



Isabella Plains Early Childhood School

Family Handbook

2013

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Early Childhood Education Matters -

Philosophy Statement for Early Childhood Education in ACT Public Schools

Education and Training Directorate Vision

That all young people in the ACT learn, thrive and are equipped with the skills to lead fulfilling, productive and responsible lives.

Education and Training Directorate Values

Honesty, excellence, fairness and respect.

Isabella Plains Early Childhood School (IPECS) Vision and Mission Statement

To provide high quality care and education for children from birth to year two, and their families, within a collaborative and integrated service.

Our values

- All children are unique
- Children are capable and competent
- Children are at the centre of all we do
- Children learn through doing
- Productive partnerships between home and school are essential
- Staff employ best practice in Early Years Learning
- Staff are members of a collaborative team providing care and education

Philosophy Statement

Isabella Plains Early Childhood School whole school philosophy builds upon our school's vision statement and the principles and practices from the Early Years Learning Framework.

We build **secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships** with all members of the school community.

At IPECS, the educators:

- Ensure that the interests, abilities and culture of every child and their family are understood, valued and respected.
- Encourage children as active participants in sustainability, influencing the quality of life now, and for future generations.
- Respect the views and feelings of each child.
- Initiate warm, trusting and reciprocal relationships with children.
- Provide safe and stimulating environments for children.

- Build on children’s prior learning and experiences to build continuity for their learning and development.

We develop **partnerships** with families that support the learning and development of all children.

At IPECS, the educators:

- Actively engage families and children in planning children’s learning and development, at school, in the home and in the community.
- Use families understanding of their children to support shared decision making about each child’s learning and development.
- Create a welcoming and culturally inclusive environment where all families are encouraged to participate in and contribute to children’s learning and development experiences.
- Welcome families into the school through classroom visits and our internal community groups, for example Playgroups and Parent groups.
- Strive to be transparent and objective, and provide families with information about their children’s learning and development, and about what they can do to further support their children.
- Work collaboratively to share information and plan to ensure holistic approaches to children’s learning and development.
- Acknowledge the significance of transitions within and across early childhood services and schools, and ensure that children understand the process and have an active role in preparing for these transitions.
- Implement the *KidsMatter* framework to make a positive difference to young children’s mental health and wellbeing during their early childhood years, acknowledging the ‘whole child’.

We strive for **high expectations and equity** for all.

At IPECS, the educators:

- Establish high expectations for all children’s learning and development.
- Support children’s learning and development through a combination of child-led and adult-led play based learning, as well as active teacher-led learning.
- Advocate a child-initiated approach, which is well supported and guided, viewing young children as active constructors of their own knowledge.
- Ensure that every child experiences success in their learning and development and is acknowledged for their achievements.
- Recognise that every child can learn, but some children require quite different opportunities and supports to do this.
- Maximise opportunities for every child.
- Provide physical environments that support a range of opportunities and challenges for learning, and physical activity both indoors and outdoors.

- Encourage children to explore, solve problems, communicate, think, create and construct.
- Use child-centred approaches to explicitly teach particular knowledge and skills.

We have **respect for diversity** in our learning community.

At IPECS, the educators:

- Recognise bi and multilingualism as an asset and support these children to maintain their first language and learn English as a second language.
- Promote cultural awareness in all children, including greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and being.
- Support children to develop a sense of place, identity and a connection to the land.
- Build on children's interests, abilities, cultures and previous learning experiences to extend their thinking, learning and development.
- Recognise the connections between aspects of children's learning and development.

We enhance the learning and development of all children by engaging in **ongoing learning and reflective practice**.

At IPECS, the educators:

- Gather information that supports, informs, assesses and enriches decision-making about appropriate professional practices.
- Continually develop professional knowledge and skills enabling us to provide the best possible learning and development opportunities for all children.
- Promote practices that have been shown to be successful in supporting children's learning and development.
- Assess children's learning and refine teaching to meet interests and needs.
- Collect and maintain objective information to enable planning of stimulating early childhood experiences and best possible practice.

Curriculum

The Early Years Learning Framework has been developed to ensure your child receives quality education programs in their early childhood setting. This is a vital time for them to learn and develop.

The Framework's vision is for all children to experience play-based learning that is engaging and builds success for life.

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Programs/EarlyChildhoodEducation/Pages/default.aspx>

It is a guide for early childhood educators who work with children from birth to five years. They will use the Framework in partnership with families, children's first and most influential educators, to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities, and recognise that children learn through their play.

The Early Years Learning Framework describes childhood as a time 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 living 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.



Belonging



Being



Becoming

Kindergarten to Year 2 programs are based on both the [Every Chance to Learn Curriculum](#) and [The Australian Curriculum](#). Kindergarten to Year 2 focus on explicit teaching of literacy and numeracy each day as well as a morning block of Investigation time each day where children learn through play based on their individual interests and strengths.

To view Education and Training Directorate policies please visit <http://www.det.act.gov.au/>

Our Hours of Operation:

Reception: 8.30am – 4.00pm

Childcare: 7.30am – 6.00pm

Preschool:

Rubies and Amethysts - Classes begin at 9.00am and finish at 3.00pm on Monday, Tuesday and alternate Wednesday.

Coral and Jets - Classes begin at 9.00am and finish at 3.00pm on Thursday, Friday and alternate Wednesday.

K, 1 and 2: Classes begin at 9.00am and finish at 3.00pm.

Out of School hours care- 7-30am-9am, 3pm-6pm.

Enrolment procedures

Children seeking to enter school at preschool age should be four years of age on or before 30 April in that year.

Preschool enrolments open in February prior to the commencement of the preschool year. Enrolment forms may be obtained from Reception at Isabella Plains Early Childhood School or online at http://www.det.act.gov.au/school_education/enrolling_in_an_act_public_school. To be eligible to enrol, you will need to provide your child's birth certificate, immunisation details and proof of residence, i.e. utilities bill, mortgage document, lease or tenancy agreement.

Early Entry and Early Intervention: Early enrolment for children under compulsory education age is also available to children eligible for entry into Early Intervention (Special Education) programs. Children requiring Special Education support may be enrolled upon meeting certain eligibility criteria. An application may be made through the School Counsellor or through the Student Support section of the Education and Training Directorate. Full information will have to be provided to the Principal at the time of application. Further information is available on the Department's website at <http://www.det.act.gov.au/>

Avenues of communication with staff

At Isabella Plains Early Childhood School we value and recognise the importance of a positive parent/staff relationship. We encourage:

- Sharing knowledge to enhance the growth and development of your child.
- Developing positive relationships with families that are based on mutual trust and open communication.
- Developing a sense of belonging to the school for the children, parents and staff.

Our school implements a range of strategies to ensure communication links between the school and the home. Important school notices are placed on notice boards, sent via e-mail, sent home as hard copies if requested and mentioned on Twitter at @IPECS_1. Newsletters are produced each fortnight with information about what is happening in the school from birth to eight years. Our GEMS Parent Association meetings are held once a month for your input and feedback. More information about The GEMS Parents Association can be accessed at www.ipecs.act.edu.au/gems_parent_association.

Our school values collaborative partnerships between parents and staff and provides a number of opportunities throughout the year for formal family interviews to share information about your child on their interests, their strengths and areas to focus on extending their learning and development. Our formal interview times are:

- Term 4 in the year prior to commencement for preschool families - This gives preschool children the opportunity to become familiar with the school and staff and helps them mentally and visually prepare for their preschool year.
- Start of Term 1 - Getting to Know You interviews for preschool to year 2 families
- Mid Year - Goal Setting Interviews for Preschool to Year 2
- Optional end of year interviews if requested for Preschool to Year 2

Teachers appreciate the opportunity to talk with parents and carers both informally and in formal situations. This ensures valuable insights, and understandings, can be appreciated about a child's individual developmental journey. If you have any questions or concerns throughout the year, please do not hesitate to ask for an appointment to meet with the teacher.

Contribution to decision making.

Families are welcome and encouraged to contribute to the decision making procedures of our school through the School Board.

Board

Each government school in the ACT is administered by a School Board whose membership comprises the school principal, two elected staff members and three elected members of the parent body and a nominee of the Department of Education. Elected members normally serve for a two-year period.

The Board is the policy-making body of the School. Its major functions are to:

- determine the educational policies to be implemented at the School
- assess, from time to time, the needs of the School in relation to the provision of buildings and facilities, equipment, funds and teachers and other staff, and make recommendations to the Chief Executive (of the Department of Education) with respect to the meeting of those needs
- determine the purposes for which funds made available for the School are to be expended
- make recommendations to the Chief Executive in respect of the use of the buildings, facilities and equipment of the School for purposes other than school purposes
- develop relationships between the School and the community and between the School and community organisations.
- make recommendations to the Chief Executive on matters relating to the School

Responsibility for the implementation of policies established by the Board rests with the Principal and staff.

The GEMS Parents Association

The role of the GEMS is to promote parent participation in the work of the school and to provide strong positive community support for the school by encouraging parents to be involved. The GEMS support all areas of the school from the babies to Year 2 students.

Meetings are generally held once a month during school terms on Monday evenings and are advertised in the Newsletter and on the website. All parents are encouraged to attend the meetings. In addition to its more official activities, the GEMS Parents Association provides an informal meeting ground for parents and teachers and serves a fundraising function for the School.

A LETTER FROM THE G.E.M.S PARENTS ASSOCIATION
(Genuine Engagement, Mutual Support)

Hello and welcome to the Isabella Plains Early Childhood School.

Isabella Plains Early Childhood School provides children and families with a vibrant, inclusive and supportive community based environment in which our children can grow and thrive. All parents and carers are encouraged to be active participants within the school and to be a part of their child's school life.

A great way to do this is to join the G.E.M.S. The role of the G.E.M.S. is to promote direct parent participation in the work of the school and to provide strong positive community support for the school. We welcome all parents from all areas of the school - babies to Year 2.

The G.E.M.S are responsible for the school support services such as book club, fundraising, the school environment and social dinners/ family days. In 2011 the G.E.M.S:

- Raised \$1600 through a Bunnings BBQ to assist IPECS
- Held the Kids Glitter Glow Disco (attended by about 85 very happy children).
- Organised monthly book clubs and an annual toy catalogue order.
- Had input into various school-based activities, including school photos and the environment committee.

Our meetings are casual and relaxed and provide parents with an opportunity to engage directly with each other as parents and also with dedicated and supportive staff from the school.

Our meeting dates for 2012 will be on the school website and will be sent out to parents at the start of the year.

We look forward to seeing you at Isabella Plains Early Childhood School and feel sure that you will enjoy being part of such a positive and passionate school.

Karen
G.E.M.S President

PARENTS POINTERS

Below are tips from parents at our school to help your child settle into their new adventures at Isabella Plains Early Childhood School (IPECS).

- **Labeling** - Label all items and belongings (everything!)
- **School bag** – Not too big, not too small. Children like to be able to carry their own bag and will have to from time to time so don't get a bag that is too big for them to manage. However, make sure it is big enough to fit lunchbox, spare clothes and a jacket in winter.
- **Lunchbox and Drink Bottle** – make sure your child is able to independently open and use their lunchbox and drink bottle.
- **Clothes** – Children love to play and this is encouraged greatly at IPECS so dress your child accordingly. They need comfortable and practical clothing and footwear for the day. The school has a great range of school clothing (jumpers, hats, short and long sleeved t-shirts, beanies and polar fleeces) for sale, order forms are available at the front office.
- **Hats** – Hats must be worn at all times when outside. Hats are available for purchase from Reception for \$7.00.
- **Spare Clothes** - include a complete change in your child's bag including singlet, underwear, socks, top and bottoms in case of accidents or incidents with paint, water etc.
- **Footwear** – Enclosed shoes are the most suitable to protect little feet and joggers are the most practical for playing and comfort, however sandals may be worn for the warmer months and the children do like to have a change.
- **All-Weather** – Please provide clothing to allow for all weather conditions for your child. Always have a jumper and a T-Shirt in your child's bag despite what the weather is doing when you leave home. Beanies, gloves and a jacket are a must in winter.
- **Sunscreen** – Children are reminded to wear sunscreen. Please provide your child with their own and teach them how to apply it themselves - roll on sunscreens are great for this purpose.
- **Library Bags** – Please provide your child with a library bag as they will be borrowing books to take home.
- **Bedtime** – Your child will enjoy a fun filled and active day at IPECS. It is essential to try and establish a regular bedtime routine so your little person is refreshed and full of energy for the next day.
- **Communication** – be sure to check the notice board outside the room, your child's bags, their tray and your email for information from the school.

Participation in school activities

Our school welcomes families to share their special skills, interests and diverse family cultures with the school and with their child's class program.

Our school encourages families to participate in social activities to enable families to meet each other and form a sense of belonging to the school community.

Our school values any contributions from our families, such as:

- sharing knowledge and expertise of craft, cooking, music, story telling, job skills etc.
- interacting with the daily program
- working bees in the garden etc.
- joining the GEMS Parents Association



Joe's dad Chris brings in his pet snake for show and tell.

This sparks the children's interest and a unit of work emerges on reptiles!

Participation of volunteers

Volunteers have a special place in schools and assist in many ways. This may include interaction with individuals and small groups of students in a range of different activities.

To assist our school in providing a safe environment and a positive educational climate, volunteers are asked to comply with the Code of Conduct for Volunteers. This code of conduct has been formulated to clarify the type of conduct that is expected of volunteers when participating in programs and activities in ACT Government schools.

- Observe similar standards of behaviour and ethical conduct to that required of staff. For example you are expected to act within the law, be honest and fair, respect other people (including students), and work to the best standard of your ability.
- Appreciate that teachers have a special duty of care for students that can not be delegated or transferred to others. Appreciate also that the principal is the spokesperson for the school.
- Appreciate that students have rights and aspirations. Treat students with dignity and respect.
- Observe confidentiality in respect of all information gained through your participation as a volunteer. All information held by schools should be handled with care. Some information is especially sensitive. Sensitive and/or personal information requires additional caution in the way it is treated. For example, volunteers should not discuss nor disclose personal information about students, staff or students' parents/carers to others.
- Accept and follow directions from the principal/supervisor and seek guidance through clarification where you may be uncertain of tasks or requirements. You may need to familiarise yourself with the department's policies and guidelines on particular issues.
- Observe safe work practices which avoid unnecessary risks, apply reasonable instructions given by supervisors and report to the supervising staff and school administration any hazard or hazardous practice in the workplace.
- Report any problems as they arise to your supervisor including incidents, injury or property damage.
- Avoid waste or extravagance and make proper use of the resources of the school/department.

Reporting and Assessment

Assessment practices need to be relevant, purposeful and continuous. Assessment at Isabella Plains Early Childhood School is child centred and linked to the goals of children in the areas of cognitive, language, physical, social and emotional development.

Assessment is carried out on a regular basis in order to provide feedback to children and families, to indicate progress, to inform teaching practice and determine what learning opportunities need to be presented next.

At Isabella Plains Early Childhood School we aim to collect a balance of quality assessment data to help us achieve positive outcomes for our children.

Forms of Reporting

Learning Journals	When
<p>Learning journals reflect a snapshot of children’s learning, projects, literacy and numeracy as well as social and emotional development. Learning Journals are collated each term by children and their teachers. The learning journal is part of the ongoing assessment, evaluation and reflection for each child. Children share the responsibility of collecting and collating the learning journal. Learning journals are on display every day for child and parent access. Parents are encouraged to regularly share their child’s learning journal with them and complete a feedback form outlining what they thought and what they would like to see included in the journal.</p> <p>The learning journal will include work samples which cover a range of purposes such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• giving feedback on achievements and progress• giving evidence of skill development• describing progress and development of learning• communicating intended learning outcomes• sharing the child’s perception and understanding of learning• providing parents with information about the child’s learning• displaying a range of achievements across the curriculum• providing a valuable education record for the year <p>Guidelines for preparation of learning journals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• samples from a variety of areas of learning and a range of activities are included• includes samples, which show development and progression e.g. start of the year and end of the year• includes some first drafts to show children’s editing attempts as well as final drafts• includes work displayed in a range of ways e.g. work samples that demonstrate children’s achievement/learning, creative, photos etc.	On going

Interviews	When
<p>Getting to Know You Interviews</p> <p>The purpose of getting to know you interviews is for parents to talk with staff about their child – their strengths, any concerns, special needs, family details etc. These interviews are designed to develop positive working-together relationships and assist staff in planning effective programs for children.</p>	<p>Week 2 & 3 Term 1</p>
<p>Goal Setting Interviews</p> <p>At the goal setting interview children’s strengths, areas for development and goals for the remainder of the year are discussed in detail, using the learning journal to demonstrate achievements.</p>	<p>P-2 Weeks 8-9 Term 2</p>
<p>As required</p> <p>Parents may request an interview with staff at any time. Parents will be informed as soon as an issue concerning their child’s education arises and will be invited to discuss the concerns with appropriate staff.</p>	<p>Ongoing throughout the year</p>

Written Reports	When
<p>Written Report</p> <p>A written report includes a summary of the child’s strengths under the five domains of development: social, emotional, cognitive, language and physical, as well as literacy and numeracy for children in kindergarten to year 2. It also includes a self-reflection by the child and a description of support / extension needs</p>	<p>K-2 End of Term 2 & Term 4 Preschool Term 4</p>
<p>A-E Reporting Summary Report Template (Yr 1 – Yr 2)</p> <p>A Federal Government requirement. The report outlines the child’s achievement in key learning areas.</p>	<p>K-2 End of Term 2 & Term 4</p>
<p>PIPS (Performance Indicators in Primary School) Summary Report for Kindergarten</p> <p>The PIPS summary report is produced centrally from the PIPS data for Kindergarten children. Parents will receive a summary report indicating their child’s level of achievement.</p>	<p>Term 1 & Term 4</p>

Procedures Timeline

Term 1	
Date	Action
Week 1 - 10	Ongoing collection of learning journal entries
Week 1	Conduct Getting to Know You Interviews
Week 2	Inform parents of PIPS testing (Kindergarten students only)
Week 3 & 4	Conduct PIPS testing for Kindergarten students

Term 2	
Date	Action
Week 1 - 10	Ongoing collection of learning journal entries
Week 6	Inform parents of choice to withdraw child from A-E Reporting

Week 9	Semester 1 written report sent home (K-2) A-E Report sent home (K-2) PIPS reports sent home
Week 8-9	Goal Setting interviews (P-2)
Week 10	Option for interview using work samples and portfolios

Term 3	
Date	Action
Week 1 - 10	Ongoing collection of learning journal entries
Week 8	Open morning or afternoon
Term 4	
Date	Action
Week 1 - 10	Ongoing collection of learning journal entries
Week 2 & 3	Conduct PIPS testing for Kindergarten students
Week 6	Inform parents of choice to withdraw child from A-E Reporting
Week 9	Semester 2 written report sent home (P-2) A-E Report sent home (K-2) PIPS reports sent home
Week 10	Option for interviews to discuss student report

Voluntary contributions

Public education is free. At Isabella Plains Early Childhood School we pride ourselves on providing the highest quality education for our children and this involves providing quality resources for our children to explore, to create, to imagine, to investigate and to experiment as they learn through play and as they develop their skills and knowledge in literacy, numeracy and science in both indoor and outdoor environments. Our school encourages families to contribute a voluntary contribution to enable it to purchase special resources and offer specialised programs.

Our school is committed to providing valuable learning experiences to enhance all areas of our children's development. Additional expenses throughout the year include excursions, incursions, swimming lessons, extra curricular activities such as sports or dance programs. These experiences are optional and subject to parent permission.



Dramatic play props



Hatching Chicks program



Cooking activities

Individual Resources

Families are asked to purchase book packs for their children that contain the necessary resources for each child to use in the classroom throughout the year such as pencils, textas, books and learning journals. Order forms for the book packs are sent home in information packs for preschool and new families in November and through Reception for current families.

Isabella Plains Early Childhood School has a colour code of green, purple and white. Optional school clothing of green or purple t-shirts and jumpers are available for purchase from Savvy School and Formal Wear in Tuggeranong.

Children are required by our Sun Smart policy to wear a sun hat when outdoors. Hats are available for purchase from Reception.

Children are encouraged to borrow books from the school library and will require a library bag. Families can supply their own library bag or purchase one from Reception.



Children enjoy drawing in their drawing books and looking through their learning journals

Excursions

Excursions are an exciting part of the educational program at Isabella Plains Early Childhood School. On enrolment, parents are asked to give permission for their child to go on incidental excursions e.g. walk to the shops. If excursions involve any form of transport, parents will be advised in advance and asked to give permission, in writing, for the child to attend. The adult/child ratio is 1:4 for preschool on major excursions so parents and carers are invited to join in on excursions to help make up the ratio. Unfortunately siblings will not be able to attend excursions due to ratios and numbers on the bus and at venues.



Swimming



Farmyard Nursery



Cinderella Performance

Physical Activities

Physical activity is very important for children's health and well being. Your child will be involved with some hands on experiences both inside the classroom and in the outdoor area. These activities can, at times, be very messy. Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately so that they feel confident to participate in all the challenges provided throughout the session. In keeping with the sun safe policy, children will need to wear either a legionnaires or wide brimmed style hat. Please ensure that cords on hats are detachable in compliance with Directorate regulations. If children do not have a hat, they will only be allowed to play in the shade. Outdoor play is vital aspect of our educational program and children will spend time outdoors throughout the year. Canberra has a cold climate during winter so a warm coat and hat is required in the cooler months of the year. The children will be challenging themselves on the climbing equipment so sensible footwear is essential and long dresses and skirts are discouraged as they can be dangerous when climbing. Please label all of your child's clothing and pack a spare set in case of extremely messy play or accidents.



Physically active play



Messy play

Information on hygiene procedures.

Staff, children and volunteers must adhere to the hand washing procedures to prevent the spread of germs and illness.

All children are encouraged to wash their hands:

- On arrival
- Before and after eating or touching food
- After toileting
- After blowing their nose and wiping tears and dribbles
- When leaving the centre

All scratches and cuts must be covered.



Children learn about hygiene and nutrition in the program and through play

Suggestions on what to pack for lunch

It is important that children have healthy meals throughout the day to ensure they stay alert, energized and able to learn. Below are suggestions for healthy food ideas from The Raising Children Network (<http://raisingchildren.net.au>)

- **Protein** builds bodies and keeps children strong and healthy. Try peas and beans (any kind, including frozen baby peas and canned baked beans), eggs, fish, chicken, meat, milk, yoghurt and cheese.
- **Vegetables and fruit** contain [nutrients](#) and [fibre](#) important for a healthy body inside and out. The more colourful, the better. Offer vegies like broccoli, green beans, carrots, sweet potato, tomatoes, spinach, and cucumber (with skin). Also try colourful fruits such as peaches, apricots, pears and apples. (Wash fruit and leave the skin on.)
- **Starchy carbohydrates** provide energy. The more fibre they contain, the slower they burn. Try fibre-enriched bread, wholegrain rice, couscous, pasta, corn bread, pancakes and low sugar cereal.
- **Good fats** with [long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids](#) build brain and nerve cells. These good fats are found in fish (tinned or fresh), avocado, and vegetable oils such as those made from olives or canola (but try to avoid deep frying in these delicate unsaturated oils).
- **Tap water** is the cheapest and best source of fluids. It is also fortified with fluoride for [strong teeth](#).
- **It is essential that children have breakfast before coming to school. Healthy breakfast choices include low sugar cereals, multigrain toast, egg, yoghurt or fruit.**

Children have three eating times during the day:

10.00am	healthy snack break
11.10am	lunch
1.20pm	afternoon snack

Ideas for the **healthy snack and afternoon snack include**: fruit, yoghurt, cold meat, seeds, vegetable sticks and hommus, muesli bars, crackers & cheese.

Lunch ideas include: sandwiches or salads with tuna, chicken, cheese or egg, corn cobs, raw or cooked vegetables, baked beans, crackers, rice crackers & milk.

Children also need to continually drink water to ensure proper brain function. A drink bottle can be brought into class each day for children to sip on. Bubblers are also available throughout the school grounds.

Canteen

Children from Preschool to Year 2 are able to order a hot lunch from our school canteen; orders can be placed at reception at the beginning of each day

School lunches can be susceptible to food poisoning, especially in the summer heat. Children's lunches will be stored indoors away from sunlight but it is recommended to supply your child with an insulated lunch box and small lunch box ice bricks to keep food cool and to avoid the growth and contamination of food poisoning bacteria.

Please note: Isabella Plains early Childhood School is a nut aware school due to the inclusion of students with life threatening anaphylactic allergic conditions.

To view Education and Training Directorate policies visit <http://www.det.act.gov.au/>

Delivery and collection of Children

Regular attendance and punctuality is important as this allows the children to settle into routines and establish themselves as part of the group. In accordance with the National Quality Standard, collection of children must be by a parent or authorised nominee over the age of 16. Children needing to be collected between the hours of 9-3pm will need to be signed out at Reception by a parent or authorised adult. Children arriving late to school will also need to be signed in at Reception.

Teachers require verbal or written parent/guardian permission to release children to any person other than their parent/guardian. Children must not be left unattended before the start of class and must be accompanied on arrival into the preschool classroom. Families are encouraged to collect their children promptly when class finishes as staff often have meetings and professional development courses to attend.

Absence Notes

Parents are required to provide a note of absence from school, when children are away. Notes need to be given to class teachers upon return to school.

Changes to Details

It is important for families to keep personal details such as home, work and mobile numbers up to date at Reception in case of accidents, illness or other emergencies. Staff also need to be aware of change of address, child care arrangements, medical information and emergency contact numbers. However, please keep telephone calls to the school during session times for urgent matters only as it is disruptive to the program when staff members leave the children to answer the telephone.

Student Welfare and Management

At Isabella Plains Early Childhood School we value that everyone is an individual and that we all have the special qualities that make us who we are. It is important that students are treated with respect and by valuing their uniqueness and what they bring to the school. We provide a supportive, welcoming and culturally inclusive educational environment where students feel safe and happy. The school has a *Safe and Supportive Environment* policy that outlines the steps for addressing student welfare and management issues.

At Isabella Plains Early Childhood School we teach our children a set of guidelines from Preschool to Year 2. We call these guidelines 'Our School Agreement'. Children understand that these guidelines are expectations to ensure the safety and happiness of all children, staff and families in the school. We respect ourselves, each other and our school. The three main points are:

- *We take care of ourselves*
- *We take care of each other*
- *We take care of this place*



Children participate in a Social and Emotional Learning program "Bounce Back", a skills based program linked to Kids Matters.

Emergency management procedures.

The school has a policy on emergency evacuations and are required to practise evacuations and lockdown procedures. All staff and children participate in the practise evacuations and children are talked through what is happening so that they understand the purpose of the experience.

Child Protection practices

All employees in schools are mandated to report any case of suspected child abuse. Failure to notify suspected physical and /or sexual abuse of children is a criminal offence.

Staff will deliver developmentally appropriate lessons to children in protective behaviour and safe behaviours. Staff will also deliver lessons to enhance children's social and emotional skills.

Kenny Koala visits to talk to the children about stranger danger and road safety.



Parent Support

At times families and children experience challenges that may be of concern. Our Community Coordinator is a good first point of contact; we can assist you with information relating to health, child development, community and social programs. We can also link and refer you to the appropriate services based on your families need.

We have the services of a Community Coordinator, a pastoral care program provided by our Chaplain and a Counsellor offering counselling services for children.

Parentlink www.parentlink.act.gov.au is a website which parents can use to access:

- Parents guides, including electronic order forms
- A directory of local parenting services
- Upcoming community events and parenting courses
- Further readings in relation to the parent guides
- Links to other useful websites.

At Isabella Plains Early Childhood School we have a strong focus on families and community. We aim to provide a range of services within the one setting to meet the demanding needs of families. In building a "Community Hub" setting we encourage genuine school- family partnerships and provide family programs that contribute not only to the children's education but also to a greater sense of family and community.

Our programs for children and families include:

Move and Groove – A fun music and movement program where you can expect to learn new songs and musical games, play lots of instruments and make new friends

Welcome Wednesday Breakfast – a nutritious and delicious breakfast is provided for the whole family on Wednesday mornings

Musical Gems Playgroup – a relaxed and welcoming playgroup with a focus on music and play experiences

Parent Groups - a get together to share experiences for parents with very young children

Craft and Laugh - Join us to work on those UFO'S (Unfinished Objects) and share a cuppa with other mums from the Brindabella Women's Group

The Parent Room

The Parent Room is available to families and is perfect for many occasions such as meetings, playgroups or informal get togethers. The room is well equipped for children's play and has a lovely courtyard. Presently the Parent Room is used for Playgroup, Music and Movement Programs, Parent Group Meetings, Craft Group and a variety of meetings and parenting activities.

The timetable below shows when the Parent Room is currently being used on an ongoing basis. New groups are very welcome; if you have an interest in using the room for a booking please contact Louise McCormick – our Community Coordinator on 62059722 or 62057688.

louise.mccormick@ed.act.edu.au

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning	Lil Gems Playgroup	Move and Groove A music and movement program	Gems Playgroup		Craft and Laugh with Brindabella Women's Group
Afternoon			Sparkles Parent Group		

Transitions

Your child is a member of the Isabella Plains Early Childhood School community. By enrolling your child into an Isabella Plains Early Childhood School preschool class your child will automatically move on to kindergarten in our school. As our school philosophy has an integrated approach from birth to eight years by the end of your child's preschool year they will be familiar with and have had learning experiences in most parts of the school including the library, the hall, the bike track and caring for our chickens. From the beginning of the preschool year your child will understand that they are part of and have ownership of the whole school making their transition to kindergarten positive and successful. To further assist with the transition process we implement a transition program for our preschool children. This involves:

- Regular visits to the library, the hall and the bike track
- A buddy program with the Kindergarten children
- Visiting Kindergarten throughout the year to participate in their Investigation experiences
- Meet the Teacher afternoon tea at the end of Term 4 where all children in the school meet their new teacher for the following year and visit their new learning space



Preschool children using the bike track



Preschool children using the hall



Preschool children collecting eggs

For more information about this topic please follow the link to this website for some handy hints:

[Starting school - a guide for parents](#)

Transition for students from Year 2 to Year 3

At the end of year two all of our children will move to a new school for year three. Children who live in Isabella Plains have priority access into Monash Primary School, Bonython Primary School or Richardson Primary School. Children who live in another suburb have priority access into their local school or can apply to any school and acceptance is dependent on spaces available.

Each year two child will visit their new school several times in semester two. These visits will be scheduled at a variety of times during the day so that children can experience a range of experiences including class time, outside play, canteen visits, assemblies and special events. Parents will receive a schedule of dates, times and activities for each visit.

What to expect in year three mini unit

A mini unit will be included in semester two learning for our year two children. This unit will include discussion and exploration of what might be the same and what might be different at their year three school, including:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|--------------------------|
| student council | assemblies | buying snacks at canteen |
| sports carnivals | bells | house captains / houses |
| national competitions | uniforms | teacher's names |

Medical condition management

Immunisation

The ACT Department of Health advises that all children attending school in the ACT should be immunised against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, measles, mumps, rubella and HIB (Haemophilus influenzae type b). We would ask that you check your child's present immunisation status to see whether it is complete for his/her age. ACT Public Health regulations require schools to request proof of up to date immunisation when enrolling. Failure to provide this may result in your child being excluded from school should an outbreak of an infectious disease occur. A copy of exclusion periods for students with infectious diseases is available. Parents are asked to adhere closely to these requirements unless medical advice to the contrary is provided in writing.

Medical and Accidents

It is important that sick children are kept at home for their own comfort as well as the comfort of other children and staff. If a child becomes ill or is injured at school appropriate First Aid will be given and if necessary parents will be notified and asked to take their child home. If emergency treatment is required parents will be notified immediately and the child will be transferred by ambulance to hospital. In such cases ambulance services and treatment are free. All students who have an ongoing condition (e.g. asthma, diabetes, epilepsy) must have a treatment plan completed by parents and their GP and lodged at the school. Plan proformas are available from the Front Office or from a staff member in the preschool.

Exclusion periods for infectious diseases such as mumps, German measles, measles and chicken pox are provided at the end of this handbook.

If a child is to take a **prescription medicine** while at school, written directions and medicine must be left with staff. Information on a child's health status e.g. epilepsy, diabetes, should be given on enrolment or on diagnosis. If the health problem is serious please provide an up to date photograph of the child so it can be placed on our Medical Alert board.

Head lice are extremely contagious but easily eradicated. Children with either eggs or live lice will be excluded from school until written evidence of treatment is produced. Please report any cases of head lice to your child's teacher or Reception.

Anaphylaxis Prevention Plan

Isabella Plains Early Childhood School is committed to the provision of a safe environment for all students and staff.

To ensure the safety of all, the following guidelines will be followed:

1. Administration of medication

The school accepts responsibility for the administration of prescribed medication (e.g. anti-histamines) and Epipens to students. This will only occur if written agreement has been obtained between the Principal and relevant staff, parents, and the student's doctor. The agreement will include a statement setting out any necessary directions and precautions.

2. Epipen training

The Principal will ensure that at least all fulltime staff are trained in the use of the Epipen, and that all staff are aware of the practices and procedures in place at the school for supporting students and/or staff with a diagnosis of anaphylaxis.

These include:

- Any current Anaphylaxis Action Plan is clearly displayed on the classroom wall and in the class roll
- Staff are provided with instructions for using the Epipen

- When on the playground, staff are to carry a bag (containing the EpiPen and copy of the student's Anaphylaxis Action Plan) at all times
- Any staff member who is not prepared to administer the EpiPen will inform the Principal

3. **Removal of bee hives and wasps nests**

Staff will be reminded to be vigilant and report the sighting of any bee hives or wasp nests. These will be removed as a matter of urgency.

4. **Food restrictions**

Communications between school and home will include requests that foods containing ingredients identified as possible triggers for anaphylactic reactions (and stated in students' Anaphylaxis Plans) not be brought to school. These restrictions will also apply to any school/community event that occurs on the school site.

Signs will be clearly displayed around the school grounds to remind all community members of the restrictions in place.

Concerns or complaints

If you have a concern about your child's education please have a conversation with the classroom teacher. You are also welcome to make contact with the executive teacher in the school.

Should the need arise the ACT Education and Training Directorate has a policy for complaints resolution. This policy can be accessed at http://www.det.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policy_a-z

Diseases - Outbreak Procedures and Exclusion Periods

Personal hygiene measures such as hand washing, covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, covering weeping sores, not sharing food or drinks and not attending school when ill or suffering from diarrhoea are important means of limiting the transmission of a number of common infectious conditions.

The *ACT Public Health Regulations 2000* require children with the following conditions, and children who have been in contact with the following conditions, to be excluded from school, preschool, child care or family day care for the periods specified.

Condition	Exclusion of person with condition	Exclusion of persons in contact with condition
Amoebiasis (entamoeba histolytica)	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*Campylobacteriosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Chicken pox (varicella and herpes zoster)	Exclude until the last blister has scabbed over. The child should not continue to be excluded by reason only of some remaining scabs.	Not excluded Any child with an immune deficiency (eg with leukaemia, or as a result of receiving chemotherapy) should be excluded for their own protection and seek urgent medical advice and varicella-zoster immunoglobulin (ZIG), if necessary.
Conjunctivitis (acute infectious)	Exclude until discharge from eyes ceases.	Not excluded
*Cryptosporidiosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Diarrhoea	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*#Diphtheria	Exclude until— (a) at least 2 negative throat swabs have been taken (the first not less than 24 hours after cessation of antibiotic treatment and the second not less than 48 hours later), and (b) a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Exclude family and household contacts until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer.
Giardiasis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*#Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib)	Exclude until a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded
Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Exclude if— (a) child is unwell, or (b) child is drooling, and not all blisters have dried or an exposed weeping blister is not covered with a dressing.	Not excluded
*Hepatitis A	Exclude for at least 7 days after the onset of jaundice and a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded
Herpes (cold sores)	Exclude young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices while the lesion is weeping. Lesion to be covered by a dressing in all cases, if possible.	Not excluded
Impetigo (school sores)	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced and sores on exposed surfaces	Not excluded

	are covered with a watertight dressing.	
Influenza and influenza-like illnesses	Exclude until well	Not excluded
*Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer.	Not excluded
*#Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after the rash appears.	(a) Immunised contacts not excluded. (b) Exclude non-immunised contacts until 14 days after the first day of appearance of the rash in the index case. (b) Non-immunised contacts immunised with measles vaccine within 72 hours after their first contact with the index case are not excluded after being immunised. (d) Non-immunised contacts who are given normal human immunoglobulin (NHIG) within 7 days after their first contact with the index case are not excluded after being given NHIG.
Meningitis (bacterial)	Exclude until well	Not excluded
*Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has commenced.	(a) Not excluded if receiving rifampicin or other antibiotic treatment recommended by the Chief Health Officer. (b) Otherwise, excluded until 10 days after last contact with the index case.
*#Mumps	Exclude for 9 days after onset of symptoms, or until parotid swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).	Not excluded
*#Poliomyelitis	Exclude for at least 14 days after onset of symptoms and until a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded
Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (lice), trachoma	Exclude until effective treatment has commenced.	Not excluded
Rotavirus	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*#Rubella (German measles)	Exclude for 4 days after the appearance of the rash.	Not excluded Female staff of child-bearing age should ensure that their immune status against rubella is adequate.
*Salmonellosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*Shigellosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded

Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the person has recovered or has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours.	Not excluded
*Tuberculosis	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer.	Not excluded
*Typhoid and paratyphoid fever	Exclude until a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	(a) Not excluded unless the Chief Health Officer notifies the person in charge of the school. (a) If the Chief Health Officer gives notice, exclusion is subject to the conditions in the notice.
*#Whooping cough (pertussis)	Exclude for 21 days from start of cough, or for at least 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the Chief Health Officer.	Exclude non-immunised household, home based child care and close child care contacts under 7 years old for 14 days after the last exposure to infection, or until 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the Chief Health Officer (whichever is sooner).
Worms (intestinal)	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded