



Pittwater House

Kindergarten Handbook

To be used in conjunction with the
Student Handbook

achieve a balance
co-educational campus | single-sex education

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Key Contacts

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Head of the Junior Schools: Mrs Ruth Achurch DipT, *N'cle CAE* (NSW)

Welcome

Welcome to the Pittwater House Junior School. When your child starts in the Junior School they will either be leaving the nurturing environment of our own Early Childhood Centre or having their first year at Pittwater House. Either way they will be moving into a warm and caring classroom setting and their educational journey will continue as we build on the solid foundations laid down in their pre-school environment. This journey will continue through the Junior School, into the Secondary School and beyond.

Kindergarten is a year where you will see many changes. Your child will continue to be delighted by learning and their introduction to the six Key Learning Areas including English and Mathematics.

There will be many changes that will be introduced in a caring way. One of the most important changes will be expectations. The Kindergarten teachers will be asking you to start to expect more from your child in terms of taking responsibility for looking after their belongings, remembering to do basic routines for themselves, and generally becoming more independent. Independence is a wonderful gift you can give your child. By making them independent, a whole world of possibilities will open up to them. They will still be surrounded by an atmosphere of security but will be encouraged to take advantage of the many and varied experiences that are available.

You as parents are your child's first and lifelong teachers and we call upon you to support the school program, as your support can make a big difference. With home and school working together we can achieve success.

Finally, I offer you the invitation to regularly visit your child's classroom, ask questions about our program and generally be part of the exciting and caring environment that we create at Pittwater House.

Welcome to Pittwater House Junior School!

Mrs Ruth Achurch
Head of the Junior Schools



Philosophy of the Junior School

At Pittwater House we feel that education is multifaceted and that it is more than just the acquisition of knowledge. Education is the enhancement and enrichment of children's lives so that they can develop to become adults with the ability to cope and grow in today's society and in future societies.



Students bring a multitude of past experiences to each new learning situation. The teacher acts as instructor, guide, facilitator, mentor and support giver both encouraging and challenging each child to build on their past experiences and achieve to the best of their ability.

Learning is an ongoing, interactive process between the student and the teacher. The teacher is able to instil within the individual the desire to actively explore both their tangible and intangible world. As role models the teachers at Pittwater House stimulate, initiate, demonstrate and encourage children to become responsible for their own learning.

A stimulating class environment is an important part of a positive teaching situation. Examples of work from all class members lead to challenging standards of care and content. A well-balanced timetable, reflecting all parts of the curriculum lends enrichment to the classroom scene.

At Pittwater House we recognise that all children are unique and have the ability to strive for excellence and to succeed in a small way every day. Within our classrooms each child's contribution is valued and they are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to have respect for their classmates and teachers.

Class Programs

The Kindergarten program follows the NSW syllabuses for the Australian curriculum, but is individualised to the needs of the children in the class. The program also recognises the School's ethos that all children learn differently, at a different pace and require lessons to be presented in a variety of styles.

The children are assessed on entry into Kindergarten which gives them a baseline level allowing the teachers to group accordingly and monitor their progress as they proceed through their schooling years.

Literacy and Numeracy Rotations take place each week. Kindergarten work in stage groups for literacy and numeracy. These groupings are mixed across the grade to cater more effectively for the wide range of abilities. Parent helpers are most welcome to assist during these sessions. The timetable has been developed so that all K-2 classes work within stage groups at the same time. The children are grouped across stages to allow for enrichment and fluid movement between groups when required, catering more effectively for each child's needs.

The Literacy component is based upon a sight word and phonics program; Letters and Sounds. The children develop reading and comprehension skills and strategies using context, grammar, word usage and phonics in short predictable printed texts on familiar topics. The children begin writing with an increasing awareness of the nature, purpose and conventions of written language. They will produce simple texts that demonstrate an awareness of the basic grammar and punctuation needed.

The Mathematics program covers the strands of Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, Statistics and Probability. The concept of 'Working Mathematically' underpins all the areas. The children are encouraged to ask questions and explore mathematical problems. They use everyday language, materials and informal recordings to demonstrate understanding and link mathematical ideas. These sessions are based on the notion of the necessity of play and exploration in children's learning along with the need for concrete demonstration and manipulation to learn new concepts for children aged 5-6 years.

The culture of Pittwater House is built upon the traditions and core values in place at the school.

- The Kindergarten children participate in a social/emotional program that is based on the core values.
- Our unique rewards system means that all children know what they are working towards which reinforces correct behaviour and work ethic. This reward system follows through from K-6.
- The traditional values of the school help to reinforce a strong sense of discipline and also good manners.
- Our Well-Being program works hand in hand with our pastoral program in consideration of the skills taught for students' social and emotional growth.



Facilities in the School

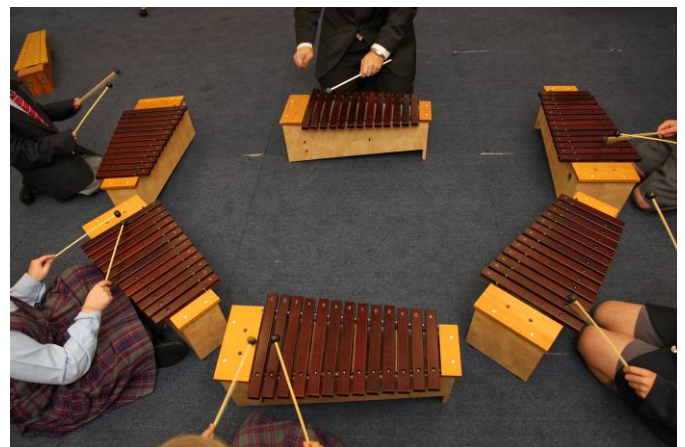
Kindergarten students are fortunate to have available to them all the facilities on campus which include the James Mooney Sports Oval, the short-course swimming pool, the sports centre, the Creative Arts Centre and the Library. Children attend classes with specialist teachers for PE, French, Dance, Music, Tennis and Library taking advantage of these facilities.



Students use the swimming pool for their PE lessons supported by their teacher, and parents when necessary, in the summer terms. Their swimming ability is assessed by our specialist PE teachers and they participate in a water awareness program appropriate to their individual ability. This is great preparation for our K-2 Swimming Carnival, held in early Term 1.



Music and singing are an important part of the curriculum. Children attend music lessons with a trained specialist teacher where they learn music appreciation and receive an introduction to rhythm and movement. The children are given opportunities at an early age to perform in front of an audience, both in formal and informal situations. They will become familiar with being on the stage of the School's Hall. These performances greatly increase a child's confidence which often carries over to other areas.



Kindergarten students have access to a range of laptops, and iPads. Each classroom and the Library are fitted with an interactive whiteboard. Technology is embedded in all Key Learning Areas.

Children attend a weekly session in the Library with the teacher-librarian. They learn to choose appropriate reading materials as well as how a library functions and the borrowing process. Most importantly, this promotes a love of books encouraging children to become life-long readers.

Buddies

There is a Buddy system in place for all Kindergarten children. Each ECC-Year 2 class is buddied up with a Year 3-6 class. Throughout the year they will participate in various activities together.



Daily Routines

Students need to be at school by 8:15am as lessons begin at 8:30am. The day finishes at either 3:00pm or 3:20pm. Children may be picked up from the car park at 3:00pm. There is supervision in the playground from 8:10am. After School Care and Holiday Programs are provided by OOSH Northern Beaches.

A class timetable will be placed on the inside front cover of your child's Diary outlining each day's activities.

Homework Policy

Homework will begin in Term 1. In Kindergarten homework consists of daily reading, a list of sight words and an optional work sheet. Homework will be given Monday to Thursday.

Food and Nutrition

Healthy food is paramount for your child's learning, growth and development.

Crunch and Sip

Fruit and vegetables cut into bite size pieces and a drink of water in a named reusable bottle, is taken at 9.30am each morning.

Recess

Children will require a small snack in a labelled container for recess. Suggestions include manageable portions of fruit or healthy snacks such as muesli bars or cheese and crackers. Do not include any products that contain nuts.

Lunch

Parents need to pack and send individually packed lunch boxes each day. We recommend sandwiches as a nutritious base in your child's lunch box, as they are manageable and healthy and fillings can be varied according to your own child's likes and dislikes. More fruit, cheese, muesli bars, and other healthy snacks should also be added to lunch boxes to fuel your child's energy needs. Once again please do not include any products that contain nuts. Try to keep packaging to a minimum.

Drinks

Drink bottles are an easy way to provide water for children. Please send a named reusable drink container with your child each day.

Canteen

Canteen orders are available for Kindergarten children. Orders are accepted through the School's on-line service at: <https://www.pittwaterhouse.com.au/portal/school-information>

Allergy Aware Environment

The School aims to provide a nut-free environment to protect children and adults on campus who have allergies to nuts and nut products. Students, staff and visitors must not bring nuts or nut products on to the School campus and no nuts or nut products will be sold at the School Canteen. Students should not share any food with other students. Students with allergies should ensure they have an action management plan that has been communicated with the Schools Health Centre and that they follow the stated procedures in regards to medication, etc. The School cannot guarantee to eliminate all nut products at School functions or during curricular or extra-curricular activities.

Allergies to foods or other substances must be reported via the Medication Update form supplied at the time of enrolment or when necessary via Edumate. It is also imperative that class teachers are informed of any such allergies so as to accommodate individual requirements.

Pittwater House Portal

This portal provides a home for the vast amount of information that parents, students and teachers use on a regular basis. The aim of this service is to provide our community with easy access to these resources and accompanying information guides. Parents, students and staff are encouraged to regularly visit their respective links in order to remain informed of current resources, policies and events.

Please visit the Pittwater House Portal:

<https://www.pittwaterhouse.com.au/portal/school-information>.

If you are having access issues, please contact school.admin@tphs.nsw.edu.au

Edumate

The Edumate portal provides direct access to view your child's attendance, timetable and reports, the school calendar and your account transactions if you are the account holder. Edumate also provides access to update your personal details at any time. In future, the portal will also be expanded to provide information on academic progress and welfare details, including notifications of disciplinary action (ie detentions) or awards given. For full instructions please visit the following link on the Pittwater House Portal: <https://www.pittwaterhouse.com.au/portal/edumate> .

Attendance

Pittwater House utilises Skoolbag and Edumate to record attendance. Skoolbag Attendance Notifications are to inform the school of any upcoming absences (replacing written notes) and Edumate is to view any outstanding past absences and update with relevant details of absence.

Please download the Skoolbag app. For full instructions please visit the following link on the Pittwater House Portal:

<https://www.pittwaterhouse.com.au/portal/skoolbag>

For instructions on how to use Skoolbag and Edumate please visit the following link on the Pittwater House Parent Portal:

<https://www.pittwaterhouse.com.au/portal/attendance>

Skoolbag Absence Notification Forms:

- **Absence Notification** – sickness, medical and non-medical appointments only
- **Early Departures** – send by 9am on intended day of departure, sign out at Reception
- **Late Arrivals** – inform school on the day of late arrival, sign in at Reception
- **Application for Exemption or Leave during Term Time** – holidays, funerals, events, etc.

Absence Notification

If your child is absent for a full day due to sickness or an appointment, please use the absence notification form on Skoolbag.

Application for Exemption

Please note that all leave during term time for absences other than sickness or appointments, e.g. holidays, long weekends, funerals, representing the school at elite sporting events or employment in approved entertainment industry activities, must be applied for by completing the **Application for Exemption or Leave during Term Time** form (10 days in advance) which can be located on Skoolbag under the Attendance notifications.

Early Departure

Requests for early departure from school must be received by 9am on the intended day of departure. An **Early Departure** form can be found under Attendance notifications on Skoolbag. Please write a note in your child's diary as a reminder. All students must sign out at Reception prior to departure.

Late Arrival

If your child is arriving late please use the **Late Arrival** form on Skoolbag and write a reminder in your child's diary. All students must report to Reception immediately upon entering campus to sign in.

As an alternative to using Skoolbag email: attendance@tphs.nsw.edu.au or phone Reception on: 9981 4400.

Illness and Medication

If your child has recovered and is well enough to return to school but still requires medication, please see the School Sister to have the medication stored in a safe place. The School Sister will administer any medication required. Return to school from illness must be a full 24 hours after the last bout.

If your child falls ill throughout the school day, Sister will be consulted and Panadol may be administered (for which parental consent is sought on enrolment). If the illness or injury is more than minor, parents will be contacted immediately and informed of the situation.

If a serious accident occurs at School the ambulance will be called immediately, together with parents or emergency contacts if parents are unavailable. Sister will be called and will administer first aid. All teaching staff also hold current First Aid Certificates.

Sun Safety



We enforce the “No hat, no play” rule in the Junior School to develop each child’s sun safety awareness. Students in K-2 only need a wide-brimmed hat. We actively teach sun safety and the need to ‘Slip, Slop, Slap’ throughout the year. We recommend you please apply a generous amount of sunscreen to your child before leaving home to not only protect them from sun damage in the morning hours, but to reinforce in the home the same understanding of sun safety. Extra attention is needed on the days your child has swimming.

Swimming

Private lessons are encouraged for all non-swimmers at Pittwater House as swimming is a survival skill necessary for life on the Northern Beaches.

Excursions

Throughout the year visitors attend the Junior School to provide informative demonstrations and shows. Occasionally the children and staff may venture out to experience, see, listen or attend a worthwhile event. Prior to any excursion or activity parents will be notified via Skoolbag that an online permission form is required for completion to provide consent for your child to attend such events.

If you have any concerns as to your child’s dietary needs or involvement in such celebrations please discuss these with your child’s class teacher.



Parent/Teacher Communication

A Student Diary is issued to every child at the beginning of each year by the class teacher. These books are integral to the daily communications between teachers and parents. If you need to make note of how your child is feeling, any questions or concerns or wish to remark on conversations or events you think important for the class teacher to know, please write these down in the corresponding date in the Student Diary.

Teachers read and initial this book each day, and may make comments about how your child spent their day, the friendships they are forming, or give detail about upcoming events. Likewise, parents should read these comments and initial the book each night. There is also requirement for you to initial each week to signify you have read the School newsletter, HouseNews.

The School's 'Canvas' portal is a great way to liaise with the class teacher and catch up with the classroom happenings. Each parent and student has their own login. Link to Canvas site: <https://canvas.tphs.nsw.edu.au/login/ldap>

Formal Parent/Teacher Interviews are held during Term 3 each year after mid-year reports have been issued. However, teachers are available at other times for formal interviews.

Please do not use the Student Diary for Attendance purposes, please refer to the Attendance section of this Handbook.

Daily Requirements

What to bring to school each day:

- Crunch and Sip
- Recess in a labelled container
- Lunch in a labelled lunchbox
- Labelled refillable drink bottle
- Homework folder
- Student Diary
- Spare clothes (in case of accidents underwear/socks)
- Wide-brimmed Hat
- Rain coat (or School rain jacket)

Synopsis of Class Requirements

The following equipment will be required at the beginning of the year. All items need to be clearly named.

- Painting smock / T-shirt with sleeves
- Recess in a named container
- PE uniform in a named PE bag
- Library bag
- Please check your child's Diary daily for messages and initial
- When you have read the Newsletter please sign for it in your child's Diary
- A raincoat should be kept in school bags for those unexpected downpours

Please name all of your child's belongings (even shoes!) as you will be surprised at what can get lost, misplaced or borrowed. It is much easier to return lost items to the correct owners if they are named clearly.

Bringing toys to school for news or other occasions is actively discouraged, as many precious and costly items can be lost or broken, causing unnecessary heartbreak. Please encourage your child to bring items such as photographs, interesting things from nature such as leaves, shells etc., favourite books, postcards or things that will help them to tell a story.

The Pittwater House Junior School is a wonderful environment for young children. We believe your child will gain an excellent grounding and be well prepared to continue their schooling at Pittwater House.



