HELLO

KINDERGARTEN!

What to expect when your child starts Kindergarten
VISION STATEMENT
St Columba’s Primary School aims to foster the total development of each child within a caring community that is totally committed to supporting the Catholic principles and ideals.

Prayer Reflection

I dreamed I stood in a studio
And watched two sculptors there
The clay they used was a young child’s mind
And they fashioned it with care
One was a teacher –
The tools used were books and music and art;
One was a parent –
With a guiding hand and a gentle, loving heart.

Day after day the teacher tooled
With touch that was deft and sure,
While the parent laboured by his side
And polished and smoothed it over
And when at last their task was done,
They were proud of what they had wrought,
For things they had moulded into the child
Could neither be sold or brought
And each agreed they would have failed
If they had worked alone,
For behind the parent stood the school,
And behind the teacher, the home.
St. Columba’s School
Bayswater

Staff 2017
Principal: Mr Greg Martin

Kindergarten White
Teacher: Mrs Chelsea De Luca
deluca.chelsea@cathednet.wa.edu.au
Education Assistants:
Mrs Sue Doble
Mrs Andrea Gilbert

Kindergarten Green
Teacher: Mrs Marinella Fasolo
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Education Assistants:
Mrs Ruth Desmond
Mrs Annette Pratt

Kindergarten Days and Times
All children attend Monday, Wednesday and Fridays
8:45am—2:45pm

A huge thank you to the gorgeous children of Kindergarten 2015 for their smiles and images!
Photography Credit: Mrs Rebecca Pileggi—photographer to the stars. Thank you for your time and expertise!
This booklet is for you as your child starts Kindergarten.

It takes you through what happens in a typical day in Kindergarten and includes ideas to help settle your child into school.

As your child’s first teacher, the role you play is vital. The early years of school build on the experiences your child has at home and sets the foundation for all their future learning.

There are lots of things you can do to support your child’s learning.

This booklet gives you ideas of what you can do at home to add to the exciting things your child is learning each day at Kindergarten.

Discover some great ideas online:

www.raisingchildren.net.au
www.maggiedent.com
www.developingchild.harvard.edu
www.beststart.org/OnTrack
www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au
St Columba’s Kindergarten Program

Our Kindergarten program focuses on the balanced development of each child. We aim to foster the spiritual, social, emotional and physical growth of each child as well as to develop their academic talents.

Religious Education is the first learning area of the Catholic School curriculum. In Kindergarten, “God talk” permeates all learning experiences as a natural part of the day. Prayer, both formal and informal, is an opportunity for children to develop understandings about God and is a part of our daily routine.

The Kindergarten program is based on the Early Years Learning Framework. The outcomes are:

1. Children have a strong sense of belonging
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4. Children are confident and involved learners
5. Children are effective communicators

For more information about the EYLF, please visit—
www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood
YOUR CHILD’S SCHOOL JOURNEY

Children learn many important things before they start school.

They learn from you at home, from friends and family, in local playgroups and day care centres. They bring all of this learning with them to school when they start Kindergarten.

Children learn best when they are supported by their families. The more you are involved in your child’s learning and the more you talk with the teacher, the better you can both support your child. A strong partnership with the school and regular contact with the teacher makes sure your child gets the best start to school.

In Kindergarten, your child continues to build on the important skills they have developed with you at home. These skills may include your child being able to talk about things that interest them; draw pictures; pretend write; recognise colours, numbers, sizes and shapes; and share with others.

Your enthusiasm helps your child settle into Kindergarten and be proud of the things they learn each day.
EARLY EXPERIENCES AND BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

Children’s brains are a ‘work in progress!’

In the first few years of life, your child’s brain grows rapidly. The experiences you have with your child during these years are extremely important. A fun, happy and safe environment at home, school and within the school community helps your child develop socially, emotionally and intellectually.

Play is particularly important in childhood learning. Play gives children opportunities to develop imagination, practise skills, communicate with others, take on challenges and solve problems in fun and enjoyable ways.

Singing, playing games, building, playing make-believe, talking, climbing, dancing, reading, writing and drawing all help your child’s brain develop ways of thinking and learning.

‘Play is our brain’s favourite way of learning’

Diane Ackerman
KINDERGARTEN:
BEGINNING THE SCHOOL JOURNEY

Magical. This is often how families describe Kindergarten classrooms. Rooms are filled with children’s art and colourful displays for all to see. There is a range of activity areas where your child can discover, imagine, create and learn through play.

While Kindergarten is not compulsory in Western Australia, attendance is highly recommended as your child builds on important social and emotional skills that help them throughout their school life. They also develop early maths, speaking, listening, reading and writing skills.

Your child’s teacher will communicate with you through written notes, emails and photographs of your child’s learning. It is important to take the time to read these messages. Feel free to ask the teacher for clarification.

If you show you are confident and happy about school, your child picks up on this. This is important in encouraging a love of learning and enthusiasm for going to school each day.

**EDITORIAL STATEMENT**

**REVISED**

BETTER TOGETHER
Religion in Kindergarten

Children have a natural spirituality and their awareness of God and the wonder of life begins long before their formal schooling. Parents are the first faith educators of their children. Catholic schools support parents in the faith formation of children by accepting the responsibility of providing a range of experiences which will nurture and develop each child’s sense of wonder in God’s presence and creation and which contribute to the life long process of developing their faith and religious knowledge.

In Kindergarten, each child is invited to interact with an environment rich in learning opportunities. Spiritual, social and emotional growth are fostered as children learn about God’s love for them and as they show respect and care for others.

Children are engaged in developing an understanding of and relationship with Jesus. Children will be using stories of Jesus and other appropriate Bible stories to assist them in developing an understanding of God’s love for them.
**What happens during the day?**

Kindergarten runs for three days a week—
Monday, Wednesday and Friday; 8:45am—2:45pm.

Please wait behind the play ground gate until these times.

The teacher plans regular breaks each day so your child can eat morning tea and lunch. We encourage healthy food to eat, and water to drink. Sip and Crunch (morning tea) is a fruit or vegetable cut ready to eat, along with a drink bottle of water. For lunch please pack a healthy lunch in wrappers and containers that your child can open easily and eat on their own. Self management is a very important skill that your child learns at this time.

There are also opportunities for inside play, outside play, dance, music, sport and rest time. We support play based learning at all times, which can be messy, hands on but always fun! Please understand that your child may get wet, dirty and/or paint on themselves. This is a clear sign learning has occurred!

For small accidents that are common in Kindergarten, please ensure your child has a change of clothes, including underwear, in their bag. We will change your child if required.

Hats are compulsory year round at St Columba’s. We play outside at every opportunity, so please ensure your child is dressed for the weather. Children are permitted to remove footwear, so shoes they can manage themselves are essential.
WHAT WILL MY CHILD LEARN?

In a carefully planned learning environment, your child experiences many different learning activities. These include cutting, painting, gluing, drawing, dressing up, sand play, climbing, storytelling, water play, singing, dancing, exploring and social activities such as making new friends.

The social and emotional development of your child is a very important part of planned learning. The teacher plans activities and encourages all children to be involved so they become successful learners, team players, good problem solvers and creative thinkers who enjoy challenges.

Another focus in Kindergarten is on language and literacy. Your child develops an early understanding of letters, sounds and rhyming words, as well as how pictures can tell stories, how written words can be read, and how spoken sounds can be written down.

Learning about maths and numeracy is also a key part of Kindergarten. Your child learns about numbers, shapes, counting, measuring and the many different ways maths is used in our daily lives.

Teachers take into account children’s experiences and backgrounds to make sure learning programs are targeted to meet their individual needs.
IN KINDERGARTEN...

Writing
Your child becomes aware that spoken words can be written down. Their writing may show randomly placed letters or scribbles that looks similar to what they see as writing. Encourage all their efforts!

Sounds
Your child starts to identify sounds in words, especially the first sound in a word. They may then identify the last sound in a word. Your child also begins to recognise some letters and words, such as signs and names of shops, and learn sound-letter connections.

Measurement
Your child develops and uses the language of measurement such as: tall, short, heavy and light. They use the language of time such as: quick, slow and fast, and are able to use terms such as: before, after and next to discuss the timing of familiar events.

Sorting
Your child begins to sort objects by size, shape and colour, and group similar kinds of toys together such as cars and blocks.

Numbers
Your child begins to play games that help them learn about numbers and join in with stories and songs that encourage counting.

Reading
Your child becomes interested in books and the pictures and words in them. Reading stories, saying and singing nursery rhymes, poems and songs and making up actions are all part of Kindergarten.

Shapes
Your child learns about shapes and sizes by comparing and building.

Time
Your child may remember simple sequences and follow steps in their daily routine.

In Kindergarten, your child learns social skills by playing and sharing with other children.
Play allows them to share, take turns and develop their confidence and coordination.
Taking an interest in what your child does at school, helping in class and being a part of the school community show your child how much you value school.

Helping your child to settle into Kindergarten

Developing the habit of going to school regularly from Kindergarten is vital so your child does not miss out on important ideas and skills they need for future learning.

You can help by:

- Talking positively about school so your child is happy to go each day
- Showing interest in what your child is doing at school and talking with the teacher about what your child is doing at home
- Setting play dates to help your child make friends
- Teaching your child how to share and take turns
- Arriving at school and collecting your child from school on time
- Making sure your child gets nutritious meals each day and enough sleep each night

If your child is unwell or tired and unable to attend school, please telephone the absentee line asap before the start of the session.

9208 2711

You will also need to issue an email or written note explaining your child’s absence.
WHAT YOU CAN DO AT HOME

- Read books aloud, point to pictures and talk with your child about the story
- Draw and write with your child and talk about what you are doing
- Encourage your child to use trial and error to learn and complete tasks. Be patient and let them have a go
- Your child begins to hear and see how numbers are used at home and begins to match number names to very small groups of objects just by looking. You can help by talking through what you are doing. For example: We need four plates, so if I get two plates and then get two more, we will have four plates
- A great way to help with maths skills is through everyday activities—at bath time, when playing outside and while cooking together. Counting with your child using items they can see and touch, measuring items and comparing items help them hear and use maths ideas
- Number songs and rhymes help your child learn about counting. Spend time together singing songs like: 1,2,3,4,5 Once I caught a fish alive. Number books that you read together and talk about are also great ways for your child to learn early ideas
- Encourage your child to dress themselves, prepare for activities and help to tidy up. It may take longer, but these self-management skills are essential for continued learning and independence

“Teach me and I will forget. Show me and I will remember. Involve me and I will understand”
MORE IDEAS FOR YOU AND YOUR CHILD

Talk with your child

At school, your child learns about the importance of communication. You can help by talking with your child about the things they do at school. Ask them to explain or describe things that happened during the day. Ask ‘open’ questions so your child answers with more than a yes or a no. For example: ‘What was your favourite thing you did at Kindergarten today?’

Speak with the teacher

Have regular contact with your child’s teacher. If you want to speak with your child’s teacher without interruption, it’s best to make an appointment.

Contribute to the class

Your child’s teacher will ask for parent involvement in class by a ‘stay and play’ roster that is displayed on the noticeboard. You may also be able to assist with incursions, art projects, sporting activities or special events. You can also get involved in the school Parents and Friends Association, school canteen, sporting teams and social events.

Teachers often need items for art and craft, maths and science such as buttons, material scraps, shells, containers. The list is endless! All donations will be gratefully accepted.

Start of the Day

Children love being read to. We encourage all parents or caregivers to stay for the first ten minutes of Kindergarten to read to children or complete a puzzle. This time together helps your child settle for the day, and allows for uninterrupted, quality time between children and families.
KINDERGARTEN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does my child need to bring each day?

Your child needs to bring their school bag, with a school hat, food, a water bottle and a change of clothes (including underwear) for accidents. Sun cream should be administered before school.

What do I pack for my child to eat?

Sip and Crunch (Morning Tea) - fruit or vegetable ready to eat and a water bottle filled with water.

Lunch—a healthy lunch such as a sandwich and snack/fruit and the water bottle.

Please pack food in containers your child can manage, in an insulated bag with an ice pack.

What is the school policy on allergies?

Please find the school policy enclosed. If your child has an allergy, an anaphylaxis plan must be supplied to school, along with the appropriate medication. This will be stored at Kindergarten. Children with allergies also require a red school hat from the Uniform Shop. PLEASE NOTE: St Columba’s is a NUT FREE ZONE. No children or adults are permitted to have nuts on site.

Do you celebrate birthdays at Kindergarten?

Yes! Birthdays are recognised and celebrated with a birthday certificate and song. If you wish, you may like to send small cupcakes or muffins into class to be distributed at home time to each child. Please advise your teacher.

What do children wear to Kindergarten?

Children wear the Early Childhood uniform available for sale through the Uniform Shop. Orders are placed online (please see the school website). Each child must also wear shoes that they can manage to put on and take off throughout the day. A school hat is compulsory.

Does my child have the opportunity for rest?

All children are given time during the day to rest, listen to music and meditate. Please supply a towel, labelled with your child’s name, for your child to lie on.
KINDERGARTEN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the 'Stay and Play' Roster?

We love having a parent help during the Kindergarten Session. We place a roster on the noticeboard outside the classroom, and ask for one parent per session for about two hours. You may join in activities, play and chat with the children.

How will I learn about my child's progress?

St Columba’s integrates technology in all classes PK-6. Staff in Kindergarten use iPads and photography to document a child’s learning. These photos are then compiled into Learning Stories, and distributed to families by email. We also have a class blog which you will need to subscribe to when your child begins Kindergarten. Please provide a current email on the information form and add the teacher’s email to your address book, so that these important emails aren’t sent to ‘junk’ files.

Children are also assessed by the Community Nurse and a Speech and Occupational Group. You will receive information and results throughout the year.

Please don’t hesitate to make an appointment with the teacher if you have any queries or questions in the meantime.

What is the Pastoral Care Raffle?

St Columba’s is fortunate to have a supportive and pastoral school community. One aspect is the Pastoral Care team—a group of volunteer parents who support and donate gifts and help to families in need at our school. There may have been an illness, a new baby, a death or a difficult time.

Each Friday, there is a small raffle held outside Kindergarten. Tickets are 20 cents each with a maximum of 3 tickets per child. The money raised funds the Pastoral Care initiatives.

Each week, a family is rostered to provide a small prize for the raffle—value up to five dollars. The roster is displayed outside Kindergarten and online in the school newsletter.
KINDERGARTEN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is School Banking?

School banking is coordinated by volunteers. All children can sign up and make contributions to their bank accounts. The service is affiliated with the Commonwealth Bank.

Can Kindergarten children place lunch orders from the canteen?

Yes they can! St Columba’s has a fabulous canteen service on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Staffed by parent volunteers, we ask that each family places their name on the roster.

All ordering is completed online through ‘Our Online Canteen’ and the link is on the school website home page.

What care options are available at St Columba’s? OSHC

The school offers a before and after school care program, as well as day care on student free days and holidays. Kindergarten children may attend and the centre is open from 7am until 6pm. Please contact Jess Scott (coordinator) on 92082723 or OSHC@stcolsbays.wa.edu.au.

My child has arrived late to Kindergarten/I need to collect my child early from Kindergarten. What is the procedure?

If your child arrives late or leaves early, you must attend the school office before coming to the classroom and complete a slip.

Where do I find newsletters, notes and other school information?

The St Columba’s website contains a wealth of information, weekly newsletters and term planners. Please consult the site FIRST. Our class blog will also contain valuable information. Other notes will be placed in your child’s ‘file’ which is outside the classroom. Please check it regularly.
St Columba’s School Motto

To grow in Faith, seek Wisdom and live in Peace.

Mercy Values

At St Columba’s School, we strive to use the values of the Mercy Sisters to guide all who belong to our community in the building of a better and happier world for future generations. These values of mercy, compassion, justice, service and excellence are the core values of what it means to be a part of a Mercy School. We hope that in leaving St Columba’s that these values are entrenched and an understanding of this charism will be taken with the children for future years.