Welcome to PRE-PRIMARY!

What to expect when your child starts Pre-Primary
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.

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.
Pre-Primary Green
Teacher: Mrs Pamela Holloway
holloway.pamela@cathednet.wa.edu.au
Education Assistant: Miss Meagan McKie

Pre-Primary White
Teacher: Mrs Anni Schelfhout
schelfhout.anni@cathednet.wa.edu.au
Education Assistant: Mrs Nathalie Dowling

School Term Dates

**Term One:** Wednesday 1st February – Friday 7th April

**Term Two:** Wednesday 26th April – Friday 30th June

**Term Three:** Monday 17th July – Wednesday 22nd September

**Term Four:** Tuesday 10th October – Friday 8th December
This booklet is for you as your child starts Pre–Primary.

It takes you through what happens in a typical day in Pre-Primary 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 Pre-Primary.

Discover some great ideas online:

www.raisingchildren.net.au
www.maggiedent.com
www.developingchild.harvard.edu
www.beststart.org/OnTrack
www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au
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 Pre-Primary.

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 Pre-Primary, 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 Pre-Primary and be proud of the things they learn each day.
Children’s brains are a ‘work in progress!’

In the first few years of life, your child’s brain grows rapidly. By the time they are three years old, 90 percent of their brain has developed, so experiences in the early years are very important.

Loving and caring relationships with you, your family, friends, school staff and others in the school community help your child develop socially, emotionally and intellectually.

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

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

BEGINNING COMPULSARY SCHOOLING

After a year of part time Kindergarten, your child goes on to full-time Pre-Primary. This is the first compulsory year of schooling in Western Australia.

The Pre-Primary classroom looks similar to the Kindergarten classroom with lots of children’s creations on display, as well as bright posters and charts around the room.

Your child’s teacher often sends home written information and it is important you take the time to read these messages. St Columba’s Bayswater has a very informative and up to date website where you can view photographs, assembly items, newsletters and current school related information. Use this as your first ‘port of call’ if you have queries, but don’t hesitate to speak to staff if you need further clarification. It is important that you become a member so that you are privy to this information. Please visit the website www.saintcolumbas.com.au and register on the home page to become a member.

St Columba’s Community also has a Facebook Page – you will need to request permission to join.

Your involvement in the school helps your child settle quickly and helps you understand how you can best support them.
What happens during the day?

Your child’s teacher encourages you to visit the classroom at the start of each day. Wherever possible, try to spend this important time with your child. This is when you find out what your child is doing at school and what you can do at home to support them.

Your child’s teacher plans a balance of activities as part of their learning, these include:

*Religious Education, English, Maths, The Arts, IT, Humanities and Science*

*Italian:* Senora Leahy.

*Library:* The children need to bring a library bag and return their library book. Please support us by reminding your child to pack their library bag and book each week.

*Music:* Mrs Smith

*Physical Education:* Mrs McCluskey. Children need to wear the faction coloured sport t-shirts, black shorts and sport shoes.

*Science:* Mrs Bolton

**Be sure to pack a healthy snack and lunch for your child each day.**

**Morning Recess**—All children must have a piece of fruit or vegetable and a small snack if you wish.

**NO peanuts or food containing nuts.**

**Lunch time**—Please make sure lunch boxes and drink bottles are clearly labelled and that your child can open their lunch box/containers.

**Be sun smart and make sure your child has a school hat and wears sunscreen every day.**
Religion in Pre-Primary

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 lifelong process of developing their faith and religious knowledge.

In Pre-Primary, 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.

Many of the art and craft, music and movement, stories and play activities we experience each day are part of our Religious Education Program.

We also say a morning prayer, fruit time prayer, lunch prayer and afternoon prayer. We will often send information on the topics we are covering in our religious education program, enabling you to support and reinforce them at home.

The first mass we will attend is Ash Wednesday Mass. We will visit the church during the term to further familiarise the children with the church. Parents and family are always welcome to join us for mass.

St. Columba’s Church has a children’s liturgy every Sunday morning at 9:30 am.
WHAT WILL MY CHILD LEARN?

Pre-Primary provides your child with a broad range of skills to help them understand the world. Your child learns more about literacy and numeracy, and further develops their personal and social skills, critical and creative thinking, and physical wellbeing. Your child develops skills in technology, the arts, science, humanities and social sciences, and languages.

Your child’s teacher takes into account the different experiences and backgrounds of child and targets programs to meet their abilities and learning needs.

ENGLISH LEARNING AREA

Listening and Speaking

Your child participates in class, group and pair discussions. They listen to others and retell events and experiences with their classmates and known adults. They also identify and use rhymes, letter patterns and sounds in words.

Reading

Through storybooks and films, your child learns that stories are about ideas and feelings, and that they have characters and events. The teacher may ask your child to talk about what happens in a story and what the characters are like. Listening for rhyme, letter patterns and sounds in words is important to early reading so classroom activities focus on this. Your child is also taught to identify the letters of the English alphabet and connect them to the most common sounds they represent. Your child reads a variety of short, predictable texts with familiar words and supportive pictures.
Writing

Your child continues to experiment with letters of the alphabet, learning the difference between upper and lower case letters and begins to write using letter formations. In their writing, they use known words and familiar phrases and begin to use capital letters and full stops. Attempts at new words show developing sound-letter knowledge. Your child begins to use high frequency sight words, for example: the, is and was.

MATHS LEARNING AREA

Numbers

Your child begins to connect number names, numerals and quantities, including zero, initially up to ten, then up to 20. Sometimes your child may think zero means ‘blast off!’. You may need to explain that it also means none or nothing.

Your child learns to represent and solve number problems involving adding, removing, grouping and sharing of small numbers of objects. For example, they may use toy farm animals to show three cows are put in a paddock with four others cows and then be able to work out how many there are all together.

Your child learns to create, copy and continue patterns using objects. These patterns may be based on colours, shapes and sizes.
The Language of Maths

Your child learns to count, naming numbers in a sequence going both forward and backwards and being to use the relevant language of maths, for example: How much? How many? and How long? They use small numbers to ‘get enough’ items for their games and activities.

During games and activities, your child starts to compare the size of things using language such as: longer, shorter, taller, heavier, lighter, fatter and thinner. They use the everyday language of time and connect the days of the week to familiar events. For example, they may recognise they go to the school library every Wednesday.

Your child begins to learn shape and object words, for example; ball, circle, square, cube, triangle and cone, as well as position words. For example: near, far, between, under, behind and in front.

On-entry assessment

During Term One, all Pre-Primary children take part in an assessment for literacy and numeracy. There is no pass or fail. Teachers collect information on children’s skills in language, reading, writing, counting and numbers. This helps them plan learning experiences and tailor learning for each child, extending children who perform well and supporting those who may need assistance.
GOING TO SCHOOL EACH DAY REALLY MATTERS

At school, your child’s teachers plans programs and activities that build on previously learned skills.

Developing the habit of going to school regularly from Pre-Primary 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 you can do 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 every night
• Taking family holidays during the school holidays and not during term time.

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.

Sign in/out—If you are taking your child out of school during school hours, it is important to sign them out at the front office and then in again if they are returning on that same day. Please inform us of any planned activities scheduled in the morning, preferably via a written note. If your child arrives at school after 9am they need to be signed in at the office.

admin@stcolsbays.wa.edu.au
WHAT YOU CAN DO AT HOME

- You may like to visit your local library and borrow books on topics of interest to your child.
- Encourage your child to draw, write and tell stories.
- Encourage your child to use trial and error to learn and complete tasks. Be patient and let them have a go.
- Make time to read with your child every day. This not only promotes good reading habits, it is also a great way to spend time together as a family. Read your child's favourite book over and over and encourage them to join in. Encourage your child to express his/her opinions about the story. Did you like the ending?
- Encourage them to write and to tell you the reason for writing and why. For example: I am writing a letter to Gran to say thank you for my birthday card.
- Practise using numbers and counting with your child while doing everyday tasks. For example: We have two visitors coming for dinner. There are four people in our family. How many plates will we need?
- Encourage your child to use their new number skills to say how many objects when there is no need to count. For example: You can just ‘see’ there are three things.
- Explore measuring by chatting with your child when you are cooking, shopping or at bath time. You may discuss taller, lighter, longer, heavier, thicker, thinner.
- Help your child pour water or sand from one container to another to decide which holds more, or investigate whether a tablecloth is big enough to cover a table.
- Encourage your child to observe things in nature and to ask questions.
- Collect items and sort them into groups and talk about shapes, sizes, patterns and what they feel like.
- Explore your child’s family history using photographs, objects and stories.
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 Pre-Primary 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 parent 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.

Read Together

Children love being read to. The time you spend reading together helps your child develop a love of books and words. The earlier you start, the better—your child is more prepared for school if they are familiar with language and the many ways it is used.

Your local library is a treasure trove of books and reading materials—let your child pick out those that interest them.

Make sure if your child has an allergy or medical condition, that you advise the school in writing and supply medication and an action plan. Please also advise the teacher is your child is seeing a specialist.
Allergy Friendly School—St. Columba's School is an ‘Allergy Friendly School’. Children are not permitted to bring any nut products to school as some children have life-threatening conditions, even when exposed to nuts and other products. The school’s policy is attached and on the website and parents are requested to read the document and abide by the procedures and rules.

Health – For the sake of your child and the health of others please do not send your child to Pre-Primary if they are sick. In the case of infectious diseases please ask your doctor about quarantine periods. If your child’s hair is shoulder length or longer it must be tied back and kept off their face. Children are not permitted to wear any jewellery to school, except for small sleepers or studs. Please see the uniform policy on the website for further details.

Birthdays – We are happy for your child to celebrate their birthday at Pre-Primary. You are welcome to provide small, nut-free treats for class eg. cupcakes, freddo frogs, lollipops etc. If your child’s birthday is not in the school term please organise another time with me to celebrate with the class.

We will not hand out invitations in class, as it can be upsetting for those not invited. If you are not inviting the whole class please hand out invitations outside of school.

Parent interviews/appointments: Parents are welcome to arrange appointment times throughout the year at short notice. Appointments can be arranged for after school hours. Please feel free to make a time to meet and have a chat. We have formal interviews in Term Two when I will meet with everyone but if you would like to meet before then please let me know. Reports go home in Term Two and Term Four.

Uniform - Children are to wear their faction polo shirts, black shorts and sports shoes on Fridays. The children may wear their coloured Saint Columba’s t-shirts on Monday to Thursday.

Bag – The school bag is compulsory. It needs to be brought to school every day. Please make sure all items are clearly labelled and your child has...

- A spare change of clothing in case of accidents
- The school hat with name clearly marked. We have a ‘No Hat No Play’ rule at our school.