



Education &  
Communities

**Penshurst West**  
 **Public School**



# 2025 Kindergarten Handbook

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This booklet was prepared by the Kindergarten Staff at Penshurst West Public School. Please keep it as a handy reference.

Further information about our school, its programs and student learning and can be found at our website:

<http://www.penshurstw-p.schools.nsw.edu.au>

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# Penshurst West Public School

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Penshurst West Public School and thank you for enrolling your child.

Our primary school is working in partnership with you, helping your child to feel secure and accepted so they can experience a high degree of success.

Every child is unique, developing at his or her own rate, possessing special skills and interests and having a personal style of doing things.

We recognise that you have provided the foundations upon which we shall build and we encourage you to continue playing an important part in your child's education.

The P&C Association convene every month and by joining this association you can meet new people and become a vital partner in your child's education.

Teachers value the involvement of parents in classroom and school activities and the school has a wonderful group of parents assisting in a variety of learning experiences.

We look forward to a rewarding relationship with you and your family throughout the next seven years.

Yours sincerely,

The Staff at Penshurst West Public School



# Kindergarten Enrolment

Children may enrol in Kindergarten at the beginning of the school year if they turn 5 years by the 31st July that year. Proof of your child's age (birth certificate/passport), immunisation certificates and proof of address must be shown on enrolment.

Each year an orientation and transition program is arranged for children who will be commencing primary schooling at the beginning of the next year. The transition program is usually held during Term 4. The program includes activities such as storytelling, counting games, music, dance, art and craft, sport and developmental play.



# School Overview

## **Philosophy**

The primary goal of Penshurst West Public School is to establish an educational program where each student develops a positive self-image and the ability to function as a productive member of our society. We are preparing children for a future where they will need to be literate, numerate and able to access knowledge by using the latest technology. We expect every child to achieve and provide learning opportunities that use the latest teaching strategies and develop students who can think creatively and use their imagination.

We believe that education is a partnership between the parent, teacher and child. The responsibility for learning should be initiated in the home, encouraged, channelled and developed by teachers and ultimately accepted by the students.

Working in a caring environment, we believe that we can carry out our role of serving the needs of our students. We undertake to educate our community's children and to assist in building the Australia of the future.

## **School Aim**

To provide experiences so that each child can:

- develop a joy of learning
- develop positive self esteem
- master the basic skills
- develop his or her unique and creative strengths and talents.

## **School Hours**

Monday to Friday  
9.25am - 3.25pm.



## General School Practices and Routines

### Absence Notes

When your child is absent from school for any reason, a written note, email or phone call is required for legal reasons. Notes explaining the absence should be addressed to the classroom teacher, dated and signed. Absence notes are required immediately upon return to school. If your child will be away for more than three days, please inform the school office or their class teacher. If your child is going to be out of school, and you know in advance, please write a note to the office or their teacher. For absences of more than 5 school days (excluding illness), such as overseas holiday, there is an exemption from school application that must be filled out before leaving.

- **LATE ARRIVALS:**

Please take your child to the office if they arrive at school late.

Parent / Caregiver must report to the office with their child and receive a late slip.

- Your child will then take the slip to the classroom and give it to the class teacher.

- **EARLY DEPARTURE:**

Contact the office if you need to collect your child early from school. Their class will be contacted and your child will be sent to the office with their school bag.

**NB** All late and early departures are recorded as partial absences and are checked by the Home School Liaison Officer (HSLO).



# Why attendance matters



When your child misses school they miss important opportunities to:



Learn



Make friends



Build skills through fun

## Days missed = years lost

A day here and there doesn't seem like much, but...

When your child misses just...

they miss weeks per year

and years over their school life



### **From the Office**

Payments at the school office will only be accepted between the hours of 9.00am-9.30am & 3.00pm-3.30pm. Alternatively, you can pay online at any time.

### **Book Club**

The school participates in the Scholastic Book Club Scheme once a term. Children may purchase reasonably priced books at levels appropriate to their reading ability.

### **Canteen**

The school canteen provides a wide range of food and drinks for the school. Students are able to bring cash for over-the-counter sales, or alternatively you can make an order via Flexischools.

### **Child Access and Court Orders**

It would assist the school if the Principal was informed of the conditions of access to students if parents are separated. The Principal must sight any court orders in order to act on them. In all cases, it will be assumed that both parents have equal access unless there is documentation to the contrary.

### **Class Formation and Student Progress**

Children are placed in classes by the staff and executive. The classes are formed so that each child has an equal opportunity to develop skills and talents to the best of his/her ability. Individual learning needs, social adjustment and the best placement for a child are always considered.

### **Computer Education**

We have a Technology Lab with 30 computers and two connected classrooms (video conferencing facilities), as well as an interactive panel in every classroom. We are continually updating our computer network and students have numerous opportunities to use computers as an integral part of their classroom learning including learning coding to program robots.

Students may be given opportunities to use digital cameras, laptops, iPads, robotics, video editing programs, PowerPoint presentations and web page design. The school is continually upgrading both hardware and software to meet the needs of our students.

### **Emergency Information**

Emergency information is kept at the school office. When enrolling your child, you will be requested to complete emergency information on the enrolment form. Parents are asked to give the school the name of a local friend or relative whom the school can contact if the parent is unavailable. **Please inform the school immediately if there are any changes to their details.**

The school office staff will deal with injuries and illnesses of a minor nature, though our facilities for sick children are minimal. If your child suffers any physical problems the school must be informed.

### **Excursions and Performances**

Notes are sent home prior to these functions to seek permission from parents. Children are not permitted to attend excursions without written permission from a parent or

guardian. Payments and permission are both completed on the Schoolbytes App. (Please see information included in this pack).

In cases where these excursions may cause financial hardship to parents, we request that you contact the principal. All communication in this regard is strictly confidential.

Educational excursions are an important part of the curriculum at our school. Teachers try to keep costs for excursions to a minimum so that as many children as possible can participate.

### **Health and Absences**

Please keep children at home when they are sick. A child who isn't healthy cannot concentrate on schoolwork and they also spread germs to other children and teachers. Some common childhood diseases will keep your child at home.

<i>Chicken Pox</i>	Until fully recovered – at least 7 days after spots appear.
<i>Measles</i>	For 5 days after the rash appears.
<i>German Measles</i>	Until fully recovered or at least 5 days (minimum exclusion)
<i>Head Lice</i>	Until treatment has been effective and all dead eggs are removed.
<i>Impetigo</i>	Depends on severity and location - Infection must be covered.
<i>Conjunctivitis</i>	Until treatment has been effective.
<i>Mumps</i>	Until fully recovered – at least 10 days after swelling occurs.

Check regularly for head lice and nits. Don't be surprised or upset if your child gets them. Many children do. Head lice and nits don't do any harm, but they do make the head feel itchy. Most chemists can recommend a suitable treatment.

It's recommended that children be immunised against diphtheria, whooping cough, measles, mumps, poliomyelitis and tetanus before they start school. Children who are not immunised will be required to stay at home for the duration of an outbreak of vaccine-preventable diseases.

The Home School Liaison Officer (HLSO) will monitor school rolls each term. Students who have high absences may be placed on a monitoring program or closely tracked to assist in their attendance.

### **Home Reading**

To promote the enjoyment of reading, all students participate in a Home Reading program. Students are encouraged to read to a parent, caregiver or older sibling for 10 minutes a night.

#### *Kindergarten to Year 2*

Students are matched to an independent level of difficulty and take books at that level from the classroom. Books are taken home in a reading folder and must be returned every day. A 10-minute reading session is to be recorded on the home reading record card each day.

## **Jewellery**

To avoid accidents ONLY STUD EARRINGS are to be worn at school. NO other jewellery should be worn to school.

## **Library**

Our school has a Teacher Librarian allocation of two days per week. All children are encouraged to be enthusiastic borrowers, and all classes visit the library each week to borrow books and improve their information skills. To help protect the books the children require a clearly labelled library bag.

## **Lost Property**

It is important that all items brought to school should be labelled for easy identification. This includes uniforms, jumpers, raincoats, painting shirts, hats, school and library bags, lunch boxes, drink bottles, pencil cases etc. It is much easier to return lost items to their owners if they are labelled. Lost property is located outside the library but always check outside your child's classroom, the playground and the hall.

## **Medication**

Please consider that if your child requires medication, he or she may be too sick to attend school. If they are returning to school after an illness and still taking medication this **must** come to the office in the original packaging clearly showing the child's name and dosage. A parent **must** fill in a medication form at the office before this can be administered. Please note that over-the-counter medication CANNOT be given.

## **Parking**

Unfortunately, there are no facilities for parent parking on our school grounds. Please take great care when parking near our school as stopping in the "No Stopping" zones hinders driver vision and makes the pedestrian crossing more dangerous. Police regularly patrol the parking near our school. As a courtesy to our neighbours please do not park across driveways. Please exercise extreme care when driving near our school. When you enter the school on foot it is important for student safety that car park exits are not used by students or their parents, please use the pedestrian gates.

## **Parent / Teacher Meetings**

"Meet the Teacher" nights are held early in Term 1. This is an important opportunity to find out about new classroom routines and practices. Parent/Teacher Interviews are held early Term 3, using an online booking system. Interviews with classroom teachers can be arranged at other times. Do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher if you feel a need to do so, however, an appointment is necessary.

## **Performing Arts**

Students are encouraged to participate in our choir, dance groups, drama performances, music festivals, school performances or cultural visits. These performing arts opportunities provide students with a variety of skills and further develop their self-esteem when performing in front of an audience.

## **Personal Development**

As part of our school personal development, health and safety program, Social Skills, Peer Support, Drug Education and Child Protection Programs are taught throughout each year. A whole school “Anti- bullying” program is a key feature of everyday learning.

## **Reports**

Student progress is assessed continuously throughout the year and assessment tasks are embedded into the daily curriculum. Assessment can take the form of observations, work samples, class tests, project work and daily classroom performance. This continued assessment is considered when reports are compiled. These assessments are designed to report on the progress of students achieving learning outcomes. Strong assessment and reporting practices are key elements which drive future planning.

Parents are made aware of their child’s progress by Parent/Teacher interviews and/or written reports sent to parents at the end of Term 2 and Term 4. Parents wishing to discuss student progress should first telephone the school to make an appointment. We ask that parents do not go directly to a teacher during lesson times as it disturbs the class and interrupts the lesson. Arrangements can be made for discussions at a mutually convenient time.

## **School Counsellor/ Psychologist**

The role of the school is to provide a service to students, parents and teachers in relation to children’s learning and behaviour. Our School Counsellor/Psychologist is only at the school two days per fortnight. Therefore, her time is prioritised by the school’s Learning Support Team. Parents who wish to access the counsellor/psychologist for school related support should contact the class teacher or principal in the first instance. Teachers refer children who are experiencing learning and/ or behavioural difficulties to the psychologist for advice and assistance. To fully assess the problem, the psychologist sometimes finds it necessary to administer diagnostic tests as well as hold one-to-one discussion with the child. Parents are informed and permission is sought before the psychologist is involved.

## **SRE**

SRE are teachers from Protestant, Orthodox, Muslim and Catholic denominations visit the school on **Mondays and Thursdays**. Please make sure you have indicated if you wish your child to attend a SRE class on your enrolment information sheet or inform your child's teacher.

## **Sport and Physical Education**

Sport is organised on a grade basis for students in Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2. Students are introduced to activities to develop their gross motor skills. Students in Years 3-6 participate in school sport activities, and some can join Public Schools Sports Association (PSSA) sporting teams to compete against other schools in a Friday morning competition. Team selection takes place before the commencement of each sport season. Sports offered vary each term. The school also utilises the professional skills of outside providers of programs which enhance the learning experiences of the students. There is a small cost for these programs.

## **Sporting Carnivals**

- Swimming - Years 3-6 (Students turning 8 years in Year 2 who are competitive swimmers may also attend).
- Cross Country - Years 3-6 (Students turning 8 years in Year 2 who are competitive runners may also participate).
- Athletics - Years K-6

Successful students at carnivals, (Yrs. 3-6, 8yrs and older), represent the school in the Georges River District Carnivals.

## **Support Programs**

The school implements a variety of programs to support students and to assist those experiencing difficulties in a particular area of learning. During each week your child:

- will have library lessons with our librarian.
- will spend a total of two hours with the release teacher where he/she will be involved in a range of curriculum activities. This is the class teacher's preparation time.
- may be taught by the EAL/D (English as an Additional Language or Dialect) teacher if he/she requires help to develop English skills.
- may be given assistance by School Learning Support Officers (SLSO) or a parent tutor through a program organised by the support teacher if he/she requires additional support in literacy development.

## **Sun Sense Policy**

Penshurst West has adopted a Sun Sense Policy that is active throughout the year. In the interest of skin care all children must wear a hat when in the playground. Children who do not have a hat are not permitted to play in the sun. 'No hat...Play in the shade'.

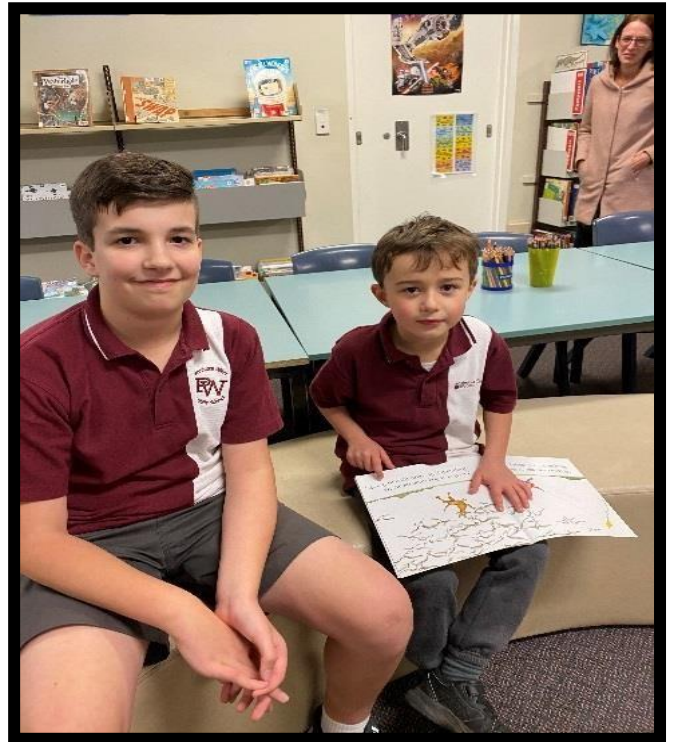
## **Uniform Shop**

All children are expected and encouraged to wear the school uniform. The P&C organise the selling of new and second-hand uniforms.

At this stage, the uniform shop is open on Fridays between 9.00am-10.00am. However, this is subject to change. The uniform shop is in the Administration Block near the school office. Please ensure that all items purchased for students are clearly labelled.

## **Voluntary Contributions**

As a public school there are no compulsory fees. However, funds available to our school from government sources are limited, so the P&C request contributions from each family, to help provide a range of equipment and materials.



# Preparing Your Child For School

*[Source: NSW Dept of Education and Training]*

Parents/caregivers can do a lot to help prepare their child for Kindergarten before the big 'first day'. Below is a list of skills that will be useful for children starting Kindergarten. We recognise that not all children will have these skills as everyone develops at a different pace, so this is intended only as a guide so that starting school may be just a little easier.

Encourage your child to attempt the things mentioned below, but don't worry if your child can't do all of them. Talk to the Kindergarten teacher, and together you can support and assist your child's learning.

## **Personal/Social Skills**

- uses the toilet independently
- can say own name, address and phone number
- adapts to unfamiliar settings and new experiences
- can finish a task and tidies up afterwards
- plays cooperatively with other children - shares and takes turns
- can sit still to listen to a story for a few minutes
- is curious about the world
- can share an adult's attention with several other children
- participates in imaginative play

## **Language**

- talks to other people about familiar objects and events
- answers and asks simple questions
- makes needs known
- follows simple instructions
- uses books for enjoyment or for looking at pictures
- identifies pictures in books, magazines, on television or video
- uses a variety of things (pens, pencils, textas, paintbrushes, sticks in the dirt) to draw, scribble or write
- joins in singing familiar songs

## **Mathematics**

- recognises that numbers can be used to count
- uses words such as many, a lot, more, less
- identifies things in a group that are different
- sees differences in shapes
- differentiates between opposites - up and down, under and over, in front and behind, day and night

## **Physical Skills**

- uses scissors to cut along a straight line
- enjoys a variety of indoor and outdoor play
- can put on and take off jumpers, shoes and socks independently
- can tie shoelaces
- uses a tissue or handkerchief



## The First Day at Penshurst West

It is important that the first day is positive and encouraging for students. Some students will need to be reassured that you will be waiting at the end of the day. Your child will be given a time to arrive at school on his/her first day.

### On arrival

The school leaders will meet you at the Scott St Gate and escort you to the school hall at your **allocated time**. After enrolment, you will be able to accompany your child to the Kindergarten classrooms.

Our advice is that you try to leave quickly after meeting the teacher and briefly leading your child into the room. Some children get upset despite the best preparation. If your child cries or clings to you, leave as quickly as possible. Most children settle when the routines begin. If your child continues to be distressed we will contact you.

### Home Time

The children will be dismissed at the earlier time of 3pm for **Weeks 2 and 3 (3<sup>rd</sup> February – 14<sup>th</sup> February)** of school to allow them to settle and avoid being overwhelmed at home time. After the two-week period, students will finish their day at 3:25pm. Parents and caregivers are asked to wait for their child near the silver seats outside the kindergarten classrooms.

## Things Your Child Will Need For School

**A School Bag** – Your child's bag should be big enough to hold a lunch box, an A4 reading folder & other personal items. **All items should be clearly labelled** as often children have the same lunchbox. It is a good idea to let your child practise opening, closing & packing it.

**Spare change of clothes and raincoat/umbrella** – A FULL set of spare clothes **FOR ALL STUDENTS** (including underwear and socks) should be kept in a plastic bag in your child's school bag in case of an accident. Please provide this even if your child has not wet their pants for a long time, as children can get busy in the playground and the classroom and often it's too late to get to the toilet. Please ensure these items are clearly labelled.

**Food** – Lunch, fruit break and recess should be brought to school each day. The students often eat in the playground with the food in their laps. It is important that students know which food has been packed for their recess and their lunch. Ask your child to help you pack their lunch box.

# The Kindergarten Year

As a parent, it is vital that you provide your child with praise, encouragement and patience as the transition is made. Each child comes to school at varying stages of readiness. At Penshurst West, we take particular care to assess the child's entry point and adapt learning programs to cater for individual needs.

In Kindergarten, there is a balance between formal learning and developmental play. During developmental play activities the children learn about educational concepts through play. Social and emotional development is an important part of learning in Kindergarten.

Your child will have many new experiences and learn many new skills.

**Socially**, our Kindergarten Program aims to develop and reinforce your child's ability to:

- play cooperatively with others
- respect ideas and the feelings of others
- work well in groups
- listen and communicate with others, and
- build confidence and independence.

The Kindergarten learning program is based on key learning areas (KLAs) of English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, History, Geography, Creative Arts and Health, Personal Development and Physical Education.

## English

Your child will be encouraged to listen, talk, read and write.

Our English program focuses on the key components of language, literacy and learning. Students will develop skills, strategies and understandings through shared, guided and independent reading and writing experiences. Their skills will also be enhanced through our Phonics and Sight Word Programs, telling news, handwriting and other fine motor activities such as playdough, cutting and tracing.

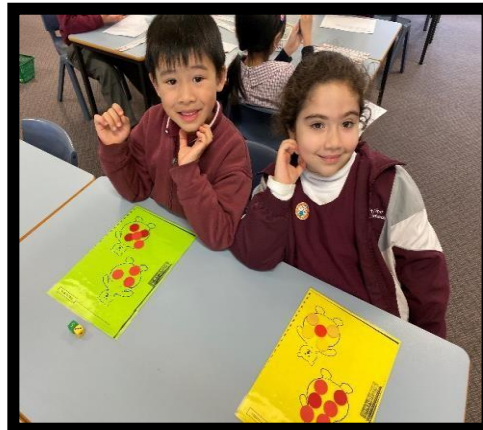
Every child will be assessed to determine their individual needs in reading. They will be placed on a reading level and will participate in activities at their level. Our Home Reading Program will commence in Term 1 and students will take home books at their level. The school has a specialist English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) teacher who helps children from a language background other than English. This teacher works both in the classroom and withdraws small groups of students for special instruction.



### Mathematics

A major component of the Kindergarten Mathematics Program involves language development. Majority of the concepts are taught through interactive, hands-on experience. We match students to a level in number and provide them with activities to develop their individual knowledge and skills.

We use an investigative approach to teaching measurement concepts. Students solve problems using materials and are encouraged to use mathematical language to explain results and strategies. Water and sand activities are often used to develop an understanding of volume and mass concepts.



### Science and Technology

In science, Kindergarten students will study daily and seasonal changes, living things and their needs, materials in the world around them and how things move. Students also identify familiar digital systems and follow a simple set of instructions. Students will also participate in coding lessons and will have the opportunity to use programmable floor robots called 'Bee-Bots.'

### History

In Early Stage One, students learn about their personal and family histories. They learn about their past, families and special celebrations.

### Geography

In Kindergarten, students learn all about places. They explore familiar places, discuss why they are important, study Indigenous places and learn how to care for places.

## Creative Arts

Visual Arts, Dance, Drama and Music are essential features of the Kindergarten year. Making artworks, singing, acting, dancing and making music are part of the Kindergarten Program. Drama skills develop confidence, speaking skills and an understanding of how other people feel. Dance develops whole body coordination. Music increases listening and singing skills and Visual Arts develops creativity.



## Personal Development, Health and Physical Education

Cooperation, Child Protection, drug education, nutrition and safe living programs are taught throughout the year. Students participate in a grade fitness program. Classes rotate through a variety of sporting activities involving movement and ball skills to promote high fitness levels.



## How You Can Help At Home

Your help at school and at home is very important.

Some of the ways you can help include:

- joining the Facebook page to keep up to date with any messages and what is happening in the classroom
- looking for notes in your child's school bag each day
- having a special place to display some of your child's work at home
- having a special place to keep your child's merit certificates safe (i.e. a folder at home) as they cannot be replaced if lost
- becoming involved in the school's P&C, helping in the canteen or in the classroom (if possible)
- Download to your mobile device; **Sentral** and **School Bytes** (this is how we communicate with our families). **Flexischools** (to order food via the canteen)

### Reading At Home

Time spent reading in the home is invaluable in developing a love of literacy in children. By sharing books regularly, children learn:

- to begin to read books from the front, not the back
- that words run from top to bottom and left to right
- that the words of a story say the same thing every time
- that pictures often relate to the words on the page

Take the time to talk about the pictures and the story and relate parts of the story to the child's world. Occasionally, invite your child to predict what will happen next. In repetitive stories or favourite stories, children often like to predict the words. You may like to run your finger across the print as you read to highlight the relationship between print and reading. Overall, reading experiences should always be positive.

There are many opportunities to value reading in the home. You may like to join the local library where children can be involved in selecting and borrowing books of interest. Children can become involved in recognising and reading simple labels, signs and family letters.

### Writing At Home

Writing, like reading, should be part of the home environment and shared as often as possible. It is important that children see you writing such things as shopping lists, cards, letters and messages. Children then see writing as useful and develop a desire to learn.

Children begin to write through 'scrawl'. They then begin to copy letters and words from their environment. Early attempts could be encouraged by providing your child with crayons, thick pencils and large paper. Enjoy their work by placing it in a special place such as on the fridge or home noticeboard. If you are encouraging your child to write his/her name, please refer to the name card supplied in your orientation package. It is important that lower case letters are used.