Welcome

Kindergarten Information Pack 2011
Welcome to Mother Teresa School

Contact Details

Telephone  62415604
Fax  62415604
Email  office@motherteresa.act.edu.au
Web  http://www.motherteresa.act.edu.au/
Address  40 Wimmera St
          HARRISON ACT
Office Hours  Monday - Friday  8:30am—3:30pm
Before School Care  7.30am-8.55am
School Hours  8.45am to 3:05pm
After School Care  2.55pm-6.00pm
Principal  Mr Michael Lowe
Assistant Principal  Mrs Cherie Kelly
Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu, the nun known to the world as Mother Teresa of Calcutta, was born to Albanian parents in what is now Macedonia in 1910. As a Sister of Loreto, she taught girls in her order's mission schools in India for twenty years. Then, on September 10, 1946, on a train journey in the mountains, she suddenly realized that God was calling her to something more - to care for the poorest of the poor.

In the city of Calcutta, many homeless people lived and died on the street. One day Sister Teresa came across a half-dead woman lying in front of a hospital. She stayed with the woman until she died. From that time on, she dedicated herself to caring for the poorest of the poor in India. She founded the Nirmal Hriday ("Pure Heart") Home for the Dying in a former temple in Calcutta, where poor, homeless people were cared for and allowed to die with dignity when no one else would have them. She also founded an orphanage and leprosy hospital.

Inspired by her heroism, other young women, including some of her former students, joined her in her work with the sick, the poor, and the forgotten of Calcutta's slums. They formed a new, worldwide order of nuns, the Missionaries of Charity. Like Mother Teresa, they wear a plain white, blue-edged sari, the traditional dress of Indian women. They live a simple, prayerful life, and take care of people all over the world wherever there is need.

Mother Teresa won several awards for her work, including the Nobel Peace Prize. She always used the money from such prizes to found new homes and hospitals for poor people.

Mother Teresa died in 1997 at the age of 87. Her life and work remind us that happiness and holiness come from doing "Small things with great love." She is remembered on September 10.
Starting Kindergarten

Classes commence Monday 7th February

Monday to Friday - full days
8.45am to 3:05pm

Please pack fruit break lunch and afternoon snack
(At Mother Teresa we have a risk minimisation policy regarding nuts and nut products.)

After Kinder Orientation your child will probably feel a great deal more confident about starting Kindergarten. It is important that you talk to your child about going to Kindergarten in a positive and enthusiastic manner.

It is important that you explain to your child that Mother Teresa School is a safe and happy place and that there is always a teacher close by if they feel frightened or upset.

Discuss with your child all of the different things they will do at school and how much fun it will be to:

- Make lots of new friends
- Meet interesting teachers
- Go to the library to borrow a book
- Use the Interactive Whiteboard (ACTIV Board)
- Paint and do craft
- Sing songs
- Learn about letters, numbers and words
- Play on the computers etc...
Start preparing your child a month before the BIG day!

During this time you should start to encourage your child to be independent. Help your child learn to manage and take care of the things they will use on a daily basis at school. Children will already have experienced many of these things in Pre-School.

For example:

- **Discuss with your child how they will use the bathrooms** (toilets) at school. It is important that you explain to them that they will be allowed to go to the toilet whenever they need to, but they MUST ask the teacher before they go. We ask that you please pack a spare pair of underpants and appropriate coloured school socks in the front pocket of your child’s school bag - 'just in case'!

- Encourage your child to put their school hat on when going out to play. When they come inside, practice putting their hat in a designated place. Don’t forget to talk about the ‘No Hat, Play in the Shade’ rule. Remind them that they need to wear their hats outside if they want to play. We have found that it is a good idea to place a ‘spare school hat’ in your child’s bag.

- Practice putting school jumpers on and taking them off. Throughout January allow your child time to wear in their new school shoes. We have found that new shoes and hot feet are a sure-fire way to cause uncomfortable and at times painful blisters.

- **LABEL EVERYTHING!** Show your child their full name written on their hat, jumper, school bag, library bag, painting smock and lunch boxes.
- Familiarise your child with their school bag. Give them plenty of time to get used to wearing it on their back. Show them how to take it off and put it on. Give them opportunities to practice taking their lunch box in and out of it and most importantly show them how to do up and undo the zippers!

- Have fun choosing a distinguishing name tag or features (eg key ring, ribbon) to place on your child’s school bag. A unique touch to your child’s school bag will help them find it first time (especially in the first few weeks of school).

- Encourage your child to practise writing their first name, using a capital at the beginning and lower-case letters for the remainder of their name. One of the biggest challenges that Kindergarten teachers face is trying to ‘unteach’ the use of capital letters.

- Each day at school your child will have **fruit break**, **lunch** and **afternoon snack**. Practice having these three breaks! We suggest that you have ‘picnics’ where your child is encouraged to make selections from their lunch box. Get them familiar with drinking from a drink bottle and show them how to open and close the lid. In the first few weeks of school we ask that you place your child’s afternoon snack and fruit break in a separate container. This is one way to stop your child accidentally eating all of their food in one go!

- Read, read and read! We encourage you to read to your child as much as possible. We find that children who enjoy books are always enthusiastic to learn to read on their own!

- **Start practising on those shoelaces!**
The first day at school!

The first day is a very exciting event, but it can also be a little confusing! Please read the following dot points carefully as they explain in detail what will happen and what you will need to do when you arrive on this special day!

The first day of school for everyone is **Monday 7th February 2010**.

- On arrival collect your child’s name tag as you enter the school grounds.
- 8.45am line up in class group and we will have a short assembly.
- Each Kindergarten teacher will call out the names on their class lists.
- We will then instruct you to follow the teachers to the classroom.
- You will be asked to find your child’s name tag on the desk. Once found, place the bag on the designated desk.

Here’s the tough one!

- Once your child is settled, we ask that you then leave the classroom.
- You are invited to join the other parents for a cup of tea or coffee outside the canteen.
- If we feel that your child is too distressed and unlikely to settle we will contact you immediately. We have your child’s best interests at heart.
- Once the class is settled the fun begins!
- The Kindergarten teachers will stay with the children throughout play time.
- **At 3.05pm when the big event is over, we ask that you wait for your child outside the classroom block.**
- Teachers will walk the children to the pick up area.
**General Information**

**Absenteeism:**

One of the most important duties that a teacher carries out is maintaining the class ROLL. The roll is a legal document and all absences must be accounted for. If your child is absent from school a written note is required. The note must be addressed to the teacher, provide the date/s of the absence and outline the reason for the absence (the reason may be through illness or personal leave). You must sign the note.

A courtesy call to the school’s office is appreciated, but does not legally explain your child’s absence. A note MUST be provided on your child’s return to school.

For example:

Dear Mrs Kelly,
Freddy was absent from school on 12 November 2011 due to an illness.

Signature

Dear Mrs Leet,
Suzie was absent from school on 12 November 2011 due to family commitments.

Signature

**Making an Appointment to see your Child’s Teacher:**

We are only too happy to meet with you to discuss your child’s progress etc. However, it is very difficult for us to concentrate on the issue at hand if we are still with the children. Before school and immediately after school are not appropriate times to try and see us for an interview. We ask that you arrange a mutually convenient time to meet either through a note or phone call. We are then able to give you our full attention to discuss any concerns.
Kindergarten Curriculum:

Your child will experience wonderful learning opportunities through the following Key Learning Areas: Religious Education, English, Mathematics, Social Sciences, Science and Technology, Personal Education and Physical Education (PDHPE), Visual Arts, Drama, Dance and Music. In the ACT our curriculum is organised to cover Essential Learning Achievements. In 2011 we will also begin the exciting work of implementing aspects of The Australian Curriculum. The Interactive Whiteboard is an integral part of the Kindergarten Curriculum and enriches the children’s learning through exciting and educational experiences with technology.

Sports Days:

Children will need to start wearing their Mother Teresa Sports uniform on our sports days - WEDNESDAYS and FRIDAYS.

Parent Help:

There will be plenty of opportunities for you to come and join in all of the fun of Kindergarten. We have Literacy Mornings, Gross Motor and Theme Days. We will always keep you well informed of these events, allowing you plenty of time to organise your visit. Early in the year we will give parents the opportunity to offer assistance by signing up or registering their interest. This will then be followed by an information session for parent helpers.

Correct Pencil Grip:
What your child will need to bring on the first day of school!

- A big smile!
- School bag
- School hat
- Drink bottle filled with WATER ONLY.
- Fruit Break (a piece of fresh fruit or vegetable cut into small pieces if possible. No processed or packaged foods are eaten at this time!)
- Lunch (Please remember ‘Risk MINIMISATION policy’ regarding NUTS and NUT PRODUCTS.)
- Afternoon snack
- Painting smock (an old t-shirt is just as effective as commercially made smocks)
- Library bag

Technology at home and in the classroom

Technology is a very important part of our curriculum at Mother Teresa. Below are some free websites that may be of interest.

www.starfall.com
http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/bll/leo/index.htm’
http://www.learningplanet.com/act/abcorder.asp
http://pbskids.org/lions/games/
http://www.kidport.com/GradeK/LanguagesArts/LanguageArts.htm
http://www.harcourtschool.com/activity/buzz/buzz.html
http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/interactive/literacy.html#1
http://www.kiddonnet.com/gb/flash/phonics/Intro.html

We encourage vigilant supervision while children are accessing any internet site.