

## Frequently Asked Questions



### **How do I contact my child's teacher?**

If you need to set up an appointment, advise pick up arrangements or provide additional information about your child's needs please email the school. The office will send your email to the class teacher. We do not provide teacher email addresses as part of our school's communication policy.

### **How do I enter the school grounds?**

There is a gate on Malcolm St next to the staff car park. There is a gate on Bridge St., which is the entry point for before and after care students. Families who are enrolled into after care will be given the code to unlock the main gate. All gates should be unlocked at 8:30 for access. Students and families are prohibited from using the staff car park as a thoroughfare for pedestrian access.

### **What is a 'mufti day'?**

It is when students dress up in casual clothes and it is usually connected to a theme or a fundraiser. Please do not go and buy new costumes for the events, and please make sure the clothes or outfit are comfortable for children to sit, play and go to the toilet without stress.

### **What is my child learning?**

In the first few weeks of each term, the office will send an overview of work via email. It will have general information about the topics covered in subjects, dates to put in calendars or timetable information.

### **What is the timetable?**

Teachers are happy to provide timetables of learning so that this helps families prepare for each day or talk about events that may have happened over dinner. Please be aware that due to the nature of schools, the timetable often changes and learning activities may be switched due to the circumstances of each day.

### **What is the P&C?**

It is a great opportunity for you to get involved with the school, support your child's learning and make a difference to the whole school community. There are many BBQ's, Working Bee's in the garden, Fundraising events and Meetings that you are welcome to attend. There is no formal invitation or secret handshake; everyone is encouraged to participate at these events.

### **Where am I?**

The map included in this information pack will help you find your way around the school. The major landmarks are the rainbow serpent in front of Block C (the library building) and the office at the front of the school. The COLA is the Covered Outdoor Learning Area and is in front of the Lucy Woodcock Hall, which is the big building near the grassed area and adjoining the staff car park.

### **What is RFF?**

Relief from Face to Face teaching – which is when class teachers are 'off class' to meet with colleagues to plan units of work, mark assessment tasks and organize

other school events for each grade. The RFF teachers at ERKO this year are the Library, Art and Music teachers. These teachers are specialists in their fields and this year are Mr Chadbond, Ms Witt and Ms Stein, respectively. The RFF teachers collect classes according to the timetable and students have the opportunity to work in other learning spaces around the school.

### **What are the class names?**

The classes at ERKO are named after native Australian plants and flowers. In 2020 the classes are as follows

Kindergarten: Bottle Brush, Correa, Hibiscus

Stage 1: Banksia, Grevillea, Waratah, Wattle, Viola

Stage 2: Blue-Gum, Boronia, Hakea, Lilly-Pilly, Wollemi

Stage 3: Casuarina, Eucalypt, Lemon-Myrtle, Melaleuca

### **Where are the toilets?**

Students can access the toilets on the ground floor near the inner courtyard playground. Adults are reminded for child protection reasons not to enter the student toilets at any time. If you need to use a toilet or take a younger sibling to the toilet, please use the toilet attached to the Lucy Woodcock Hall.

### **How do I pay for excursions or school fees?**

You can pay online via the school website.

### **What if my child is sick?**

The easiest form of communication is to email the office directly. All absences must be explained, in terms of sickness, doctor appointments or family holidays.

### **What if we want to go on a holiday?**

All absences over 5 days away from school require a 'certificate of extended leave'. Contact the office for this document, complete it and return to the office before you take your holiday.

### **What is 'permission to publish'?**

Teachers may take photos of learning activities throughout the year and these may be published in the school newsletter or on the school website. There may also be other events around the school, such as author visits or community planting projects where professional photographers seek permission to use photographs for external websites or publications. If you tick 'no' for permission to publish, your child will be edited out of photographs and removed from other publication opportunities.

### **Why doesn't my child's teacher know where their hat is?**

We are teaching your children to take responsibility for their own belongings and develop organizational skills. Hats will often be misplaced, taken home by other students or end up in the Lost Property bucket. They usually take 1-2 weeks to come back home so it is good to have a spare hat.

**Do I have to buy fancy nametags?**

No but please label everything – even shoes! At times there are dress rehearsals and costume changes and shorts, shirts and shoes can get mixed up. It is a good idea to keep a permanent marker in the kitchen to re-write names on plastic containers.

**Can my child wear jewelry to school?**

No.

**Do I need to buy pencils and textas?**

Usually no, however due to COVID-19, children are encouraged to bring their pencil case with pencils from home.

**What donations do I need to send to school?**

Your class teacher will send a note requesting items such as glue sticks, tissues or zip lock bags, please wait until you hear from the class teacher.

**What if we are late to school?**

Please bring children to the office to be signed in for the day. Office staff will telephone class teachers and children will be escorted to their classroom. Families are asked to say goodbye at the office to ensure a smooth separation to school.

**When does Home Reading start?**

This usually starts towards the end of term one, to allow families to develop good after school routines at home.

**How do I know what is going on at school?**

Erskineville office sends all communication through the app 'School Enews'. Families also need to contact the office to receive newsletters and the principal's report.

**What is the PRC?**

The Premier's Reading Challenge is an initiative to promote reading at home. Students will be given their personal login and families can log the books read on the PRC website directly. The school library has a selection of PRC books for children to borrow each week.

**Can I come to assemblies?**

Families will be invited to class assemblies or special events throughout the school calendar, such as NAIDOC week or Harmony Day. Check the newsletters to stay informed.

**My child needs to take medicine during the school day, what should I do?**

All medicine needs to be checked into the school office for storage and administration. Written instruction needs to be provided about dosage etc. and students are not permitted to keep any medicines in their school bag.

**What is the mobile phone policy?**

Students in stages 2 and 3 are permitted to bring in mobile phones to school. Each morning these phones are collected by class teachers and stored in the school office until the end of the day. Students are not permitted to check their phones throughout the day for messages. If you need to get in contact with your child, you must do this via the office.

**Why does my child tell me nothing about their day?**

Your child is learning their role as a student and processing their new environment, interactions and responsibilities. They may be too tired to remember all the events that happened each day. It can help to develop a conversational routine as you prepare for dinner or bedtime (for e.g. 'I'll tell you three things about my day and you tell me three things about your day). Or ask specific questions such as 'did you play on the bottom playground at lunch or on the courtyard today?'

**Is there a school canteen?**

No.

**Do they study scripture?**

No.

**Do you have parent helpers in the classroom?**

No. We encourage all families to get involved in the school by attending and contributing to P&C activities.

**Who is my child's buddy?**

Senior classes 'buddy up' with kindergarten classes to help with learning activities and socializing. Your child will have a number of 'buddy helpers' not one set person for the year.

**What is the best way to start the day?**

If you can be organised and get to school before the bell rings, this allows children to start playing with other students. Then at bell time they know to line up, say goodbye and go to class. Please do not follow class lines to wave goodbye to your child as this can produce separation anxiety and a 'false start' for children. Teachers provide playground supervision from 8:30am.

**What time is lunch?**

Students eat their main meal at 11am.

Recess is at 2:10pm.

Please send in small manageable portions of food in containers that children can open themselves. Please do not send food containing nuts.

**What is the COLA?**

The Covered Outdoor Learning Area is located in front of the Lucy Woodcock Hall. It is where students line up for class each morning.

**What is PDHPE?**

Personal Development and Health, Physical Education. It is the subject where we cover sport, and student safety.

**How can I talk to my child's teacher?**

We schedule Parent Teacher interviews twice a year. If you need to arrange an additional appointment, then email the office directly. Please do not try to 'have a quick chat' at the beginning/end of the day, as teachers are responsible for the safety of the class and often have meetings to attend.