

Isabella Plains Early Childhood School Family Handbook



*A place of learning where all young children thrive
and belong*

General Information

Contact Details

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Facebook: www.facebook.com/IsabellaPlainsEarlyChildhoodSchool

Staff

Principal: Simon Barker
Deputy Principal: Melonie Lloyd

2025 TERM DATES

Term 1	Monday 3 February	Friday 11 April
Term 2	Tuesday 29 April	Friday 4 July
Term 3	Tuesday 22 July	Friday 26 September
Term 4	Tuesday 14 October	Thursday 18 December

2025 PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day	Wednesday 1 January
Australia Day	Monday 27 January
Canberra Day	Monday 10 March
Good Friday	Friday 18 April
Easter Monday	Monday 21 April
ANZAC Day	Friday 25 April
Reconciliation Day	Monday 2 June
King's Birthday	Monday 9 June
Labour Day	Monday 6 October
Christmas Day	Thursday 25 December
Boxing Day	Friday 26 December

Contents

GENERAL INFORMATION	2
PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME	5
OUR VALUES, MISSION AND VISION	6
ABSENCES	8
ALLERGIES	8
BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE.....	8
BREAKFAST CLUB.....	8
CANTEEN	9
CHANGES TO DETAILS.....	9
CHILDREN WITH DIVERSE NEEDS	9
CLASS CONNECT PROGRAM	9
CLOTHING	9
COMMUNICATION.....	10
CONCERNS AND COMPLIMENTS	10
CORE ELEMENTS OF SERVICE DELIVERY	11
CURRICULUM.....	12
DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN.....	14
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES.....	14
ENROLMENT PROCEDURES	14
FIRST AID	15

FOOD AND DRINK	15
GEMS P&C.....	16
HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION	17
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT).....	17
LIBRARY	18
PARENT AND CARER PARTNERSHIPS.....	18
PARENT PORTAL.....	19
POLICIES	20
PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR SCHOOL.....	20
PSYCHOLOGIST	21
REPORTING TO FAMILIES	22
SCHOOL BOARD	22
SEESAW	22
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING AT SCHOOL	23
STATIONERY PACKS	23
SUN SMART.....	24
TIMETABLE	24
TRANSFERRING/LEAVING SCHOOL	25
TRANSITIONS.....	25
VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS.....	26
WHAT TO BRING.....	26
WHOLE SCHOOL GATHERINGS	27
APPENDIX 1	28
APPENDIX 2	31
APPENDIX 3.....	32

Principal's Welcome

Dear Families,

Welcome to the Isabella Plains Early Childhood School. I am privileged to lead IPECS as a place of learning where all young children thrive and belong. Our school is located in the Tuggeranong district of Canberra and is one of five early childhood schools in Canberra specifically built to provide high quality education and care services for children from birth to 8 years old (year 2). Our teaching approaches and practices are embedded with research and best practice in early childhood education where we are committed to providing children with the best start in life. We achieve this by knowing all children and their families individually and through collaborating with each other and our families we work together to provide the best possible learning outcomes for children.

At IPECS, we believe that when we enrol a child, we enrol a family and value strong partnerships with our families and wider community. As an early childhood school, we have built a strong partnership with Communities@Work to provide birth to 8-year-old services. Three core elements drive our service delivery including high quality learning, integrated service delivery and family participation and support. We also offer a range of programs through collaboration with Kids Hope Mentors, Isabella Gardens Retirement Village, Tuggeranong Child and Family Centre and ACT Playgroups.

Our PRIDE (Perseverance, Respect, Integrity, Diversity and Excellence) values are embedded in all that we do, and all children are explicitly taught and supported to demonstrate our values each day. Through our core and specialist programs, we explicitly teach the learning skills, assets and dispositions. Our specialist programs have been specifically designed to support children to develop learning assets, skills and dispositions required for 21st century global learners. These programs include our Makerspace (ICT and STEM), Spanish and Sustainability.

Take care,

Simon Barker

Principal

IPECS PRIDE

Perseverance

Respect

Integrity

Diversity

Excellence



Our Mission

A place of learning where all young children thrive and belong.



Our Vision

IPECS graduates are happy, healthy, globally minded citizens who positively impact the world around them through respect for country, self, family, community and others

Absences

Absences are recorded electronically, and families will receive a text message or notification on the Parent Portal if a child is recorded as absent. It is preferred that parent/carers reply to this SMS or Parent Portal notification explaining the absence. Absences can also be emailed to info@ipecs.act.edu.au.

Allergies

Isabella Plains Early Childhood School is an allergy aware school. We ask that in order to minimise the risk of allergic reaction, children do not bring items to school that may contain nuts. At times, there may be other food products that we ask you to avoid sending to school based on the individual needs of children. If your child has a known allergy, you will be asked to complete an action plan with your doctor and provide a copy to the school along with any medication needed.

Before and After School Care

Before and after school care is provided onsite by Communities@Work and is accessible to all children in preschool to year 2. To enquire about places available and to enrol, please contact the Communities@Work enrolment team on 1300 212 273 or visit <https://www.commsatwork.org/>

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club operates from the Family Room on a Tuesday and Thursdays in Weeks 2-10 (during the school term) from 8.30am. Staff serve a nutritious breakfast for any child and their family that would like to attend. We encourage children and parents/carers to come to Breakfast Club together to connect with our staff and other families.



Canteen

Children from preschool to year two can order lunch from the Communities@Work kitchen which operates from the school hall. Orders can be placed in the morning before school starts at the kitchen located at the entrance to the hall. The full menu is displayed on the canteen window and only cash payments are accepted.

Changes to Details



Please inform the front office via the Parent Portal or email, info@ipecs.act.edu.au as soon as possible if there are any changes to your contact details or care arrangements. It is important that we can easily reach you in the unlikely event of an emergency.

Children with Diverse Needs

If your child is diagnosed with a developmental delay or disability, please talk to the school executive staff as soon as possible. For children with diverse needs we may consider a modified transition to starting school. In this model, children can get to know the school routines at their own pace and educators can ensure they have effectively set up learning experiences that cater to individual needs.

Clothing

The School Board encourages the wearing of school colour code as it helps to create a sense of belonging. Children are involved in a range of hands-on learning experiences, so are encouraged to wear clothes that are wash and wear. We also believe that wearing school clothing assists on excursions as children are more visible and easily identifiable in the school colours.

Colour code

Children at Isabella Plains Early Childhood School are encouraged to wear the school colours of **purple** and **green**. Children are encouraged to wear black shorts, pants or skirts.

School clothing options

Items available to purchase and order in sizes 2 to 12, from the school include

- Short sleeved polo shirts – green and purple \$22
- Long sleeved polo shirts- green and purple \$24
- Short sleeved t-shirts – green and purple \$14
- Long sleeved t-shirts – green and purple \$16
- Aboriginal design polo - \$40
- Polar fleece jumpers – purple only \$40

- Zip fleece jacket – purple only \$47
- Dress - \$43
- Sun smart approved bucket hats – green and purple \$13
- Beanie – purple \$13

Footwear

Suitable shoes have an enclosed toe and heel, include well-formed sneakers, leather shoes and boots. Well-fitting shoes are important as ill-fitting shoes can have negative long-term effects on children’s feet. Thongs, Crocs and open-backed sandals can result in injuries and are therefore discouraged.

Label all clothing

Please **ensure all clothing is clearly labeled with your child’s name**. Lost property that is labelled can be returned. Any lost property clothing with no names will be put into the secondhand clothing shop.

Communication

Our school implements a range of strategies to ensure communication links between school and home. Important school notices are placed on notice boards, sent home as hard copies if requested, emailed, and shared on our Facebook page. Newsletters are produced in weeks 1, 3, 6 and 9 of each term with information about what is happening in the school. All newsletters and notes sent home by the school are accessible on the Parent Portal and the school’s website. We use SeeSaw as a platform to share children’s learning with families.

Our school values collaborative partnerships between parents/carers and staff and provides several opportunities throughout the year for families to receive and share information about children and their interests, strengths and areas for improvement. We call these opportunities “Yarns”. Yarns is a word that might be used in Aboriginal cultures to describe coming together to talk. Yarns are held in the year prior to commencement for preschool families, at the beginning of the year and at the end of semester one. At anytime, families are welcome to contact educators or school leaders to request a meeting.

Concerns and Compliments

Educators 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 educator.

Working Together to Resolve Challenging Issues

There may be times when we need to deal with a challenging issue concerning your child at school. We understand that you are emotionally invested and would like to work with you towards a positive outcome. Challenging situations can include social conflicts, concerns about children’s learning or questions and concerns about any aspect of our programs. At these times ensure you continue to foster your child’s positive attitude toward school,

community, people and learning.

In the first instance you are encouraged to contact your child's teacher if you have a concern. If after talking with them, you are not satisfied or if you are not comfortable to talk to your child's teacher, please contact a member of the leadership team.

When dealing with challenging situations:

- Be pro-active - you may see things that the educator has not been able to see. Be open, tell them what you understand and what your child has expressed to you. Keep track of follow up and give feedback to the educator about whether the situation is resolved from your perspective.
- Be positive - we all want the best for your child. It is a shared responsibility that educators and parents/carers communicate respectfully in a way that values the teaching expertise and the parents/carers input.
- Be fair - sometimes you may feel frustrated with your child's peers, educators or other families involved. It is important that even in these situations we continue to communicate respectfully and with consideration for others. Your child is learning from your reaction - what do you want them to see?
- Be realistic - for example, if your child is experiencing a challenging situation with a peer, understand that they are *both* still learning how to engage in a positive way. There may be many times across the year where the same challenge comes up. Expectations should meet the child's capabilities.
- Be aware - we have different perspectives. As the primary carer your focus is on your child. You see *their* feelings and effects of the situation in a more intense way than others. The educator's role is to make professional decisions and move toward a resolution with your family, other families involved and the class, with consideration for the personal impact on each individual concerned.

Should the need arise the ACT Education Directorate has a policy for complaints resolution.

This policy can be accessed at

https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policies/A-Z

Core Elements of Service Delivery

IPECS provides services for children from birth to eight years old. Central to our service delivery are three core elements described below. For more information about each of the elements, please visit our website

(http://www.ipecs.act.edu.au/our_school/core_elements_of_service_delivery)



Curriculum

Preschool

The preschool curriculum is guided by Being, Belonging and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) v2.0. It is a national framework of principles, practices and learning outcomes for children in early childhood education from birth to five years and into kindergarten. The framework has a strong emphasis on play based learning.

Our highly qualified early childhood team use this framework to co-construct curriculum with children and families in richly stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments. Recognising that children learn through play, learning programs are responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities.

Through implementing the five EYLF learning outcomes, children develop a strong sense of identity, make connections and contributions to their world, enhance their physical and social wellbeing, become involved and confident learners and enhance their communication skills. Documentation is used to make children's learning visible and to track and share children's progress.

Early Years Learning Framework v2.0

Our curriculum is informed by the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) v2.0. You may be familiar with Key Learning Areas such as English, Maths, Science or the Arts - they are taught through this framework.

Children have a strong sense of identity

As they get to know our educators and class members, children have many opportunities to share what experiences or actions, help make them feel good. Children are learning to identify factors that promote their mental wellbeing. As they gain



confidence in self-help skills their achievements are celebrated, enhancing a positive sense of self. Stories, role play and discussions further help children value and follow health practices.

Children are connected with and contribute to their world

Children are introduced to various multicultural resources designed to broaden their understandings and appreciation of different cultures and places. We acknowledge and learn about the diverse cultures that enhance our class group and show individuals that they are understood by including photos, artefacts, literature, language and play activities from their family cultural background.

Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

The children will engage in class discussions and stories to help them learn about how they can thrive, be independent and help in their new classroom community. All these factors contribute to the development of a sense of wellbeing. Children will be introduced to different roles at pack up time and the recycling system at IPECS. Explicit and incidental teaching and role play around regulating emotions is a natural part of the young child's day.

Children are confident and involved learners

In the school, children will develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating. They will also continue to develop their attitude towards learning including curiosity, creativity, cooperation, confidence, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence and imagination.

Children are effective communicators

Isabella Plains Early Childhood School offers a wide variety of mediums through which children may express their ideas and understandings. These activities are planned to support children's fine motor and prewriting skills. Throughout the day, children have opportunities to move creatively and express themselves through music and movement. All experiences endeavour to develop verbal communication capabilities and this is evident through cooperative play, exposure to great books (rich text) and learning experiences that build vocabulary.

Kindergarten to Year 2

IPECS is guided by the Australian Curriculum from kindergarten to year two. The Australian Curriculum is designed to help all young Australians to become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens. Presented as a developmental sequence of learning from Foundation - Year 10, the Australian Curriculum describes to educators, parents/carers, children and others in the wider community what is to be taught and the quality of learning expected of young people as they progress through school.

Disciplinary knowledge, skills and understanding are described in the eight learning areas of the Australian Curriculum: English, Mathematics, Science, Health and Physical Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, The Arts, Technologies and Languages. In each learning area or subject, content descriptions specify what young people will learn, and achievement standards describe the depth of understanding and the sophistication of knowledge and skill expected of children at the end of each year level or band of years.

In addition to the eight learning areas, the Australian Curriculum also includes cross curriculum perspectives and general capabilities. The cross-curriculum perspectives include:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures
- Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia
- Sustainability

The general capabilities include:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Information and Communication (ICT) Capability
- Critical and creative thinking
- Personal and social capability
- Ethical understanding
- Intercultural understanding

Delivery and Collection of Children

A member of staff provides supervision for children in kindergarten to year 2 from 8.30am each morning. At 9.00am children will be directed to their learning areas to meet the educator and begin the day. Children not enrolled in before school care are asked not to arrive at school before 8.30am.

At the end of the day, K-2 parents are welcome to meet children outside of classrooms in the courtyards otherwise, all children will be walked from their classroom to the front gate where they will be handed over to a family member. If the child's parent or carer is using the pickup zone at the front of the school, the child will be walked over to the car.

Preschool children can be delivered to the preschool rooms from 9.00am and collected from preschool at 3.00pm. Before and after school care is available onsite through Communities@Work for preschool – year 2 children.

Emergency Management Procedures

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

Enrolment Procedures

The front office staff will direct enquiries to a member of the leadership team who can answer any queries you may have about the enrolment process and requirements. All ACT Education Directorate school enrolments are done via the online enrolment link; <https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/enrolling-in-a-public-school>. Once the enrolment has been completed online the school receives notification and families will be contacted

to confirm if a place is available. When an offer of enrolment has been sent, families are invited to come to the school and provide originals of the following documents to accept the offer of enrolment:

- Proof of address (utilities bill **and** lease agreement or rates notice)
- Immunisation records for your child
- The child's birth certificate or passport

Children in preschool do not need to re-enrol for kindergarten at IPECS, their enrolment continues for preschool to kindergarten.

First Aid

All staff are informed about Education Directorate policies and school procedures in relation to the administration of First Aid and the appropriate response to accidents and incidents. Staff receive appropriate professional development and induction training.

First Aid kits are located in the preschool and the front office. A qualified First Aid Officer is always on site. The First Aid Officer will manage all major and minor injuries / accidents supported by the staff. Further assistance will be called for if necessary.

Families will be contacted if the child receives a knock to their head, serious injury or if they are unwell and need to be collected from school.

Food and Drink

It is important that children have healthy meals throughout the day to ensure they stay alert, energised and able to learn. Healthy breakfast choices include low sugar cereals, multigrain toast, egg, yoghurt or fruit.

Children have two or three eating times during the day – fruit break, lunch and recess. In preschool, these vary slightly according to each group of children and their needs.

Ideas for the **fruit break and recess 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 and milk.

It is also important that children drink plenty of water throughout the day. A drink bottle can be brought into class each day for children to sip on. Bubblers are also available throughout the school grounds.

School lunches can be susceptible to food poisoning, especially in the summer heat. It is recommended that you 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.



The GEMS Parent Association (GEMS), established in 2009, works hand in hand with the Communities@Work Centre Manager, Principal, Deputy Principal and IPECS and Communities@Work educators to contribute to the learning and environments of our children.

All parents and carers of children at IPECS from birth to year two are automatically members of the GEMS. We value the rich diversity of skills and experiences that each family brings to our school and understand that helping our school comes in many different forms.

A GEMS governing committee is appointed each year with nominations and votes coming from the IPECS school community. The committee provides a delegate to attend the ACT Council of P&C Association meetings giving an IPECS voice on ACT school policies and issues. GEMS meetings occur twice a term on the designated day/time which is advertised to the school community through the newsletter and on Facebook.

The GEMS have a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/IPECS.GEMS/) to share information with parents/carers that is interesting and relevant to our school community.

The GEMS organise many fun community and educational events for our school children and their families such as:

- Whole school discos
- Movie nights
- Sausage sizzles
- End of year celebrations
- Science show presentation during Science Week
- Celebratory breakfasts for e.g., Special persons day
- Art show and mini fete

The GEMS also conduct fundraising activities to help provide improvements to the school and new resources for our children. These activities include:

- Mother and Father's Day stalls
- Colouring competitions
- Healthy fruit fundraiser e.g., mangoes/cherries
- Community barbecues e.g., Bunnings
- Cookies
- Raffles
- Stuck on You

GEMS is an opportunity for you to find out what is happening around the school, contribute your ideas, connect with other families and have some fun during this precious time of your child's life. Your children will benefit too. Research shows that when parents and carers are involved, children

get better grades, have a better attitude to school and improved behaviour. Research also shows that people that volunteer are happier and live longer. So why wouldn't you want to get involved?

If you would like to know more about the GEMS please contact ipecs.gems@gmail.com.

Health and Medical Information

The ACT Health Directorate advises that all children attending school in the ACT should be immunised against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, measles, mumps, rubella and HIB (Haemophilus Influenza type B). We ask that you check your child's present immunisation status to see whether it is complete for their 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 children with infectious diseases is available in the Appendix of this document. Parents/carers 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/carers will be notified and asked to take their child home. If emergency treatment is required parents/carers will be notified immediately and an ambulance will be called if necessary.

If a child is to take a **prescription medicine** while at school, written directions and medicine should be left with the front office staff. Information on a child's health status, e.g., epilepsy, diabetes, will be requested on enrolment or on diagnosis.

Hygiene Procedures

Staff, children and volunteers must adhere to the hand washing procedures. All children are encouraged to wash their hands:

- On arrival
- Before eating or touching food
- After toileting
- After blowing their nose, wiping tears and dribbles

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

At Isabella Plains Early Childhood School, we use a variety of digital technologies to support children's learning and to communicate with our parent/carer community.

We strive to boost children's skills and access to good quality technology across the site. We strive to use technology as a tool for learning that expands our instructional repertoire and is the vehicle that maximises the capacity of all educators and learners. It is the vision of Isabella Plains Early

Childhood School that children be engaged in a stimulating academic environment and a curriculum that is child centred and focused on 21st Century learning.

In the 21st century, understanding and using technology will be an integral part of virtually every aspect of daily life. When integrated into instruction, technology will support new strategies for teaching and learning by:

- Addressing diverse learning styles
- Accommodating individual learning rates
- Encouraging cooperative learning
- Helping children accept responsibility for their learning
- Providing the means to communicate globally
- Improving academic achievement in all areas

Specifically, we envision that technology is available and effectively supported for all children and staff to:

- Provide global access to information
- Meet the curricular needs of all learners
- Provide access to the general curriculum
- Refine critical thinking skills and foster creativity
- Provide a medium for expression and communication
- Collect, assess, and share performance information
- Improve the effectiveness of administrative tasks
- Provide skills and proficiencies necessary for future schooling

Library

The library program supports all learning, at home and at school. Classroom teachers from preschool to year two take their classes to the library each week for borrowing.

Your child will borrow from the school library as a part of their class program. They will need to bring a library bag for borrowing. Preschool children are provided with a library bag. Parents' and carers are welcome to access the library with children before and after school. Children can also borrow electronic books via the school library catalogue which can be viewed on a computer or personal device. Log on details and instructions on how to access eBooks are sent out early in term one.

Each year IPECS participate in Book Week and the Chief Minister's Reading Challenge. These events are organised by a team of staff as outlined in their roles and responsibilities.

Parent and Carer Partnerships

Positive parent and carer partnerships are critical to our success. Recent research indicates that parent/carers engagement in their children's education has a significant and positive effect on

educational outcomes. We encourage you to contact your child's educator if you have any queries or concerns. There are many ways in which you can become involved in your child's school: GEMS P&C, School Board, volunteering in the classroom, excursions and/or attending learning journeys.

We are a community - you are welcome to be part of your child's classroom, school events, and special class events like excursions. To offer help, ask your child's teacher at any time. If you have an area of expertise, like art, design, music or science, please let us know. Our children are learning to gather information from various sources. People are a precious information resource and we would enjoy including your expertise in our program at some stage of the year.

Parent Portal

Parent Portal is a secure online platform used to share student information between you and your child's teachers. Using the Parent Portal on your mobile phone, tablet or computer, you can:

- Notify us if your child is sick or explain an absence
- Book parent-teacher interviews
- Receive academic reports
- Receive our school newsletter
- Receive messages from your child's teachers
- Make payments
- Access the school calendar and your child's student timetable

One of the many benefits of the Parent Portal is that it will be used by all ACT public schools from preschool through to year 12, so there will be no need to use a different system as children change schools during their public-school journey. If you have children at nearby schools you will not need to sign up to the system twice. You will be able to easily add a student to your account once their school has access to the Parent Portal.

If you already have a Parent Portal account, use this Parent Portal access link to start using the great features. You can't access Parent Portal directly through the ACT Digital Account website, you need to use this link (<https://bit.ly/parent-portal-access>). When you are logged into Parent Portal, we recommend saving the browser as a favourite or to the homepage on your mobile phone for quick access in the future. The website can only be viewed using a web browser on your computer, mobile phone or tablet.

To access Parent Portal you will need to create or have access to an ACT Government Digital Account and complete the level 2 identity verification.

The mobile number, first and last names for your Digital Account must be an exact match for those the school uses to contact you. If you already have a Digital Account in which any of these are different from what's on the school's records, you can:

- Contact the school to have your mobile number in the school records changed, so you can use your existing Digital Account (recommended), or
- Make a new Digital Account just for use with Parent Portal.

It is important to remember that once you've created your account, you can only access Parent Portal on a browser using this link: <https://bit.ly/parent-portal-access>.

Policies

To view Education Directorate policies visit; <http://www.education.act.gov.au/>

Preparing your child for school

During your Getting to know you Yarn, you will talk with an educator about your child. You may like to discuss your child's interests and strengths and ask any questions you may have.

The Educator will ask about medical conditions and experience in childcare. We also ask about family and cultural celebrations, and discuss school clothes and lunches. You may also like to consider any goals you would like your child to work towards.

Children respond to our feelings and attitudes. Look for opportunities to model to your child how exciting starting school is and how much trust you have in the school and your child's new educator. The following ideas can be practised at home during the summer break. Once your child actually starts school, they will be coping with a lot of change. Providing opportunities to practise and repeat ideas will be a necessary part of the first few weeks.

Help your child to become aware of the essential routines of a school day:

- Talk about giving the brain and body some energy for lots of learning. Talk about and eat a healthy breakfast.
- When helping your child to practise essential routines like packing a school bag and opening their lunchbox, remember to balance your support with promoting independence.
- Talk to your child about looking after their own property. Ask your child to help pack their school bag, to tidy their own room, to manage where they store the things they need.

Help your child to identify people who can help them:

- Talk about when they might need to ask for help; to locate something they can't find or for support to resolve an issue. Ask them to give you some ideas about what they can do if they need help. You can suggest that they ask a friend first, and then they can ask an educator.

Highlighting Regular Routines at school

What happens at preschool:

- Children are supported to develop skills in becoming independent learners
- Children are actively exploring a range of learning opportunities and environments
- Learning areas are open ended, child centred, based on interest, ability or designed to support skill development
- Social skills development is supported through individual and group learning opportunities

Your child's routine will be established over the first few weeks. It will include opportunities for investigating, problem solving, building social connections and expressing what they know about their world through arts, literacy, puppetry, music, play and conversation. Your child will be playing outdoors, actively engaging in gross motor opportunities and playing with others. Your child will get to learn about their local environment, with regular visits around the school and in the local neighbourhood (eg: shops, Isabella Ponds, Isabella Gardens Retirement Village).

Beginning week one or at your child's enrolment date, your child will be engaging in their full preschool routine. Please see your child's educator if you would like to bring your child for shorter periods to allow some transition to adapt to the full timetable.

Organising Your Home Routine

- It is important for your child to come to school every scheduled day. A consistent routine can create a feeling of safety and when children feel safe they are more likely to take on learning.
- It is important to arrive at school on time. Arriving a little earlier helps your child connect with their friends and enter the classroom in an appropriate manner ready for play, learning and social interaction.
- Mornings in a family setting can be a really busy time. Put some structures into place to reduce the stress and rush, to get to school smoothly and on time. Things like packing lunch snacks the night before, getting clothes out ready for a child to dress themselves, having notes signed and ready for return and helping your child to pack their school bag the night before are all time saving strategies. You may allow time for a favourite book or activity to promote a sense of well-being.

Coping at the End of the Day and Balancing Family Life

Your child is new to the expectations at school. They will need some 'down time' when they come home. You know your child, remember that they may communicate their tiredness by crying, being cranky, fighting with their siblings and being uncooperative. This is expected behaviour. Adjust your routines to allow for a break, a time to rest and play. Look at negative behaviours as an opportunity to gently teach your child how to cope more appropriately with pressure.

Psychologist

The school has the service of a school psychologist who is responsible for assisting in identifying educational and developmental needs of children and is available to support children and families in times of need. Please ask a member of staff how you can access this service if required.

Reporting to families

End of semester reports are a written reflection of children's learning. The Early Years Learning Framework v2.0 informs preschool educators reporting on your child's sense of belonging, being and becoming. K-2 educators report against the Australian Curriculum Achievement Standards. Reports are sent home at the end of term two and four. Parents are welcome to discuss their child's progress with their teacher at anytime. If you need time for a longer conversation, please make an appointment with your child's educator. This can be done through the front office. Across the year, educators share the children's learning via Seesaw which is a digital portfolio. Login details are provided in term one.

School Board

The School Board is our official governing body which consists of seven members: the Principal, two parent representatives, two teacher representatives, Education and Care Director and one community representative. Board members are elected and are responsible for all policy decisions for the school. Information on nominating for the Board is sent out in term one each year.

Seesaw

Seesaw is a digital communication app that provides families with a real time window into their child's learning. Children and staff document learning and share this with families through the seesaw app. Parent/carers are provided with a class code to gain access to their child's seesaw account. Seesaw will be used to document each child's individual learning journey over the course of the school year. Each child's digital portfolio will represent the individual child and their learning and growth in a range of curriculum areas including indoor and outdoor play. Children share the responsibility of collecting and collating the learning journal. Parents and carers are encouraged to regularly share their child's digital portfolio with them and give feedback.

The digital portfolio will include work samples which cover a range of purposes such as:

- 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/carers with information about the child's learning
- Displaying a range of achievements across the curriculum
- Providing a valuable education record for the year

Social and Emotional Learning at School

When children feel they belong, they are more likely to engage in learning. Establishing friendships is a very important element of going to school. The social situation at school will be different to the child's family life. Your child may feel challenged when confronted with the diverse experiences and expectations of their peers. Please talk to your child's educator if your child expresses they are unhappy at school, develops irregular sleep patterns or eating habits, frequently cries for no apparent reason or just don't seem their usual, happy self.

Together we aim to:

- Explicitly teach about using our school values as a tool for life
- Teach your child that friendships come and go. You don't always play with the same person and you don't always get along. It's okay to take a break from friends and use it as a time to make new ones.
- Teach your child to ask friends to play, include others, take turns, cooperate and negotiate
- Model choosing and using positive words to empower, acknowledge personal responsibility and to provide strategies to the child for coping with challenging situations

The PRIDE values provide guidance regarding our expectations of children. We have a hands off /feet off expectation at IPECS and children are regularly taught how to maintain this expectation through play and group situations. We also expect all children to speak kindly towards each other. When things go wrong, we use restorative practices to support all parties to be heard and to "fix" what has happened. Staff will spend time listening to all children's versions of what happened and work with all involved to find a solution and way forward.

Four questions are used to guide this process:

1. What happened?
2. How do you feel?
3. Who has been harmed?
4. What needs to happen to make things right?

Stationery Packs



Each year families are asked to purchase a book pack for their child to use during the following school year. We have found that ordering class sets of all materials in bulk is a much more cost-effective way of purchasing book pack requirements. The stationery pack includes coloured pencils, textas and crayons, lead pencils and exercise books. It also covers glue sticks, paint, scissors and other craft items. \$10 per child of this contribution goes toward the cost of all digital learning tools and resources, including Seesaw which is an online learning journal that all our classes use. There is no need to come in and pick up the stationery pack, as everything will be delivered to the classrooms ready for the first day of the

school year. For preschool, the stationery pack also includes a library bag and a school hat.

Sun Smart

We are a Sun Smart school which means that from the beginning of August until the end of May, or when the UV level is above 3, sun protection will be enforced. This includes wearing hats that protect the face, neck and ears, applying sunscreen, and seeking shade. Children and educators are encouraged not to wear sleeveless tops to ensure compliance with our sun smart policy.

The full sun protection policy can be found on the schools website

http://www.ipecs.act.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/260512/sun_protection_policy.pdf

Timetable

Preschool

The preschool day is flexible and includes opportunities for children to play indoors and outdoors throughout the day. Educators ensure children are provided with opportunities to be involved in quieter, calmer periods of the day. Scheduled breaks for eating morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea are flexible and children are encouraged to drink water throughout the day. Small and large group times are held throughout the day for reading to children, inquiry learning, oral language activities as well as social and emotional learning.

Children don't typically sleep during the day at preschool, although arrangements can be made for this if required.

Kindergarten to Year 2

A typical outline of the kindergarten to year two day is outlined below. Children are encouraged to eat their lunch during the first break time and have an afternoon snack at the second break time. Educators will supervise both eating times prior to children playing outside.

- 9:00am – 11:00am – morning session
- 11:00am – 11:45am – break time (including 15 minutes supervised eating)
- 11:45am – 1:15 – middle session
- 1:15 – 1:45 – break time
- 1:50pm – 3:00pm – afternoon session

Transferring/Leaving School

Parents and carers are asked to notify the school, in writing, at least one week prior to departure when children are leaving the school to allow for preparation of documentation. Student files are shared with other ACT Government schools.

Transitions

Transition into preschool

Preschool families are invited to attend a stay and play session in term four, with typically four options to choose from to suit families schedules. Families are asked to attend a family yarn in term four. This yarn is designed to help you get to know the school, share any relevant information and ask any questions.

From preschool to kindergarten

By enrolling your child at Isabella Plains Early Childhood School, your child will automatically move on to kindergarten in our school. As with all transitions the staff will ensure that the move from preschool to kindergarten is successful. To do this we have implemented a transition program for our preschool children. This involves the children spending a number of sessions exploring in the kindergarten learning spaces, familiarising themselves with the physical environment and routines. These occur during normal school hours.

Transition from year two to year three

The transition to year three from an early childhood school is an exciting milestone for all our children. This information is provided to ensure that that all families have the required information as they work through the transition and orientation process for the following year.

IPECS and the other public schools are part of the ACT Government school system and the Tuggeranong Schools Network. Children who live in Isabella Plains have priority access to 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 at the discretion of the school.

The Education Directorate has comprehensive information about enrolling in an ACT public school at

https://www.education.act.gov.au/school_education/enrolling_in_an_act_public_school.

You can find information about the Education Participation (Enrolment and Attendance) Policy, priority enrolment areas, and the process for the coming year. You can also access website links for each school at

https://www.education.act.gov.au/school_education/directory_of_schools.

IPECS offers a transition to year three information session in late term one every year. This session will give families information on enrolling in another school, relevant dates and allow parents and carers to ask any questions about transition.

During term four year two children participate in transition visits which are arranged with the receiving school. Families will be advised in writing at the end of term 3 of dates, timings and individual arrangements for these visits. Typically, schools offer three visits (one half day and two full day visits).

Should you require any further information about transitions please contact the front office or deputy principal to make a time to discuss any concerns or questions.

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. The School Board decides the amount for voluntary contributions, and this is communicated to parents and carers at the beginning of the year.

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, extracurricular activities such as sports or music programs. Some of these experiences are optional and subject to parent/carer permission.

The school also has a Library Fund. Funds in this account can only be used for purchasing resources for the library and donations to this are tax deductible.

What to Bring

All belongings must be clearly labelled with the child's first and last name.

- A school bag, not too big, not too small. Make sure it is big enough for a lunchbox, drink bottle and a coat in winter.
- Sun safe hat (a hat is provided in preschool)
- A lunch box and drink bottle filled with water. Make sure your child is able to independently open and use these.
- A spare set of clothes, socks and underwear (to stay in the school bag)
- A library bag (a library bag will be provided at the start of preschool).
- Fruit break, lunch and recess.

Whole School Gatherings

Whole school gatherings are held week three, six and nine every term with each class taking turns to host the gathering. All children in birth to year two have the opportunity to attend the gatherings. Times and dates for these gatherings will be advertised to the community.

Appendix 1

Schedule 1

Periods of exclusion from school for children with infectious conditions

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

Infectious Diseases - Outbreak Procedures and Exclusion Periods

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Page 4 of 11

Condition	Exclusion of person with condition	Exclusion of persons in contact with condition
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 are covered with a watertight dressing.	Not excluded
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.

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Condition	Exclusion of person with condition	Exclusion of persons in contact with condition
*#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

A parent/carer of a child with a listed exclusion condition or a child who has been in contact with a listed exclusion condition must notify the school principal or principal carer as soon as possible.

*These conditions must be notified by medical practitioners to the Chief Health Officer.

Infectious Diseases - Outbreak Procedures and Exclusion Periods

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Appendix 2

THE COMPLETE LUNCHBOX

Around a third of children's daily food intake occurs at school. Providing a lunch box with food from each of the five food groups is an easy way to ensure kids get all the energy and nutrients they need.

Providing healthy food for school will support the growth and development occurring over this phase of life, and can help to develop life-long healthy eating habits to reduce the risk of unhealthy weight later in life.

Did you know? An ideal lunch box should have:



1. Fruit
as snacks



2. Vegetables
as snacks or as a filling



3. Breads & Cereals
wholegrain or multigrain



4. Dairy rich in calcium
reduced fat milk, yoghurt, cheese or
alternatives



5. Meat and meat alternatives
rich in protein



6. A drink
water is the best

Following this guide will keep your child on track to reaching the recommended daily intakes.



APPROVED LEARNING FRAMEWORKS VERSION 2.0

Australia's two nationally approved learning frameworks *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, and *My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia* have been updated.

Version 2 of the national approved learning frameworks are now approved for use under the National Quality Framework.

Approved providers and services are encouraged to start familiarising themselves with Version 2 of the updated learning framework(s) that applies to them and begin incorporating new or enhanced aspects into their educational program and practice.

The original national learning frameworks will remain in operation alongside these in 2023.

January 2023



Under the National Law and Regulations, services are required to base their educational program on an approved learning framework. This should focus on addressing the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, while taking into account individual differences.

There are two nationally approved learning frameworks which outline practices that support and promote children's learning:

- *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*
- *My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia*

These have both been updated recently for use from early 2023 onwards.

The original national learning frameworks will remain in operation alongside the updated frameworks in 2023.

During 2023, additional supporting material will be developed by governments and ACECQA to support providers and their services and will be made available on the ACECQA website.

WHAT'S CHANGED?

The updates to both frameworks are the results of a robust process to assess options and provide recommendations for change. This included reviewing contemporary research, comprehensive stakeholder engagement nationally, and piloting of proposed changes across a range of education and care settings.

The changes you will find in both framework documents comprise a mix of clarifications and expanded explanations across the Principles, Practices and Learning Outcomes of the original Approved Learning Frameworks, and a smaller number of more substantial changes.

The main differences you will see are a stronger connection between the frameworks and the National Quality Standard in areas such as sustainability, theoretical approaches, critical reflection, the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of being, knowing and doing, inclusion and the addition of three new principles.

Your service can play an important role in implementing the Approved Learning Frameworks Version 2.0.

KEY UPDATES TO BOTH NATIONAL APPROVED LEARNING FRAMEWORKS

VISION

- Strengthening Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives throughout the frameworks including the vision, principles, practices and outcomes

PEDAGOGY AND EDUCATOR'S PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

- Strengthening the link between the vision and planning cycle

PRINCIPLES

- Strengthening the principle of ongoing learning and reflective practice
- Introducing a new principle promoting collaborative leadership and teamwork
- Introducing a new sustainability principle
- Introducing a new principle of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives
- Strengthening the principle of high expectations and equity
- Updating the principle of secure, respectful, and reciprocal relationships to include relational pedagogy
- Strengthening partnerships to include other professionals

PRACTICES

- Clarifying the meaning of holistic approaches
- Strengthening the connection between play-based learning and intentionality
- Replacing cultural competence with cultural responsiveness
- Aligning assessment and evaluation for learning, development and wellbeing

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Expanding and strengthening guidance to support the Principles, Practices and Learning Outcomes

HOW WERE THE APPROVED LEARNING FRAMEWORKS UPDATED?

Education Ministers commissioned an update of the two national approved learning frameworks.

Both frameworks have proved integral to the success of the National Quality Framework for close to a decade. The purpose of this update was to ensure they continue to reflect contemporary developments in practice and knowledge, while supporting all educators to promote the wellbeing, learning and development of each child.

A national Consortium led by a partnership between Macquarie University, Queensland University of Technology and Edith Cowan University was engaged by ACECQA, on behalf of all governments, to deliver the 2021 National Quality Framework (NQF) Approved Learning Frameworks (ALFs) Update project.

The project commenced in April 2021 and was delivered over three stages.

In Stages 1 and 2, the Literature Review, surveys and stakeholder feedback on the Discussion Paper highlighted the strengths of the original frameworks and identified areas where they could be improved.

Potential areas for improvement were explored in the Discussion Paper, aiming to strengthen the connection between the frameworks and the National Quality Standard.

During Stage 3, the Consortium piloted the potential updates in 16 ECEC and OSHC services across Australia to inform their recommendations to governments and ACECQA on areas for improvement, and how any changes are best implemented.

The pilot sites included a diverse range of service types across jurisdictions.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- [ACECQA website](#)
- [ACECQA Newsletter](#) and [We Hear You blog](#)

