Government of South Australia
Department for Education

Mount Barker South Primary School

Welcome to

Mount Barker South Primary School

A Families Guide

To The

Reception Class

VISIBLE LEARNING

"When teachers see learning through the eyes of the student and students see themselves as their own teachers"

Our **vision for teaching and learning** is: **Collaboratively Improving Learning**

Our **learning process** we are committed to is the **SOLO taxonomy.**

Our learning process describes how learning outcomes grow in complexity. It is based on a theory of teaching and learning.

Our **learning dispositions** are: **CHALLENGE, REFLECTION, INDEPENDENCE and COLLABORATION.**

Our learning dispositions describe the way in which learners engage in and relate to the learning process.

Our Learning Expectations:

1. We expect all students, staff and families to develop a growth mindset.

2. We expect all students, staff and families to show mutual respect.

3. We expect all students, staff and families to attentively listen by tuning in.

4. We expect all students, staff and families to communicate and receive feedback constructively.

Our learning expectations describe what we want our school members to be demonstrating all the time.

Your Child in the Reception Class

Reception children follow a program designed to help them achieve what are known as the 'early learning foundation goals'. These are targets that most children are expected to achieve by the time they leave the reception class. This will provide a firm foundation for Australian Curriculum work in Year 1. We believe that children learn best from practical hands-on experience and through play areas of the curriculum are delivered in this way as much as possible.

The Foundation curriculum includes:

- English - Language and literacy
- Mathematics
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development
- Creative development
- Outdoor Natural Play

Language and Literacy

This will focus on children developing competence in talking and listening and in becoming readers and writers. In small groups and in large groups children will be encouraged to listen attentively and talk about their experiences. They will also start to make up their own stories and take part in role-play with confidence. They will learn to recognise their own written names and some familiar words and show awareness of some of the different purposes of writing.

Mathematics

This will focus on children being provided with practical activities to help them compare, sort, match, sequence and count. Through such first-hand experience, children will develop an understanding of numbers and will learn to record and use the appropriate mathematical language involved. They will learn names and properties of shapes and look at measures such as length, mass and capacity.

Personal and Social Development

This will focus on children learning how to work, play and co-operate with others and function in a group beyond the family. Children will be helped to become further self-confident, to express their feelings and to show respect for people of other cultures and beliefs.

Physical development

This will focus on children's development of mobility, awareness of space, and manipulative skills in indoor and outdoor environments. Children will be encouraged to move confidently and imaginatively with increasing control and co-ordination.

Creative development

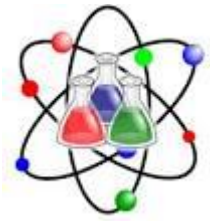
This will focus on the development of children's imagination and their ability to communicate and to express ideas and feelings in creative ways. Through art, music, dance, stories and imaginative play, children will develop an increasing ability to use their imagination, to listen and to observe. Children will be encouraged to explore sound, colour, texture, shape, form and space in two and three dimensions.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

This will focus on children's developing knowledge and understanding of their environment including their families and communities and features of the natural and made world. Children will be encouraged to recognise features of living things, objects and events and to look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change. They will talk about their observations, sometimes recording them and be encouraged to ask questions to gain information.

STE(A)M

At the South school your child will participate in weekly learning experiences in the STE(A)M room with the STE(A)M teacher. This is a multi-disciplinary subject involving Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics. Here they will learn to be inquisitive, hypothesise and manipulate information.



AUSLAN

Your child will participate in weekly lessons. They will learn to count, learn the alphabet, shapes, basic greetings, days of the week in AUSLAN.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students will attend PE lessons with our PE teacher on a weekly basis in line with the Australian Curriculum.

MUSIC & DRAMA

Students will attend Music & Drama lessons with our Music & Drama teacher on a weekly basis in line with Australian Curriculum.

What can I do to help my child before starting school?

Before starting school, you can support your child's learning and development in many ways. When starting school your child will be encouraged to be personally independent.

You can help by:

- Encouraging your child to dress and undress. Try to allow a reasonable amount of time to do this. Creating a dressing up box at home will help by making dressing and undressing fun.
- Encouraging your child to tidy up toys, books and games after using them.

You can help your child's social and emotional development by:

- Talking with your child and encouraging your child to talk with other children and other adults.
- Encouraging and supporting your child to play co-operatively with other children.

You can help your child with the early stages of reading, writing and mathematics by:

- Encouraging an enjoyment of books and stories; visiting the local library and sharing stories with your child.
- Encouraging your child to join in with rhymes and songs.
- Providing your child with a variety of writing equipment to encourage drawing and writing skills, labelling your child's pictures with his or her name and perhaps some writing. Your child may want to copy your writing if he or she is ready.
- Helping your child with simple mathematical skills, e.g. matching and sorting everyday objects, counting objects or playing with water at bath time; pouring, filling and emptying.

What can I do if I think my child has special educational needs?

Sometimes, it is possible to know that a child may have a disability or difficulty in learning when they are very young. For other children, it is not apparent until later.

Parents and carers know their children best. They often realise that there may be a problem with learning, long before their child starts school. Doctors and health visitors will be able to refer to an appropriate specialist if it is likely that a child may need extra help in school. Early assessments on entry to school may also alert us to any potential problems.

If you are already concerned that your child may have special educational needs, you are strongly advised to contact us as soon as you are offered a place and ask for advice.

If you are in doubt, please ask for help.

What can I do to help my child in the Reception year?

In the Foundation year, the children are encouraged to have a positive approach to learning and to believe that learning is fun and enjoyable. We have high expectations of our children and believe in the 'growth mindset' approach to learning by always encouraging them to 'have a go' and do their best.

Once your child has started school, your involvement and support remains vital to his or her development. Your encouragement will help your child to settle into school happily and confidently and show that home and school are working together.

In order for your child to get the best from their education we need to work together to promote the right approach to learning. To do this we would like you to encourage:

- ***Confidence and persistence***
- ***Fun/enjoyment***
- ***The 'growth mindset', 'have a go' approach***
- ***A positive and optimistic attitude***
- ***High expectations***

Being on time for the morning routine daily and establishing routines as a source of security.

You can also help your child by:

- Continuing to encourage independence; explaining why he or she needs to be able to unpack their bag. Your child's teacher will reinforce this at school but is often the only adult available when your child is unpacking each morning. This is one of the reasons why it is essential that all children are on time to school for the morning routine.
- Asking if your child would like to invite new school friends home to play. If you are considering out of school activities, bear in mind that your child will be tired after a busy time at school.
- Communicating with a member of the Early Years team. Please tell us if something is worrying you or your child. We also love positive feedback about our learning programs.
- Encouraging your child to develop an awareness of safety. This covers such things as not putting things in his or her mouth and or learning the importance of road safety by using the road crossing.

The curriculum for young children: Foundation class activities

An effective curriculum for young children recognises that they often need to repeat experiences. This is a necessary part of the learning process, which develops confidence and leads to a greater understanding.

In the foundation class, we are building on the children's previous knowledge. Practical experiences are more valuable and appropriate at this stage of learning. Play provides important opportunities for learning in many ways; observation, exploration, discovery and communication. These opportunities are developed through both indoor and outdoor activities.

Language and literacy - Learning to read and write

Children will enter their foundation classes with a variety of early reading experiences, for example: recognising names and signs as well as, advertising logos, video titles and book titles.

Experiences that develop early reading and writing skills include, sorting and matching activities, jigsaw puzzles, lotto games and activities involving language and singing. When your child enters the reception class these activities will continue and develop alongside a more structured programme of learning.

Reading

The foundation class will build upon storytelling and reading experiences developed at home. Your child will learn to read using a variety of different methods. It is important to be aware that children learn at different rates and that children all learn to read in different ways.

The children are taught to link letters to sounds (phonics teaching) through a wide variety of actions and games. At the same time as learning to say a sound they match the sound to the letter shape, which will then help them when they are trying to write, breaking down words into their component sounds. Your child will undertake Jolly Phonics daily during Reading For Learning time to help them to practice reading, saying and writing the sounds and letters from the alphabet.

Another strategy is to learn key words (most commonly used words). We build these into our reading and writing sessions and encourage the children to read them. These will be sent home for you to learn together a few at a time.

During the day many activities will help your child to read, these might include the opportunity to:

- Recognise his/her own name
- Read classroom notices and labels
- Learn and participate in poems, songs or nursery rhyme
- Develop listening skills
- Practise basic letter sounds and recognise their shapes
- Read individual words and search for them
- Share a book with the teacher or other adult
- Enjoy a book with a friend

Your child will regularly bring home a take home reading book at an appropriate level, a group reading book from our school library and possibly reading games for you both to enjoy together

- Try to ensure that your child has books of his/her own at home and that they are valued
- Regular visits to the local library can ensure that your child can enjoy looking at a wide variety of good quality books, both fiction and non-fiction.

When your child is confident enough to read to you:

- Read to them first, then let them re-tell the story.
- Encourage your child to guess unknown words, by reading on or using the initial letter sound and looking at the picture.
- Provide words if your child needs them.
- Do not create anxiety by pushing them on before they are ready.
- Do not compare progress with another child – remember each child is different.
- Finally encourage your child to read daily and provide constructive feedback e.g. “Today you were able to find all the ‘s’ sounds” OR “Congratulations on having a go at reading 2 sentences.”

Writing

In order to write, children need well developed hand-eye co-ordination and fine motor skills. The reception team will provide a variety of activities to help to develop these skills; for example, tracing in sand, big patterns in paint, felt-tip pen, chalk, threading cutting, etc. Children may also be encouraged to play at being writers by having a desk or other play area, that encourages writing. As their confidence and interest develops they will be taught to form letters correctly and to write simple words.

Here are a few suggestions as to how you can help your child to write:

- Encourage writing while they play.
- Value their contribution.
- Ask them to read what they have written.
- Write with them or for them and /or encourage them to draw pictures of their oral story.
- Show examples of writing e.g. lists, letters, home address.

Mathematics

Early mathematical experiences are not just "sums", they include the following areas and concepts:

- Weight
- Length
- Volume and capacity
- Time - e.g. seasons, days and weeks, yesterday and tomorrow
- Money
- Sorting and classifying and sequencing shape and space
- Data handling
- Number counting, recognition and formation
- Patterning
- Estimating
- Shape

To help children understand these concepts, they need plenty of practical, firsthand experiences with concrete resources such as:

- Sorting and classifying objects which relate to their everyday experiences and their environment;
- Introducing and encouraging use of appropriate maths language such as,
  "more than" "less than" "the same as"
- Comparing and contrasting
- Songs and rhymes

These activities offered in the reception class will help to give secure building blocks for future mathematical development.

Here are a few suggestions as to how you can help your child with early maths:

- Look at numbers around the home and outside.
- Encourage recognition of numerals and name them.
- Write the numerals down.
- Count things around the home.
- Talk about size and shape of things.
- Let them see you using money; allow buying of items when you are together.
- Talk about numbers; is it a big number / small number / what is the next number?

Our contact with you

You will have regular opportunities to meet members of our team during the year to discuss your child. These will range from parent information sessions to 3-way interviews and day-to-day liaison. We also have newsletters that go out regularly with lots of important and valuable information to help you feel part of the class and school. Don't forget, you are always welcome to make an appointment with your class teacher to talk about any other concerns you may have. Currently we use SEESAW as a communication system as well as MGM Outreach as a text messaging service.

Student Reports

Your child's progress will be continually monitored throughout the year. At the end of term 2 and term 4, you will receive a written report on your child via email, and again this may be discussed with your class teacher by appointment if required. Students begin to be graded by A-E in year 1. The Department for Education benchmark is a 'C'.

Parental involvement

All children benefit from extra adult help in their classroom. Your help will be valued greatly. If you wish to volunteer in school, please ask. We usually encourage a settling in period for your child before you begin to help in school.

Parents might help in the following ways:

- ***Reading with students***
- ***Flash card with students***
- ***Quick Maths with students***
- ***Excursions and Camps***
- ***Sharing talents and interests***
- ***Gardening***

If you are interested in helping, please don't hesitate to ask us.

All parents, grandparents and family members require a WWCC (WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK) and to have a completed the online RRHAN-EC training. Please speak with the Front Office to obtain information on obtaining a clearance.

It is most important that children view school as a positive and safe place to be. Therefore, your partnership is critical in helping your child feel positive about their learning and achievement.

We look forward to working collaboratively with you and helping your child to feel secure and successful at our school.