



Doncaster Gardens Primary School

‘Preparing your child for school’ 2024 Parent Handbook





Doncaster Gardens Primary School

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The staff and school community are very pleased to welcome you and your family to Doncaster Gardens Primary School and we look forward to a happy and rewarding partnership.

At Doncaster Gardens Primary School, we aim to foster every child's potential in a safe, friendly and stimulating educational environment. We believe education is a joint responsibility and encourage you to become involved in the school's operation.

As your child enters school for the first time, they will have already begun to discover and enquire about the world 'at large'. They will be keen to seek new learning experiences, encounter new learning environments and to socialise with different people.

This booklet intends to provide some practical guidance for helping both you and your child prepare for school life and to make the transition comfortable and rewarding.

Please feel free to contact the school for further information.

Kind Regards,

Staff of Doncaster Gardens Primary School

DONCASTER GARDENS VALUES...

COURAGE

CREATIVITY

CURIOSITY

COMPASSION



Preparing for School

The journey from home to school is one of the first social transitions made by young children. This can sometimes be an anxious time for parents of beginning Foundation children and we aim to make the transition to school a successful and exciting time for both parents and children.

JUST BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS

As the time gets close for your child to start school there are a number of things which you can do to help them settle in easily. Here are some helpful ideas:

- Visit the school, walk around the school grounds and have a play. Talk to your child about the school buildings and playgrounds.
- Practise the school drop off so that you are both prepared for the school morning journey. If driving to school, park a little distance away from the gate to avoid traffic congestion.
- Practise the school morning routine, including getting dressed and eating breakfast in time to leave. The 9am class discussion is important for children to start the school day well.
- Make sure your child knows where to meet you at the end of the day and please be on time to collect your child.
- Talk to your child about what happens when the bell goes and what it means (e.g. school starts, recess play, lunch play and dismissal).
- Talk to your child about the school day in a meaningful way. For example; "It's longer than Kinder. You will have recess and lunch and perhaps some stories and then I'll come and get you."
- Let your child know where to seek help in the playground (e.g. go to a teacher or an older student).
- Toileting skills and hygiene, such as opening and shutting toilet locks, flushing the toilet, pulling up pants before leaving the toilet cubicle, and for boys, using a urinal and carefully washing their hands.
- Ensure your child can use tissues to blow their nose.
- Choose a lunchbox and a drink bottle that your child can open easily. Have a special lunch day at home so your child can practise unpacking their morning tea and lunch. They should practise unwrapping and opening containers and managing to use their water bottle (non-breakable please).
- Get your child to practise zipping and unzipping their school bag. Putting a special key ring, trinket or ribbon on your child's school bag is a great way to help them identify it.
- Label your child's clothing, lunchbox and drink bottle, and point out where their names are on their possessions.





The First Day

- Foundation students begin school at Doncaster Gardens Primary School on Tuesday 30 January 2024 9:00am to 3:30pm.
- This will be the beginning of a new journey for you and your child and also for your child's teacher. Your child's teacher will be there to support both parents and children during this transition process.
- The first day of school can be an emotional time for all. Parents sometimes feel more anxious than their child. Despite many mixed emotions, it is best to make your child's first day a positive experience.
- Get your child to place their school bag either in their labelled bag locker outside their classroom or inside their classroom. Make sure that their school bag is clearly labelled (many children have a trinket etc. hanging from their bag so that it is easily recognisable).
- Encourage your child to become involved in the classroom activities. Say goodbye and reassure them that you will be back to collect them.
- If your child is upset or begins to cry, take your cue from the teacher. Reassure your child that you will be there at the end of the day to hear all about their day and then leave. Your child's teacher will comfort your child and have them settled within minutes. It is amazing how well children settle in when left to their own devices.
- Ensure that your child's recess snack and lunch is packed and that they know what they are having. You can label the containers, so your child knows which is recess snack and lunch.
- At 3.30pm, please wait outside your child's classroom and your child's teacher will bring them outside to you.
- A change of underwear and clothes is always good to have in your child's bag throughout the year, in case of any little accidents. Don't forget socks, everything gets wet. Please ensure all items are labelled.

School Times

- Foundation children will attend a one hour interview assessment session on a designated day at the start of the year. Please see the classroom teacher for more information about this.

School Day

Session 1- 2:	9:00am - 10:40am
Recess outside play:	10:40am -11:10am
Sessions 3 - 4:	11:10am - 12:50pm
Lunch and outside play:	12:50pm - 1:50pm
Sessions 5 - 6:	1:50pm -3:30pm

Making School Life Easier

Every parent has mixed feelings about their child taking the big step and starting school. The first year of school can be the most rewarding time for both children and parents. Children begin to gain their independence and take great pride in the achievements they make during their first year at school. There is nothing more rewarding than watching your child begin to read and write and link their learning from school to the wider world. It is very important that you and your child's teacher make the first year of school a very positive experience.

Enjoy your child's life at school just as they will enjoy it. If you have spent a considerable amount of time with your child in the past, you may discover some new activities and ventures for yourself.

Here are some ideas to keep in mind:

- Your attitude to your child's schooling is extremely important. Be very positive and convey to your child that school is a happy and safe place.
- Give your child time to share school experiences each day.
- Show your child that you are interested in their learning by looking at their work, both at school and at home. Display their work in a special place.
- Read and talk with your child about information in the school newsletter and upcoming school events.
- Establish a regular bedtime routine. Foundation children need **10 -11 hours sleep a night**. They're usually tired after school and might look forward to bedtime from about 7.30 pm.

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/school-age/sleep/understanding-sleep/school-age-sleep>

- Have a healthy breakfast - needed for energy and concentration.
- Try to portion recess snack and lunch into smaller sizes that are easy for your child to eat.
- Take the opportunity to play games and read with your child.
- Encourage your child to dress independently, taking their school jumper off and putting it back on. Please clearly label jumpers and hats.
- Choose shoes that are enclosed, comfortable and easy to put on. Shoes with Velcro tabs are useful if your child has difficulty tying shoelaces. Please see that shoelaces are a safe length to avoid tripping over.
- As part of our Sun Smart policy, children must wear a school hat with the Doncaster Gardens Primary School logo from September 1st through to April 30th. If children do not have a hat they must play under the sheltered areas.
- Children are encouraged to bring a small bottle of roll-on sunscreen and leave it in their school bag. We are not allowed to apply sunscreen on your child and will encourage them to apply it on sunny days before going outside.
- Doncaster Gardens Primary School adopts a 'Whole School Approach' ensuring that children, parents and teachers work together as a team. Parents are most welcome to help in the classroom. We will send information about parent helpers once children have settled in school life. Please ensure you have a Working with Children's Check if you would like to help in your child's classroom.
- Your child's teacher is specially trained to teach primary aged students and is up to date with current educational practices. Please feel free to make a time to have a chat with your child's teacher if you would like any information regarding their academic and social progress.

General School Routines

- School starts at 9.00am each morning. Children will be shown where their grade is to line up during the first week of school. We will have Junior Assembly each Friday at 3pm. Parents are most welcome to attend Assembly to hear school news and listen to weekly 'Encouragement Awards' which are issued to children in each grade. There will be no Assembly in the first week of school.
- All Foundation classrooms, will be open for children and their families to come inside set up for the day's learning from 8.50am. This is our 'classroom community time', a friendly way to start the day, where we can greet each other, share 'need to know' information, unpack school bags and have an informal chat.
- Children are required to put their own school bag in their bag locker when they arrive in the mornings. They can put their drink bottle and blue take home book bag in allocated tubs in their classroom. Children should have a drink and go the toilet before the bell.
- If your child arrives late please accompany them to the office for signing in before going to the class.
- If your child needs to be dismissed early from school, please email the office well ahead of time to arrange the time of collection and reason. Your child must be collected from the school office, if before 3:30pm. This is a legal requirement of the school and the Department of Education.
- If your child is absent from school please go onto Compass outlining the reason (this includes part of a day as well). This is a legal requirement of the school and the Department of Education.
- If your child is unwell, please keep them at home. If your child needs medication, you must send a signed written note to school stating the dosage and time to be given. This will be given to the School Nurse or First Aider, who will administer all medication.
- All children will need to have a blue take home book bag which is used to keep your child's 'Take Home Reading Books', your child's work to go home and any correspondence between home and school. This can be purchased from PSW (Primary School Wear).
- As part of our Sun Smart policy, all children must wear a school hat from September 1 to April 30.
- We have a school nurse who is employed Monday to Friday from 9am – 3:30pm.
- We have a Before & After School Care Program run by TheirCare which is located off Dehnert St, next to our Performing Arts Centre. We recommend families register as an emergency just in case you are unable to pick your child up from school on time. If your child is not picked up by 3:45pm, they will be sent to TheirCare.
Please use the following link - <http://theircare.com.au/>
- We are very privileged to have the opportunity of educating your child here at Doncaster Gardens Primary School and we value developing positive home-and-school communication and relationships. Please see or contact your child's teacher if you need any clarification or would like to know anything about your child's academic or social progress at school.
- We will endeavour to nurture and care for your child as best as we possibly can.

Checklist for the First Day of School

Before School

- ☐ Well rested (10-12 hours' sleep)
- ☐ Well nourished (balanced breakfast)
- ☐ Your child knows where their classroom is
- ☐ Your child knows their teacher's name
- ☐ Your child understands where you will meet and collect them after school
- ☐ Your child is aware of any allergies they may have (particularly food allergies)

Inside your child's school bag

- ☐ Has their name on all clothing
- ☐ Lunchbox (named) contains recess snack and lunch
- ☐ Spare clothing in a large labelled Ziplock bag (underwear and socks)
- ☐ Hat (named)
- ☐ Water bottle (named)
- ☐ Asthma pump (if necessary)

Your child is wearing

- ☐ School uniform (all items named)
- ☐ Enclosed shoes



After School

- ☐ Please wait outside the building of your child's classroom
- ☐ Check your child's school bag for all items
- ☐ Check blue satchel for school and teacher correspondence
- ☐ Ask your child how their day was

Other information

- ☐ Keep phone and email contacts up to date
- ☐ Update any medical information
- ☐ Out of Hours School Care registration completed (optional)

*If children live with encouragement,
they learn confidence.*

*If children live with praise,
they learn to appreciate.*

*If children live with acceptance and friendship,
they learn to find love in the world.*

*"May you and your child enjoy the journey and experiences
that school life will bring"*

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What do I do if I have a question or concern?

*If you have a question or concern you can visit your child's classroom and speak to your child's teacher. If you would like to discuss a question or concern further, you can organise a time to meet with your child's teacher. If you have a question or concern during the day you can call/email the school on **9848 5282** and speak to your child's teacher.*

2. What if I change my address or phone number?

If you change your address or phone number, please let the office staff know as soon as possible.

3. When will my child get homework?

Your child will commence Take Home Reading in their second full week at school. Your child will take a new book to read each night and bring it back to school each morning.

4. What if my child doesn't have a friend?

Starting school will be a fantastic opportunity for your child to make lots of new friends. We have a social skills program called 'Bounce Back' where your child will be able to develop their social-emotional learning, wellbeing and resilience. Your child will also get a Year 5 or 6 buddy.

5. What if my child needs to go to the toilet during class time?

At the beginning of the year, your child's teacher will take the whole class to the toilet in between recess and lunch breaks. If your child needs to go to the toilet at any other class time, they will go with a partner.

6. What if my child doesn't finish their lunch during eating time?

We provide plenty of eating time in the classroom before recess and lunch play. If your child doesn't finish their lunch during this time, they can eat outside in their eating area.

7. Is my child allowed to bring hand sanitiser to school?

Yes.