

ECD School Information Booklet 2021

Dear ECD Parents/Guardians/Caregivers

A warm welcome to you and your child. We look forward to a long and happy relationship with you.

The following basic information applies specifically to the ECD School and is intended to answer frequently asked questions as far as possible. Please read this in conjunction with the main PEPPS ECD Information Booklet for more general and detailed points about our school. The ECD Information Booklet is available on the PEPPS Schools' website and myHomework. For your interest, please also see the PEPPS Schools Parents Facebook page.

Your child's class teacher will also be happy to answer any further queries you may have.

Kind regards

Mrs Neandri Greyvenstein

ECD HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

1. Communication between the School and Teacher

- 1.1 ECD pupils** use a *Message Book*. This comes home daily and should be returned to school each day. Please check for any notes/letters from the school and sign to acknowledge receiving them. You may also use this book to write notes to the teacher; we check the books each morning.

This book is used for small personal notes and any letters with tear-off slips. For general information, we use the myHomework App, see below.

Teachers are happy to meet with parents should there be a problem. If it involves a lengthy chat, however, please make an appointment so that teaching time is not disrupted. This can be arranged via the message book, by phone, via the school secretary or directly to the teacher's school email address.

- 1.2 Please note** that it is school policy **not** to give out teachers' personal phone numbers and **not** to have class WhatsApp groups.
- 1.3** You will be provided with your child's teacher's school email address in January, as well as details and instructions on how to download and use the **myHomework App**. This is a school communication system for phones, tablets or laptops. It is essential to use this app to stay up to date with both general school announcements as well as class information.

Please let the teacher know if home circumstances change, as this often affects your child's behaviour at school, e.g. if mum goes away for some time, etc.

2. General Information

All ECD classrooms are situated on Plot 2.

2.1 School Times

School **starts** promptly at 07h25 each morning for all pupils in the school.

ECD pupils go directly to their classrooms each day on arrival. Please note that there is no one to receive them before 07h00. The pupils may not be dropped off at the main gate or in the parking area. The ECD pupils must be walked to the entrance of the ECD School by an adult and handed over to a member of staff at their ECD classroom. You will be directed to the classrooms on the first day of school.

2.2 After School

Stage 4 and Stage 5 end their daily programme with a short rest or nap. Parents are not allowed to pick them up in this time period. This rest is essential for their development.

ECD ends at 13h00 from Monday to Thursday and at 12h30 on Fridays and we encourage you to arrange prompt collection of your child **FROM PLOT 2** at these times. They **must** be collected, by an adult, **from the ECD fenced-off playground** at these times. **(Currently, drop-off and pickup take place at the hall at Plot 2 as this is easier during COVID).** They may **NOT** go with older primary or College siblings. Pupils wait in the playground until collected, but they may not play on any equipment, jungle gyms, swings, etc., for safety reasons.

NB Any ECD pupil who has not been collected 30 minutes after the daily finishing time, i.e. by 13h30 Monday to Thursday and by 13h00 on a Friday, will be gathered and taken to the aftercare where you will be charged an aftercare fee.

We **strongly discourage** you from leaving your child at school after these times. Not only will it be expensive for you, but it is also unfair to your child after a busy morning at school. If it is difficult to arrange for pickup on time, please **enrol your child in the aftercare programme**. Please contact Mrs Morais on 072 718 2164. This is privately run and additional costs apply.

2.3 PEPPS 6-Day Cycle/Timetable/Integrated Day

There is a **6-day cycle** at PEPPS rather than a weekly one and this applies from ECD to Grade 12. This means lessons are now timetabled according to the number of the school day, i.e. days 1-6, rather than the day of the week. It is important therefore that you keep track of which school day it is on the school calendar. You will be informed which day/s your child has swimming, for example, so that he/she knows to pack his/her swimming kit.

We introduced two fantastic external programmes, **MiniChess** and **Stimuzone** (only from Grade R) in 2019 which have been running very successfully and which will continue in 2021. Please see the separate brochures for further details and benefits of these programmes.

2.4 Adam

This is our online assessment platform where pupils are assessed continuously during the term and more intensely at the end of each term. Parents can log in and see their children's progress as they develop. Although marks are allocated and adjusted into a percentage, we would like you to keep the following key in mind at all times.

0% - 30% **Not yet achieved**

Pupil does not have the skills or cannot grasp the concept and needs help completing the activity.

31% - 50% **Partially achieved**

Pupil is still developing the skills or struggling to grasp the concept and needs some help completing the activity.

51% - 95% **Achieved**

Pupil has the skills and grasps the concept to complete the activity with little to no effort.

95% - 100% **Achieved beyond expectations**

Pupil reasons and does **more** than what is expected of him/her effortlessly and individually.

It is extremely important for parents to realise that we aim for '**Achieved**', and not for '**Beyond what is expected**', as this is unrealistic and unfair towards your child. Please do not add unnecessary pressure to your child's development.

2.5 Extra-curricular Activities

From 2021, the ECD School will be running an extra-curricular programme from Monday to Thursday between 13h30-14h30 (only for Grade R). This means that pupils will have a short half-hour break where they can have lunch/snack and playtime. Pupils will then move to their specific club. Please note that these activities are not compulsory unless otherwise requested by your teacher.

Activities are varied and your child may **choose no more than two clubs** to attend for a term. These two choices include external activities like karate, pottery, etc. Your child may choose a different club at the beginning of each term or stay with the same club for the year. Please note that pupils cannot swap clubs in the middle of the term.

Clubs will include athletics, swimming, soccer, cricket, tennis, remedial and enrichment, play therapy, creativity club, public speaking, music and drama, gardening and science, movement, cooking, Lego and building, drawing and cultural clubs.

Athletics training is in preparation for the athletics day and it is compulsory for pupils to attend at least once a week. This will count as one club.

More detail on the clubs and the days they will be held will be announced at the beginning of each term.

In addition to these clubs, we have **outside service providers** who will come to the school and offer the following activities, **pottery, ballet, karate**.

Please note that our outside service providers **charge a fee** and these activities are not part of the PEPPS programme or included in the school fees. They use our venue, but the contract is between parents and the service provider. Also, note that these activities run at the same time as the clubs, so your child will not be able to do both the school activity and the outside activity.

2.6 Break/Breakfast/School Lunch/Tuck Shop

We have a **Healthy Eating Policy** in the ECD School. We aim to maximise concentration and learning in the short time that your child is with us each day. We want to avoid the negative

effects caused by 'sugars' in whatever form. To this end, we ask that your child eats a nutritious breakfast before leaving home. Break is only at 09h30 and this is a long time to wait for the first 'fuel' of the day.

Please pack a nutritious lunch. No sugary foods should be brought to school, e.g. cakes, biscuits, muffins, sweets, chocolates. No chips, fast food or flavoured yoghurts. (Although they appear healthy, they are packed with sugar!)

Important No food will be given at school, no breakfast and lunch or in-between snacks.

Drinks – Please, no cool drinks, fruit juices or flavoured water are to be brought to school. Your child should bring a water bottle daily. (Children get used to drinking water very quickly if encouraged to.)

We will post healthy lunch box ideas on the **myHomework** App. The Internet is also full of ideas for easy, healthy lunch box fillers.

NB ECD pupils are not allowed to buy from the school tuck shop, so please do not send money to school for this.

2.7 Birthdays

Pupils are allowed to wear civvies on the day of their birthday. Parents can ask the teachers for the correct number of pupils in the class and send cupcakes to school. NO other cool drinks, birthday packets, sweets or cakes are allowed to be sent to school.

2.8 Stationery

ECD parents do not need to purchase stationery for school. Your children are provided with everything needed at school. The school stationery issued **MUST** stay at school and may not be taken home.

You will receive a short list of other items, e.g. tissues, that will need to be provided by you.

2.9 Backpacks

Your child will need a backpack to carry his/her things to and from school each day. The backpacks will be hung on hooks in each classroom. We allow you to purchase a backpack of your choice providing it is not smaller than approximately 45 x 35 cm. It needs to be big enough to carry the book bag (see below), a lunch box, a jersey and the swimming kit. We have found that a bag with two compartments works best.

Please make sure all belongings are clearly marked with your child's name and surname.

NB No wheelies or caddies are allowed in the ECD School. We do not have space for them. Please do not waste your money on a caddie; they are only suitable from Grade 4 upwards.

2.10 Fabric Book Bag

Each new child at PEPPS receives a fabric book bag at the start of the year. Pupils moving up within PEPPS continue to use the book bag from the previous year. These bags are sturdy, and if looked after, should last at least two years.

ECD pupils will not use these bags daily but will use them to bring home their *Learning Story* books and other things from time to time.

2.11 Swimming

ECD pupils swim with the PE teachers in Term 1 and 4 during the school morning. **You will be notified which day/s of the week your child will swim.** Beginners will be taught water safety and how to be confident in water in the capable hands of our coaches. Please ensure that your child has the correct items and can take part in swimming lessons. (See *Uniform Policy*.) The swimming season is very short and every lesson counts. Swimming is compulsory.

All items, costume, cap and towel, must be brought to school for your child to swim. We do not allow "borrowing/sharing" of any swimming kit.

NB A note should be sent with your child if there is a reason that he/she cannot swim on a certain day.

2.12 Money

We discourage pupils from bringing money to school as there is no need.

2.13 Uniform

The uniform shop is on Plot 1. Most uniform items are available there apart from shoes and swimming costumes. Please see the *PEPPS Uniform Policy* on the website for more details. The uniform shop will also help you with what is required.

Stage 4 and Stage 5 can wear any plain (no pictures) red shirt, golf or T-shirt with navy blue shorts. This can be purchased anywhere since these are not available in the uniform shop. Pupils are also welcome to wear the formal school uniform, but it is not compulsory. During winter, pupils can wear any navy tracksuit with their red shirts but they are also welcome to wear the school uniform available in the uniform shop.

Grade R wears the school uniform, school golf shirt with logo and blue shorts in the summer and tracksuit during the winter.

Shoes

Pupils are not obligated to wear shoes during the summer; they can come to school bare feet since this is much more beneficial to their development. They can wear proper sandals if desired. During winter, it is very cold and every ECD pupil is required to wear white or black takkies with their tracksuit.

3. External Developmental Support

We aim to develop the 'whole child' and not just the academic side. Child development is complex and no system develops in isolation; each is dependent on others to ensure 'normal' all-round development. Teachers are trained to notice when a child may be struggling in a certain area of development. Delays in some areas of development are common in children but, if caught early, they are usually easily rectified with certain therapy.

To this end, we may refer children to a **speech therapist** or an **occupational therapist** or simply to have **eyes or ears tested**. This is common practice, particularly with Grade R pupils as this is the age where therapy is the most effective. We mention it here as we have found parents get extremely worried at the mention of a therapist and often refuse to take their child or leave it so long that the child does not get the help he/she needs, which negatively affects his/her progress at school.

We appeal to you from the start to work hand in hand with your child's teacher and to give your child the opportunity to be assessed by a therapist if the teacher is concerned and recommends this.

4. General Home Support

4.1 Homework

Please ensure that your child has the following items at **home** to work with as needed: pencil, pencil sharpener, crayons, colouring pencils, a pair of scissors, a glue stick, skipping rope and old magazines.

Teachers will notify you of homework that should be done when and if necessary.

4.2 Language Development

You are encouraged to speak to your child about anything and everything! This is particularly important in ECD but applies to all ages. Enrich your child's vocabulary. Speak about what is going to happen next/where you are going and what you may see or do. A simple example for Grade R – You are going to the shop to buy apples, bananas, bread and milk. Ask your child to try and remember the list. Encourage your child to think and to question. Let him/her express his/her opinion about something and get him/her to explain why he/she thinks that way. Ask open-ended questions where your child has to elaborate instead of answering with a simple 'Yes' or 'No'. For example, instead of saying: That's a lovely picture. Ask: What did you draw? Who is in your picture? Why did you use those colours? etc.

Go on outings and get your child interested in the outside world. Remember that every opportunity is a learning opportunity. Read a book together; watch interesting TV programmes and discuss as you watch. The opportunities are endless if you become aware of this.

In ECD, a personal *Learning Story* will be sent home periodically so that you can discuss school activities with your child. Instructions will be given.

4.3 Reading

New research shows that children require a minimum of 1000 hours of 'lap time' sharing picture books with an adult before they are ready to read. The less time they have, the more they will struggle to read. If this is not already in your daily routine, do not wait – start your 'lap time' now! Before formal reading begins, let your child tell you the story from the pictures in a picture book – this is early reading. You can help your child develop a love of books and reading by taking an interest in books yourself and by **reading stories to your child**. We encourage you to join a library.

4.4 Bedtime, Television and Home Routine

Please make sure that your child gets enough sleep. Bedtime should be no later than 8 o'clock.

TV watching should be limited and monitored so that your child only watches suitable programmes. No more than **an hour of screen time** per day. This includes all screens! (TV, laptop, phone, games...limit exposure to all these.) Too much screen time adversely affects development.

Help your child's *gross motor development* by encouraging outdoor play - running, skipping, ball play, swimming. Also help develop those *fine motor skills* with puzzle building, construction and creative activities.

4.5 Discipline

A child needs rules, boundaries and a set routine at home in order to feel secure. If your child is not used to this at home, it is difficult for him/her to conform to school rules and to respect authority at school. Discipline problems **always** affect a child's academic progress. Establish a consistent routine within which your child can develop responsibility for certain tasks. We rely on you to do your part at home to ensure your child is able to take full advantage of all that the school has to offer.

Please take an interest in what your child is doing at school. Keep in touch with activities, come to meetings and be part of the bigger PEPPS family. Better progress is always made with parental support.

We endeavour to help support you as parents. We know it is a tough job sometimes! Please look out for parent articles and links to websites on the myHomework App and our Facebook page. We try our best to work hand in hand with you to help your child.

Welcome to the PEPPS ECD School Family!

ECD

Acceptance of Policies, Practices and Procedures Form

We, _____, the parents/guardians/caregivers of

_____ in Stage _____ have read, understood and agreed to the Policies, Practices and Procedures of PEPPS ECD as outlined in this information booklet. We are committed to form a partnership with the school and will ensure that our child abides by this code.

I permit photos of my child, taken while he/she is involved in school activities, to be used in school marketing material.

I understand that this agreement remains in force until my child leaves PEPPS Polokwane.

Signed:

Father/Guardian/Caregiver: _____
Name Signature

Mother/Guardian/Caregiver: _____
Name Signature

Date: _____

I, _____, in Grade _____ have read, understood and agree to the Policies and Procedures of PEPPS ECD, as outlined in this booklet. I am committed to form a partnership with the school and will ensure that I abide to this code.

I have especially taken note of the rights and responsibilities, drugs and illicit substances (including search, seizure and consent to testing), disciplinary procedures, laboratory rules, plagiarism, bullying and electronic access sections.

I understand that this agreement remains in force until I leave PEPPS Polokwane.

Signed:

Parent/Guardian/Caregiver: _____
Name Signature

Date: _____