

Foundation Phase Information Booklet 2024

Dear 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 this phase, Grade 1 to Grade 3, and is intended to answer frequently asked questions as far as possible. Please read this in conjunction with the main PEPPS Preparatory Information Booklet for more general and detailed points about our school. The Preparatory Information Booklet is available on the PEPPS School website.

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

Kind regards

Mrs Iris Kajokoto

Head of Foundation Phase

1. Communication with the school and teacher

- **Grades 1-3** Communication is through emails. Some information can be sent out on Google Classroom. Please check for any notes/letters from the school and sign to acknowledge receipt. If it is lettering with tear-off slips, please sign and send back the slip. Spelling test books come home every Friday, please sign, and send these back to school.

For general information, we send out newsletters.

Please check in the book bag for any notes/letters from the teacher and ask your child to give any notes which you write to his/her teacher.

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 contact book, by phone via the school secretary or directly to the teacher's school email address.

- **Please note** that it is school policy **not** to give out teachers' personal phone numbers and **not** to have class WhatsApp groups.
- **Most of the communication from the school is administered digitally via emails** from the Head. The school will issue reminders through SMS. The primary tool of communication from the teacher is email.
- You will be provided with your child's teacher's email address, as well as details and instructions on how to download and invites will be sent out to help you join Google Classroom. 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 mom goes away for some time, etc.

2. General Information

➤ School Times

School **starts** promptly at 07h50 each morning for all pupils in the school.

Grade 1 pupils go directly to their classrooms on the first day and thereafter meet at the Foundation Phase line-up area with Grade 2 and 3 pupils. You will be directed to the classrooms on the first day and your child will be shown where to line up for the next day. Before the bell rings, the pupils play in the playground under supervision (from 07h30).

➤ After School

School ends at 14h00 on Mondays to Thursdays and at 12h30 on Fridays. We encourage you to arrange prompt collection of your child at these times. Pupils wait in the playground until collected but may not play on any equipment, jungle gyms, swings etc.

for safety reasons.

We **strongly discourage** you from leaving your child at school after these times. It is not safe and there will be no supervision.

Children do not stay for activities in the afternoons as our extra-curricular programme is built into our school day. See the integrated day below.

📄 PEPPS "6-Day Cycle"/Timetable/Integrated Day

There is a **6-day cycle** at PEPPS rather than a weekly one and this applies from Grade 1 to Grade 7. This means lessons are now timetabled according to the number of the school day, days 1 – 6, rather than the day of the week. It is important therefore that you keep track, on the school calendar, of which school day it is. You will be informed which day/s your child has physical education and culture rotation.

Since 2019, the Foundation Phase has been running our extra-curricular activities as an integrated part of the school day. This means that your child will take part in sports and cultural activities during school hours rather than having to stay in the afternoons.

Grade 1-3

All pupils take part in all the sporting activities. Cultural activities are varied.

All pupils from Grades 1–3 may try out for the Junior Choir and attend on Monday and Wednesday mornings if selected. It is expected that a child then commits to being in the choir for the entire year so that our choir becomes well-established.

➤ Mini Breaks

From Grade 1, the school runs 50-minute periods with a 10-minute break after each one. A longer break of 30 minutes midmorning is a 'snack break', whereas the rest is for pupils to get outside and move, refreshing them for the next period of learning.

➤ New subjects from 2020 for Grades 1-3 are *Philosophy & Axiology* and *Genius Hour*. Details to follow in due course.

➤ **Breakfast/School Lunch/Tuck-shop**

We have a **Healthy Eating Policy** in the Foundation Phase. 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. The main break is only at 10h40 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, or chocolates. No chips, fast food or flavoured yoghurts are allowed. (Although they appear healthy, they are packed with sugar!)

Drinks – Please, no cool drinks, flavoured water or fruit juices 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 also have a problem with cool drinks attracting bees to the playground.)

The internet is also full of ideas for easy, healthy lunchbox fillers.

➤ **Stationery**

Grade R-Grade 3 parents do not need to purchase stationery for school. The school will provide your child with the stationery that he/she will need at school. The school stationery issued **MUST** stay at school and may not be taken home for homework. Parents are to supply stationery for any work done at home, i.e. pencils, coloured pencils, scissors, and glue.

You will have received a brief list of other items, e.g. 2 boxes of tissues and an empty ice cream container that will need to be provided by you within the first two weeks of school.

➤ **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 outside 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), lunchbox and jersey. We have found that a bag with two compartments is best.

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

NB No wheelies or caddies are allowed in the Foundation Phase. We do not have space for them, they do not easily hang on a hook, and they are unnecessary at this level. Please do not waste your money on a caddie. They are only suitable from Grade 4 upwards.

➤ **Fabric Book Bag**

Each new child at PEPPS receives a fabric book bag at the start of the year. Pupils moving up within PEPPS should continue to use the book bag from the previous year. If looked after, they are sturdy and should last at least two years. The schoolbook bag must be used for ALL books and letters to be carried between home and school. Please encourage your child to be organised with his/her belongings and to look after this bag.

➤ **Sports and Cultural Activities**

These activities are integrated into the school day as mentioned above and all children will take part.

➤ **Money**

We discourage pupils from bringing money to school as there is no need for it. Any money brought to school **MUST** be in a purse, bank bag or sealed envelope **labelled with your child's name**. It is too easily lost if placed loosely in pockets and school bags.

➤ **Uniform**

Please see the PEPPS Uniform Policy for details. The uniform shop (at the Polokwane campus) will also help you with what is required. Most uniform items are available there apart from shoes.

Summer
Red golf shirt Navy sports shorts White/navy socks Black takkies or blue/grey sandals (as specified by PEPPS) Tracksuit top on cold days. Please familiarise yourself with the type of sandals. Takkies, and not sandals, must be worn on the days your child has Physical Education (PE) lessons or sports.
Winter
Red golf shirt Navy sports shorts Tracksuit White/navy socks Black takkies The jersey and pullover may also be worn under the tracksuit top.

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, are usually easily rectified with certain therapies.

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 and Grade 1 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

➤ Homework

The PEPPS Homework Policy aims to reflect current international trends. We scaled down the amount and intensity of homework given. This allows children time to play and families to enjoy time with each other without the stress caused by 'homework battles.'

Although formal homework is kept to a minimum from Grades 1-3, reading/phonics work and some Maths activities will be given as 'drill' or practice, so please ensure that your child has the following items at home to work with as needed:

Pencil, pencil sharpener, ruler, wax crayons or screw crayons, pencil crayons, scissors, glue (Pritt type) and old magazines from which to cut pictures and letters.

Grade 1 to 3 teachers will notify you of homework that should be done as and when necessary, on Google Classroom. Occasionally, your child may be asked to find out something or to collect things for a project that will be done at school.

➤ ADAM

ADAM is a digital platform that you as a parent can access to view your child's academic progress and performance. ADAM is the school's database has a parent interface and can be used to view marks in all subjects across the curriculum. This measure has been taken to ensure optimal parent-teacher support of a child's learning journey. Each parent will be provided with the means of joining ADAM.

➤ Language Development

You are encouraged to speak to your child about anything and everything! This is particularly important in Grades R and 1 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 1 – We 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.

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

➤ 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 also encourage you to join a library.

Once your child starts bringing home a reader (from Grade 1), please listen to your child read and sign the reading card. If it is unsigned, we will assume no reading has been done. To make good progress, your child must read at home every day. Do not stop reading stories to your child once he/she starts to read by himself/herself. Your child needs to hear and see good reading practice from adults.

➤ **Bedtime, Television and Home Routine**

Please make sure that your child gets enough sleep. Bedtime should be no later than 8 o'clock. Your child should be getting 8 hours of sleep each night.

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 motor development by encouraging outdoor play - running, skipping, ball play, swimming, etc.

Get your child interested in puzzle building, construction, creative activities, reading, etc. Establish a consistent routine within which your child can develop responsibility for certain tasks.

➤ **Discipline**

A child needs rules, boundaries, and a set routine at home 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. We rely on you to do your part at home to ensure your child can take full advantage of all that the school has to offer.

5. **Contact Information**

Head of Foundation Phase	Iris Kajokoto	kajokotoi@pepps.co.za
Grade 1A Teacher	Evelyn Lerutla	lerrutlae@pepps.co.za
Grade 1B Teacher	June Mamabolo	mamaboloj@pepps.co.za
Grade 2A Teacher	Meluce Dhanere	dhanerem@pepps.co.za
Grade 2B Teacher	Christinah Jamare	jamarec@pepps.co.za
Grade 3A Teacher	Storme Smith	smiths@pepps.co.za
Grade 3B Teacher	Farisai Chinogwenya	chinogwenyaf@pepps.co.za
Sepedi Teacher	Lindiwe Makgoka	makgokal@pepps.co.za
PE Teacher	Kagiso Mokoena	mokoentak@pepps.co.za

Please take an interest in what your child is doing at school. Stay connected 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! We try our best to work hand in hand with you to help your child.

Welcome to the PEPPS Preparatory School Family!
