

**Lifelong Success  
Through Learning**



Halswell School  
*Many hearts make a school*

# Halswell School



# Information for New Entrant Parents

Dear Parents / Caregivers

Starting school is an exciting time and an important step in your child's life and also your own. We look forward to working with you and your child to make the transition from preschool to school a positive experience.

This booklet gives you with some information about how to help your child settle into Halswell School and how to help them with their learning in their first year at school.

During a child's first year at school we focus on developing foundation skills in literacy and numeracy along with encouraging the children to begin to develop the key competencies through our school ACTIVE programme. These are skills they will need to be successful life long learners. In addition to these core areas the New Entrant programme also covers PE and health, the arts and theme studies (science, social studies, technology). We also aim to encourage the children to learn through a planned "Discovery" programme which enables the children to choose and learn through play.

At Halswell School we have an open door policy and see communication between home and school as an integral part of your child's learning. If you have any concerns please feel you can approach any of the teachers and arrange a meeting at an appropriate time.

Once again, welcome to our school. We look forward to working with you and your child.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Phillips  
Year 0-2 Team  
Leader



# New Entrant Teachers

## Room 1



Annie Lee

## Room 4



Eilish Moran

## Room 2



Chris Wright



Julie Phillips

# Classification of children

New Entrant children start school throughout the year. The time of year your child starts school will determine their year group Classification.

Five year old children starting school from the beginning of the school year until the end of March will be classified as Year 1.

Five year old children starting school from May 1<sup>st</sup> until the end of the school year will be classified as Year 0.

Children who turn 5 during April will be classified as Yo/1. Towards the end of their second calendar year at school we will consult with parents of these children to decide whether the best placement for the following year is Y2 or Y3. Factors taken into account in making these decisions include social maturity, friendships, and physical maturity.

# Starting School

Your child will use the skills and knowledge they have learned at preschool, Kohanga Reo or Kindergarten when they start school. They will also experience some new activities in the New Entrant Classroom.

Children bring to school many different skills and experiences and we spend the first few weeks getting to know your child. We assess their knowledge in a range of areas, and then plan a learning programme to meet their needs. After your child has been at school for 2-4 weeks we will arrange a time to have a Chat with you about how your child is settling in and what their learning needs are.

Your child needs to arrive at school between 8.40-8.50am and will finish school at 2pm for the first two weeks.

We have found this to be very beneficial for all children, even those used to a long day at kindergarten, as the school day is so very different and demanding at first.

In the mornings, your child needs to hang up their bag and jacket in the cloakroom and put their reading folder in their desk. After the first week please encourage your child to do this independently.

Your child will need morning tea, lunch and a water bottle each day. Please name all clothing and personal items. Sunhats are compulsory in Terms 1 and 4. Please send a jacket for outside play in Terms 2 and 3.

A New Entrant pack containing all your child's stationery requirements is available from the school office.



## Tips for a Positive Start

### Help your child to prepare for school by:

- ☺ Talking about school with enthusiasm
- ☺ Downplaying any unhelpful comments that people make about school.
- ☺ If possible, try to purchase stationery at one of the pre school visits so your child's teacher can have it all ready for them on day one.

### It is helpful if your child can:

- ☺ Recognise their own name
- ☺ Manage scissors and crayons
- ☺ Manage their own clothes and shoes
- ☺ Manage the toilet independently and wash their hands
- ☺ Blow their nose
- ☺ Sit down for a short time and listen
- ☺ Follow simple instructions
- ☺ Ask for things they need



### It is also helpful, but not essential if your child can:

- ☺ Recognise and name colours
- ☺ Count to 10 and recognise numbers 0-10
- ☺ Write their own name
- ☺ Know the letters of the alphabet
- ☺ Recognise that each alphabet letter makes a different sound.

### Help yourself prepare for school by:

- ☺ Remembering you may feel unexpected emotions e.g. grief, nervousness.
- ☺ Make sure you have your own supports in place to help you handle the event. It may help to organise to go to a friend's house for coffee rather than go home and worry all day. Your child will be safe and happy at school.

### When you get to school

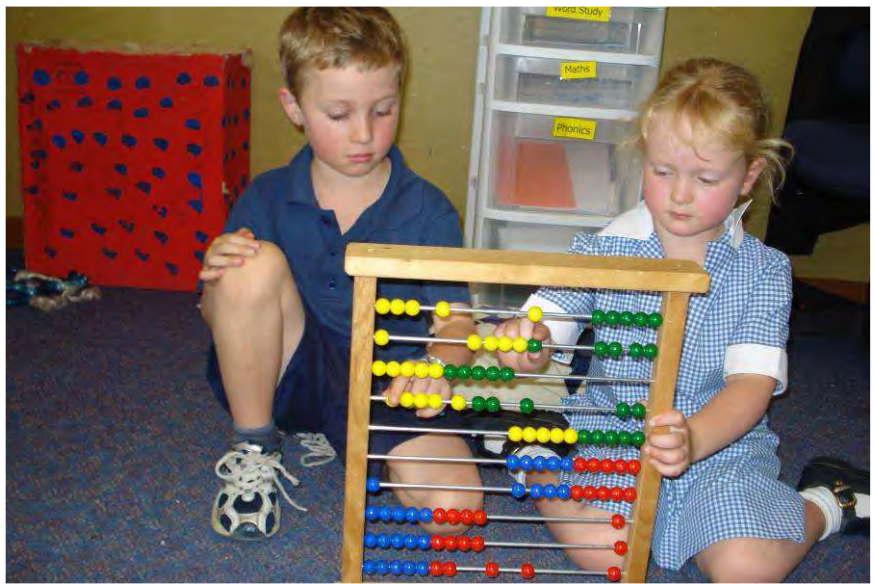
- ☺ Encourage your child to hang up their own bag on the peg in the cloakroom.
- ☺ Say hello to the teacher and other friends with your child.
- ☺ Show or remind your child where the toilets are and any other place it is important to know about, such as where they will play.

- ☺ When the time comes, make goodbyes short. Teachers have a lot of practise helping children to settle in and managing an upset child. If you appear upset this may upset your child.
- ☺ If your child is upset when you leave, we still recommend that you go. In most cases children settle down after 2-3 minutes. If your child does not settle we would notify you. So please do not worry!

### After school

- ☺ Expect your child to be very tired for the first two weeks. They will probably be very hungry too. Use the 2 o'clock finish to have a chat about the day, do homework or have a wee snack before siblings join you.
- ☺ Let them adjust to being at home before asking too much about their day. It is a lot easier to get children of any age to talk about school when they are doing something else with you e.g. helping to make dinner, tidying up etc.
- ☺ Make a time to read together each day. Your child may have a reading book on the first day. It's a good idea to get into the habit of having some shared reading every day right from the start.
- ☺ Teachers love to share your child's successes and will often pop over for a chat with you. are often busy after school with meetings or duty so However, if you have any concerns please make an appointment to speak to your child's teacher.

Remember we will arrange a parent interview with you after your child has been at school for 2-4 weeks. This interview is an opportunity to discuss how your child has settled and their learning needs.



# Lunches

To help your child develop healthy eating habits please:

- ☺ Fill their drink bottle with water only.
- ☺ Remember a sugar free snack is best for morning tea.
- ☺ Don't send lollies or chocolate to school.



## Bought Lunches

Children can order their lunch through the Tuck Shop on Fridays.

The order, with payment, should be handed to your child's teacher by 9.00am. A list of available items is in your New Entrant pack

On some Wednesdays the PTA organises a sausage sizzle lunch as a fundraiser. Sausage and bread costs \$1.00, a cookie \$1 and a Juicie \$1. Sausage orders should be given to your child's teacher by 9.00am.

Details of the sausage sizzle dates are in the school newsletter.

# Helping your child with their learning

## Alphabet

Learning the alphabet is a focus in the first year at school. To help them with reading and writing children need to learn letter names, letter sounds and the upper and lower case pairs.

Some ideas for helping your child learn the alphabet include:

- ☺ I spy
- ☺ Magnetic letters on fridge. E.g. *Find the letter at the start of sun. Can you find all the B's? etc.* Use for spelling practise with more able readers. E.g. make cat. Now can you change it to make sat?
- ☺ Put alphabet on cards and play snap, fish etc. Can be done for either letter names or sounds.
- ☺ Play "Odd One Out". Say 4 words e.g. apple, ant, tiger, as. Which is the odd one out that starts a different way?

- ☺ When your child brings home their “Jolly Phonics” book go through all the pages and get your child to tell you each letter name and sound. Play a guessing game – say a word and get your child to find the letter it starts with. Choose a letter and get your child to tell you words that start with that letter. Do an action and get your child to tell you the sound or letter name.
- ☺ Put an alphabet poster up and help your child identify letters or match letters and sounds.
- ☺ Make play dough letters.
- ☺ Alphabet jigsaws and books.
- ☺ Draw letters outside with chalk or water and a paintbrush.

## Reading

Your child will bring home a reading book to share with you most evenings. It will be a book they have already read at school.



Some ideas for helping your child at home include:

- ☺ Talk to your child about the book. Look at the pictures together and encourage your child to retell the story in their own words.
- ☺ Listen to your child read to you and help them point to each word. After a while they will be able to point at each word as they read without your help.
- ☺ Make a regular time each evening for your child to read their book to you and also for you to read to them. A bedtime story is a great way of enjoying books with your child.
- ☺ Beginning readers need to use the pictures to help them work out the words. Encourage them to do this. **Never cover up the pictures.**
- ☺ When you read with your child use book language such as author, illustrator, cover, title, pages, words, letters etc.
- ☺ We will be focusing on some high frequency words at school. These are all the common little words e.g. is, to, the, we, I, a etc. A list of these words is in your child’s Jolly Phonics book. Help your child to recognise these words in their reading book. You can also adapt lots of the ideas for learning the alphabet for learning to read and write high frequency words.

**Remember to make reading fun and enjoyable and to give your child lots of praise.**

# Numeracy

In the first year at school your child will focus on becoming confident with numbers from 0-20. This includes counting forwards and backwards, reading and writing numbers and simple addition and subtraction.

Ideas for helping your child develop numeracy skills include:

- ☺ Pointing out numbers in your local environment e.g. letter boxes, signs.
- ☺ Reading number books or doing number jigsaws.
- ☺ Provide opportunities for your child to practise counting as they help you with simple chores e.g. Laying the table - “Can you get 4 forks and 3 spoons to lay the table for tea”. At the Supermarket - “Put 8 oranges in the bag for me please”
- ☺ Talk about simple maths problems with your child e.g. “I need to make 2 sandwiches for you and 2 for your brother. How many will that be altogether?”
- ☺ Let your child help with baking. This activity involves lots of maths concepts.
- ☺ Use maths language with your child e.g. tallest, heaviest, long, short, before, after etc



# Enrolment

Please ensure you have filled out the following items and returned them to the school office:

- ☺ Enrolment form
- ☺ Yellow health card
- ☺ School helpers questionnaire

The office needs to sight:

- ☺ Verification of date of birth – a copy of either your child's birth certificate or passport.
- ☺ Your child's immunisation certificate

**If you require any further information please contact the school.**

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