can be downloaded on iOs and Android and gives parents the opportunity to interact with their child's learning. Teachers will regularly update each child's digital "portfolio" regarding their child's progress. More details on how to use the SeeSaw app will be pushed out at the beginning of the school year. If you already have a child at our school then you will simply add that child's profile onto your current app.

What to bring to Kindergarten in addition to your Booklist Items

Parents are asked to provide the following:

- A large backpack capable of holding a lunchbox, uniform items etc. and library bag (the St Mary's school bag is recommended and can be purchased from the front office).
- A large drink bottle.
- A piece of fruit for 'crunch and sip' time, healthy recess snack and lunch food. Please ensure your child has a lunchbox and food that he/she can manage independently. Food cannot be heated at school.
- Footwear: Good quality joggers with velcro fastenings are the safest and most durable shoes for children to wear to kindergarten and we recommend that your child wears these. Please don't send your kindy child to school wearing shoes with laces, or in thongs or crocs as these are real slip/trip hazards when children are climbing at school.
- A hat – we have a 'No hat, play in the shade' rule at our school to encourage sun smart behaviour.
- One spare set of clothes should be stored in your child's bag - including socks and underwear and one set should be given to the teacher (this set will be placed in the bathroom at school).

Please ensure that all clothing and containers are labelled.

Kindy Uniform 2024

Our Kindy uniform is a very simple one: students are asked to wear our sports polo shirt and hat along with shorts in summer and long pants in winter. These can all be purchased from the front office of the school. During winter we have a maroon fleece jacket that can be purchased from the front office.

Toilet Training

Please endeavour to have your child day toilet trained prior to the commencement of kindergarten and this includes wiping his/her own bottom and pulling up his/her own pants while in a toilet cubicle. We do understand that accidents do happen when little children get busy. If your child has any fears or concerns about aspects of toileting please let us know so that we can best handle the situation.

Parental Involvement

Parent helpers are always welcome in the kindergarten classroom. A roster system will be put in place in Term 2. Below are some of the activities to expect when you are on parent help:

- Work with a small group of children under the direction of a teacher
- Listen to reading in the morning
- Read to children in the book corner at 'quiet book time'.
- Assist and encourage the children to tidy up at pack up time.
- Be an active participant in dramatic play scenarios

As a parent helper you may be working with a number of children in the class, not solely with your child. Any issues should be directed to the classroom teacher to deal with as confidentiality and privacy are to be respected. All parent helpers need to sign in at the front office and complete a confidentiality form at their first help session. Please let us know if you have any special talents, interests or ideas which can contribute to our sessions.



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"Growing through Christ"

Skoolbag App



At St Mary's we use Skoolbag as a primary form of communication between the school and our parents. We use this forum to send out our newsletters each fortnight, inform parents of upcoming events and parents can use it to submit absentee forms, which are compulsory if your child is absent. The app is available for either android or apple devices. Once downloaded simply search for our school and turn on notifications. If you have issues with this simply come to the school office and we can help you sort it out.

New Low School Fee Structure

St Mary's is a low school ensuring an excellent education in school is affordable for all. Kindy school fees are a flat \$100 fee per child. Pre Primary - Year 6 fees are as follows: \$300 per year for 1st child, 2nd child \$240, 3rd child \$180, 4th child: free. There is a \$90 building levy per family.



Once again, thank you for being a part of the St Mary's community. Please come to see us if you ever have a concern or a query as we are always willing to listen and want what is best for the students entrusted in our care.

We look forward to working closely with you to provide the best educational outcomes for your child, not just from Kindergarten but through the entire duration of their education here at St Mary's.



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