STARTING FOUNDATION AT ARALUEN

Growth Mindset in Action
TESTIMONIALS

Below are some quotes taken from our Parent Satisfaction Surveys and anecdotes taken from informal discussions with parents, students and staff.

• We chose Araluen because of the small class sizes. (new Foundation parent)

• Araluen was really welcoming to our family, which was important as we were moving from overseas. (RAAF parent)

• The school’s focus on teaching Growth Mindset really impressed us and we can notice the difference it our child’s attitude to learning. (Foundation parent)

• We love that the school has a real community feel and this sets it apart from other town schools. (Araluen family of 7 years)

• I love teaching in this school because the staff support each other and work together as a team and always put the students’ needs first (new teacher to school)

• The Principal and teachers know every student in the school. This impresses us as we feel that our children are known and valued. (Parent of grade 1, 3 and 5)

• Our child has the chance to be involved in many leadership roles. You don’t always get this opportunity in bigger schools. (Grade 6 parent)

• My child loves Science and looks forward to Science class each week. (Grade 5 parent)

• The Araluen Music program is great! My children really love singing and the opportunities that the Choir offers is wonderful, such as concerts and eisteddfods. (Grade 1 and 2 parent)

• Our children enjoy doing Bike Ed. They love using the bike track and the working traffic lights. Learning road safety is important for children. (Grade 3 and 5 parent)

• I enjoy working with other parents to fund raise. This is a great way to make friends while doing something important for the school. (stay at home mum)

The Araluen Primary School community is very proud of its school!
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TRANSITION TO FOUNDATION

Our ‘Steps to Foundation’ Program

The Foundation student’s learning environment

The Foundation year is a significant shift in environment for a child. At Araluen, we value this by creating a learning environment that provides a smooth transition from Kinder. The Foundation classroom is an exciting and stimulating place where children are challenged and supported. We aim to create a safe and happy environment in which children are valued, praised and encouraged to “have a go”!

Our whole school approaches of Discovery Learning, Growth Mindset and School Wide Positive Behaviour Support are all introduced from Foundation and assist in supporting the transition for children from Kinder to Primary School.

- **Discovery Learning** is an important part of the Foundation curriculum and involves children investigating and exploring to promote independence. Children are encouraged to build on their interests and develop social skills and problem solving skills.

- **Growth Mindset** is valued as vital part of the learning progress of every child. Children are taught that they are at school to take risks and try new things. It is OK to make mistakes and we encourage children to take on learning challenges.

- **School Wide Positive Behaviour Support** plays a significant role in the early years of schooling. At Araluen, we teach expected behaviours and social skills to help set children up for success.

HOW YOU CAN HELP?

The transition to school requires your child to cope in a new environment which has many and varied demands. Below is a list of suggestions that may help to enhance your child’s intellectual, social and emotional development and which will assist him/her to adjust more quickly to school:-

- Talk to your children about school.
- Give them little duties to aid the concentration span.
- Encourage them by admiring all of their work.
- Select good stories, picture books and T.V. programs for them.
- Warn them against ‘strangers’.
- Teach them to repeat – name, address, phone number, etc.
- Teach them the correct way to ask to go to the toilet.
- Make sure they know where to wait for you after school.
- Practise several ‘school lunches’. Children need the practise in handling their lunch.
- Ensure the child knows the route to and from school.
- **DO NOT ALLOW** your child to bring along articles, which may cause harm – toy guns, arrows, roller skates, etc.
- Do not allow your child to bring toys/jewellery to school. We cannot guarantee safe keeping and careful handling at all times.
- School crossings must be used at all times – insist your child does so by modelling the correct behaviour yourself.
GROWTH MINDSET

Our school believes in the principle of the Growth Mindset. This is where we teach our students that ability can be developed and intelligence is not fixed.

Students are encouraged to take on “learning challenges”. We teach students to take risks with their learning and to learn from mistakes. Mistakes are valued as learning milestones. We teach students how to accept feedback and improve their learning.

Teachers praise the effort that students make and don’t just focus on the end product. Students learn to keep trying and that practice will improve their learning. Students hear from their teachers, “don’t worry, you are not there yet, but you will get there with practice”.

Questions to parents
1. What sort of learners do you want your children to be?
2. How do they feel about learning now?
3. Can they tell you what they like learning and what they are good or not good at?

A GROWTH MINDSET ENCOURAGES STUDENTS TO:

- improve their learning and become brighter
- seek out challenges and other opportunities to learn and improve, as these all assist their development
- avoid tasks and situations that they have already mastered
- try harder and revise their strategy when things get tough
- show resilience, creativity and grit – and therefore become a better learner.
THE FIRST DAY

On the first morning, parents should arrive at school between 8.30 a.m. and 8.45 a.m. It is advisable to leave as soon as possible after introducing your child to the teacher. There will be an array of activities available for your child to do and he/she will soon become happily absorbed.

Should it happen that your child is tearful, it is best to leave him/her in the teacher’s care, as to linger only prolongs the agony for both of you. A “tea and tissue” morning tea is traditionally held in the staff room for new parents, the principal and other school staff. Rest assured that parents are contacted if the tears continue (the child’s) for any great length of time. Conversely, if you would like a reassuring phone call during the first few weeks, please don’t hesitate to let your child’s teacher know.

- When you bring your child along on the first day, you will be supplied with a name tag for your child. Please pin this tag on your child and accompany them to their classroom. Students will continue to wear name tags for a few days.
- Assure your child that you will return to the room to collect them at the end of the school day. Foundation pupils attend for the full school day (8:45 am – 3:15 pm) but do not attend on Wednesdays until after Labour Day.
- Provide a cut lunch - include sandwiches, drink and fruit. Include fruit for your child to eat at 10.00 and 12.30 for Brain Food. (Please wrap this separately)
- Glass containers are potentially dangerous and should not be used as food or drink containers.
- After school talk to your child about what they did, who they met and what a great day they had.

BUDDIES – FOUNDATIONS AND GRADE ONE STUDENTS

- Each Foundation student is supported in their transition to school with a Buddy from grade 5. The Grade 5 Buddies meet with their Foundations every week, where they will read to them and play games. This partnership extends to the yard, where the Buddies will often play with their Foundation student and help them solve minor friendship issues.
- When the Buddies reach Grade 6, they continue the relationship they have formed and will follow their student up, as they become year 1 students.
SCHOOL HOURS

Please bring your child to the classroom until your child is confident with the routine of the school day. At the end of the day, the children will be brought out to the flagpole area for you to collect them. This is to ease congestion in the corridor. Please feel free to come back into the classroom after school if you have any concerns.

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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Morning Session</td>
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<td>Morning Tea (inside)</td>
<td>10.50am to 11:00am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recess Break</td>
<td>11.00 am to 11.30 am</td>
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<td>Middle Session</td>
<td>11.30am to 1.20 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch (inside)</td>
<td>1.20 pm to 1.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch Break</td>
<td>1.30pm to 2.15 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Afternoon Session</td>
<td>2.15 pm to 3.15 pm</td>
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From the first day until the long weekend in March, Foundation children will NOT be required to attend school on Wednesdays. If you find that the whole school day is a bit long for your child, feel free to discuss this with your child’s teacher so that further arrangements can be considered. After the Labour Day holiday in March, children will attend for the whole week and be dismissed at the normal time of 3.15 p.m.

Children are not permitted to leave the school during school hours unless accompanied by a parent, guardian or other nominated person. If at any time you need to take your child away from school, it is extremely important that you see the class teacher or principal before you do so, or write a note beforehand. If you do not do this, much time could be wasted by teachers trying to locate the missing child. A sign-out book is located at the school office for you to officially sign your child out when they leave.

There will be a teacher on duty in the playground from 8.35 a.m. to 8.50 a.m. and again in the afternoon from 3.15 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. It is suggested that parents do not drop their children at school earlier than 8.30 a.m. as no responsibility can be accepted for children who are on the premises outside these hours.
THINGS YOUR CHILD WILL NEED IN FOUNDATION

The children will receive a small pack of school requisites, e.g., scrapbooks, reading boxes, etc. (children do like these to be covered to aid easy identification). The rest of their supplies come in bulk; however, you will need to supply:

- School uniform.
- A school bag that needs to be a close-up or zip up type. It is a good idea to attach a key ring/toy/ribbon to your child’s bag to help them identify it easily.

School uniform is available from JSM Embroidery, 73 Macarthur St in Sale.

All items such as bags, lunch boxes and lids, etc., and articles of clothing which are removable (jumpers, coats, hats, etc.) MUST BE NAMED. This helps prevent costly losses for parents and wasted time for staff.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Children will be allocated a time during the first few weeks on a Wednesday for our Foundation Entry Assessment tasks. A parent/teacher interview is included in your child’s appointment time to discuss results and any concerns.

Parent/teacher interviews will be held again at the end of Term 2 after the mid-year reports. Parents are encouraged to discuss their child’s transition or progress at any time throughout the year. It is much better to address a small issue than to wait until either the child or the parent has become distressed and the problem is now a big one.

Parents are advised through the school app and the school newsletter, “Aralines”, of a multitude of events that occur throughout the school year. Class newsletters and notes home also advise parents on a regular basis of themes being studied, special events etc.
WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

The first days of school are very exhausting. There are many reasons for this:-

- The classroom is probably the most demanding situation that the child has yet experienced, both in time and attention.
- A combination of listening, sitting still and keeping quiet can be very trying for a small child.
- Some children suffer fatigue due to over-stimulation and excitement of the day’s program. This applies less to the child who has had pre-school experience.
- School begins in Australia in the most trying time of the year as far as weather is concerned.

Parents can expect some children to be cranky, bad-tempered and badly behaved, and yet a teacher will insist that the children have been perfect all day. Both statements can be true because almost all children have two behaviours. One is a social one seen particularly in a situation that is new. The other, perhaps more genuine, is shown mostly at home. Ignore rather than punish after-school crankiness. Welcome the child home; home is a very special place. Have a favourite cool drink waiting and then have a quiet talk about the day. Try to let them see how interested you are in their new adventure. It is a good time to read a story together in a cosy atmosphere. See that the child gets to school on time. Late coming often leads to a worried child and emotional disturbance.

Very occasionally, children may wet the bed during the early part of their first school year. This is possibly an anxiety reaction and as such requires a moderate approach. Don’t draw attention to it; for bed-wetting is often extended by parental anxiety.

Children coming in contact with numbers of other children can often pick up swear words. These seem to have a magic attraction for some children and they often repeat the words to show off. The best approach is to tell them that sensible children do not use such words, and simply that YOU don’t want them to do so.
HOW CHILDREN LEARN – WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD

LEARNING TO READ

- Read aloud to your child every day. If this is done in the years before going to school, it will launch a love of reading.
- Talk about a book before you start reading it to a young child.
- Praise every effort in reading, especially if confidence is low.
- Be seen reading for pleasure yourself and making visits to the library.

Don’t nag your child about reading, nor worry if the reading isn’t yet word-perfect or equal to that of some other child. Ask yourself: “Is my child interested in reading?” (TV should not be on all the time).

LEARNING ABOUT MATHEMATICS

- Display a positive attitude towards maths. Never say to your child, “You’re just like me; I was never any good at maths!”
- Maths is all around us. Try to develop your child’s sense of number, size, length, height, weight, volume, area, time, etc.
- Encourage children to take up hobbies that require “hands on” mathematical skills, such as building kits, hobby constructions, etc.
- Have a calculator around the house and introduce games that lead to the discovery of some of the fascinating properties of number.
- Seize every opportunity to use maths around the home; counting change, estimating, measuring and calculating whenever the opportunity arises.

LEARNING ABOUT WRITING

- Encourage your child to write often, to friends and relatives, and also to write in a personal and/or family journal (diary).
- Respond to the message or story of your child’s writing, rather than mark out spelling errors. (Everyone takes many years to learn to spell, so don’t think you must correct everything your child writes, but do help when the child asks you for a spelling).
- When writing yourself invite your child to add to messages you write to relatives. And why not become a note-writing family, leaving notes around for one another?
- Help your child to turn stories and other writings into ‘books’ by stapling them together into brightly illustrated covers.

Don’t get upset if the teacher hasn’t marked every error. The best correction is usually done in teacher-pupil discussion of the errors that are currently meaningful to a child.

Ask yourself: “Is my child interested in writing?”

* To ‘write’ does not mean handwriting, but the ability to put ideas into sentences.
HOW CHILDREN DEVELOP

**Intellectual Development**

- You can help your child by making him/her more aware of the world around him/her. Use every opportunity to talk with your child and extend his/her use of the language. Let your children see how spoken language looks when written and how written language sounds when spoken. Remember, reading is a process of getting meaning from print and a child’s world is full of print – street signs, shops, package labels, television books, magazines, etc.
- Read regularly to your child and encourage him/her to “read” to you, but keep these times fun and enjoyable.
- Be a role model for your child. Let him/her see you reading.
- Talk about the days of the week, e.g., “Today is Sunday”. “Tomorrow is a school day”. “Yesterday it was Saturday”.
- Name colours. Talk in colours, e.g., “Put on the brown shoes”. “Bring me the yellow towel”.
- Use number activities, e.g., count out five knives, etc., for the dinner table. Bring me four apples.
- Water play – in the bath or pool, encourage the child to put his/her head under water – a great start to learning to swim.
- Enrich their vocabulary and understanding of it by such words as big/little, up/down, high/low, wide/narrow, short/tall, before/behind, here/there, near/far, smaller/taller, shorter/fatter, to/from, same/different, circle, square, triangle, above/below, full/empty, wet/dry, warmer/colder, turn around, stretch, bend, inside out, right way around, and so on.

**Emotional Development**

- Playing games with family and friends is a fun way to help with emotional development. Through games children develop self-control, acceptance of winning and losing, confidence, responsibility, independence and start to see the value of persistence.
- Can he/she make choices, accept rules, adapt to frequent changes? This will be an important part of school life.
- Encourage the children to be independent – dress themselves, tie their shoelaces, turn their clothes inside out, etc. Pull sleeves through to the right side, use words like inside, wrong side, right side, left and right shoe, etc.

**Social Development**

- Social development is an important criterion when considering if your child is ready for school. Children need to feel happy and secure in the care of others, so please allow your child to mix with other children and adults so his/her social skills can develop. As your child plays, watch to see if he/she is fair or bossy.
- Always encourage your child to share, take turns, listen and communicate. Start letting him/her perform limited tasks without adult help.
HOW TO ENROL AT ARALUEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

While school tours and enrolments can be taken at any time, during second term, a notice will be published in local newspapers and at the local kindergartens advising parents of specific open days as part of the Kinder / Foundation transition program.

When you come to the school (no appointment is necessary) you will need to bring your child’s:-

- Proof of Age (Birth Certificate)
- Immunisation History Statement (from Medicare or phone 1800 653 809).

Parents can legally defer enrolment for their child until the child is six years old. Your child needs to have turned five before the 30th April before he/she can legally start school. Please consider your child’s overall development – physical, emotional, social as well as intellectual when deciding if she/he is ready for school.

Towards the end of the kindergarten year, your child will be invited to attend an orientation session with other kindergarten children who will be starting the following year.

Upon enrolment at Araluen, you and your child will be invited to our “Steps to Foundation” program that runs for six sessions in Term 4 to familiarise your child with school life and give you some helpful hints to getting ready for school next year.

**Getting your child ready to start school**

Before the day comes to begin school, assist your child in a friendly, informal way by reflecting on the following:-

1. Does your child know their full name and address?
2. Do they know how to put things away after use?
3. Can they recognise their own named belongings?
4. Can they tie and untie shoelaces and buckle sandals?
5. Can they attend to their own toilet needs and adjust clothing?
6. Do they know the importance of washing hands after visiting the toilet?
7. Do they know how to use a tissue or handkerchief properly and the importance of covering the mouth when coughing or sneezing?
8. Can they manage a cut lunch?

**Things you can do to help your child transition to Foundation**

- Have several "school lunches" with your child at home. Ask your child what they like to eat – it is important that they WANT to eat their lunch!
- If the school is within walking distance from your home, follow the route to be taken there and back with them prior to the commencement of the school year.
- Acquaint them with road safety procedure, including the correct use of school crossings.
- Warn them not to accept rides from strangers and to go home immediately school is dismissed.
- It is wise to have a medical check-up prior to the commencement of school, particularly for sight and hearing. If your child has Asthma, they must have an Action Plan.
WE TAKE ENROLMENTS ALL YEAR

Our school welcomes new enrolments at any time of the year. Feel free to contact us at any time to organise a tour of our wonderful school and a meeting with the Principal.

We will ensure your child has a “buddy” to make their transition to Araluen as smooth as possible. Your child’s teacher will also arrange a meeting with you after the first few weeks to discuss how your child is progressing at school.

ENROLMENT CHECKLIST FOR ALL STUDENTS

1. Fill out the Enrolment Form and return to school as soon as possible.
2. Present School Entry Immunisations Certificate and Birth Certificate/Proof of Age to School, preferably with the Enrolment Form or before your child starts school. (Immunisation Certificate and Proof of Age documents are legally required by the School before the child commences school).
3. Make sure your child has the correct school uniform.
4. A recent school report would be appreciated for students who are at school.

FOR FOUNDATION (PREP) ENROLMENTS

5. Early in Term Three and once the school has received the above documentation, you will receive a Welcome to Araluen letter as proof of your accepted enrolment.
6. Early in Term Four you will receive information explaining Orientation (Steps to Foundation program) times and dates.
7. Late in December, you will receive information regarding teachers, grades and starting times for next year.

ASTHMA, ANAPHYLAXIS AND ALLERGIES

- If your child has asthma, anaphylaxis or suffers from a particular allergy please ensure we have a current Management Plan from your doctor and / or a current Epipen and management plan for your child’s allergy.