

Foundation Phase Information Booklet for 2024

Dear Parents, Guardians and Caregivers

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

The following 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, and Google Classroom. Your child's class teacher will also be happy to answer any further queries you may have.

We look forward to many happy memories as we embark on this journey together.

Kind regards

Ms Sue Altenroxel

Preparatory School Head

1. Communication with the School and Teacher

The majority of the communication from the school is administered digitally via emails from the Head and Foundation Phase Head of Department and Grade Co-ordinators. The school will issue reminders through SMSs. The primary tool of communication for the teacher is Google Classroom. Each parent will have to be able to access Google Classroom (a video link detailing joining instructions will be provided). It is essential that all parents access the General Communication Classroom on the app for school-related messages and join each class that their children belong to for class or academic information. Teachers are happy to assist with the set-up of Google Classroom on parents' phones, tablets or computer devices. It is essential to use this app to stay up to date with both general school announcements as well as class information.

Please note – It is school policy **not** to give out teachers' personal phone numbers and **not** to have class WhatsApp groups. Each teacher's email address is available on Google Classroom.

Teachers are happy to meet with parents by appointment please. This can be arranged by phone via the school secretary or directly to the teacher's school email address.

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, moving house, passing of a family member etc.

2. General Information

All Foundation Phase classrooms are situated at Plot 2. Drop off and collection must take place at Plot 2.

➤ **School Starting Times**

School **starts** promptly at 7h25 each morning for all pupils in the school. At this time, they meet at the line-up area.

On the FIRST day of school, Grade 1 pupils go directly to their classrooms; thereafter, they will be taken to the Foundation Phase line-up area to be greeted, together with the 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 07h00).

➤ **After School**

School ends at 13h45 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. Pupils wait in the playground until collected but may not play on any equipment, jungle gyms, swings, etc., for safety reasons.

Grade 1 pupils should be collected from their classroom for the first few days of the year. Please let your child's teacher know if another arrangement has been made.

NB. Any Foundation Phase pupils who have not been collected 30 minutes after the daily finishing time (i.e. by 14h15 Monday to Thursday and by 13h00 on a Friday) and who are not enrolled in the on-site aftercare, will be gathered by the teacher on duty for further supervision. Children's names and grades will be recorded and you will need to sign them out after 14h15 (13h00 on Friday). After 14h15, (13h00 on Friday) a late child must be collected from **Plot 2 and will need to be signed out**.

We **strongly discourage** you from leaving your child at school after these times. It is unfair to your child after a busy morning at school. If it is difficult to arrange for pick-up on time, please enrol your child in the aftercare programme.

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

➤ **PEPPS 6-Day Cycle/Timetable/Integrated Day**

There is a **6-day cycle timetable** at PEPPS rather than a weekly one and this applies from Grade R to Grade 12. 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 of the school calendar of which school day it is. You will be informed which day/s your child has swimming, for example, so that he/she knows to pack his/her swimming kit. The cycle day is also on the Prep Correspondence calendar.

PEPPS Foundation Phase runs an **Integrated Day** that includes an extra-curricular programme into an academic day through the inclusion of a rotation period. This means that your child will take part in sports and cultural activities during school hours rather than having to stay in the afternoons.

Academic Programme

The following subjects are included in our academic programme: English, Afrikaans First Additional Language OR Sepedi First Additional Language, Mathematics, Life Skills (Creative Arts, Music, Physical Education, Philosophy & Axiology, Genius Hour and Beginning Knowledge Content)

Stimuzone (computer skills, coding and robotics) is included in our academic programme but is presented by an external service provider. This programme has been running very successfully over the last few years. Please refer to a separate brochure for further details and the benefits of this programme.

Extra-curricular Programme

Numerous sports and cultural activities are included from Monday to Thursday in a rotation period in our Integrated Day. Sport is on Mondays and Wednesdays while cultural activities run on Tuesdays and Thursdays. All pupils take part in all the sports activities.

Cultural activities/clubs are varied and your child chooses a club to attend for a period of two terms at a time. Your child may choose a different club at the end of each term or stay with the same club for the year. Club choices available will be communicated early in the first term.

Sporting activities include athletics, swimming, mini netball, mini football, mini hockey, mini cricket and tennis. These happen in different seasons of the year. All children do all sporting codes.

All of our Grade 1-3 pupils **swim** with the PE teachers in Term 1 and 4, during the school morning. **You will be notified which day/s of the cycle your child will swim.** Beginners will be taught water safety and to be confident in the water in the capable hands of our coaches. (Swimmers may be invited to take part in further training in the afternoons.) 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, costumes, caps and towels must be brought to school otherwise your child may not swim. We do not allow the borrowing or sharing of any swimming kit.

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

Further to these clubs, we have **outside service providers** who will come to the school after school and offer the following activities: **ballet, karate and Chef Prodigees.** Please note that our external service providers **charge a fee** and these activities are not part of PEPPS's programme or included in the school fees. They use our venue, but the contract is between the parents and the service providers. Contact details for these service providers are included at the end of the brochure.

All pupils in Grades 1–3 may try out for the Junior Choir. If selected, it is expected that a child then commits to being in the choir for the whole 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 mid-morning is a snack break, whereas the rest are for pupils to get outside and move, refreshing them for the next period of learning. Children have a short attention span and research has shown that getting frequent free play breaks helps to boost the learning that happens in the classroom. The breaks also give children the opportunity to develop social skills and gross motor skills, i.e. running, jumping, skipping, climbing, swinging, etc. We have used this timetable for the last few years and certainly see the benefits in the well-being of our pupils.

➤ **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 10h35 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. (Although they appear healthy, they are packed with sugar!)

Please note that we do allow, cupcakes, donuts and pizza for birthdays. Things that are already individual portions to make it easier for teachers to hand out. Please **DO NOT** send a cake or party packs and fizzy drinks.

Drinks – Please, no cool drinks, fruit juices or flavoured water is 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.)

We will post healthy lunch box ideas on Google Classroom. The Internet is also full of ideas for easy, healthy lunch box fillers.

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

➤ **Stationery**

Grade 1-3 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. Please purchase a 30cm pencil bag. **NO SPACE CASES.** You will have received a short list of other items, e.g. tissues 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 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), lunch box and jersey as well as the swimming kit. We have found that a bag with two compartments is best.

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 onwards.

Please make sure **all belongings are clearly marked** with your child's name and surname. We will make every effort to return lost property but are unable to do so without clear labelling. All lost property is collected daily and either returned to the child or hung up at a central place at the Foundation Phase for parents to come and search for lost items.

➤ **Fabric Book Bag**

Each new child to PEPPS receives a fabric book bag at the start of the year. Pupils moving up within PEPPS should continue to use the fabric book bag from the previous year. If looked after, they are sturdy and should last at least two years. The fabric book bag must be used for ALL books and letters to be carried to and from home and school. Please encourage your child to be organised with his/her belongings and to look after this bag. (Lost or damaged readers/library books will be charged for so this bag is compulsory to help prevent damage.)

➤ **Uniform**

Please see PEPPS's *Uniform Policy*, online, for details. The Uniform Shop (Plot 1) will also help you with what is required. Most uniform items are available there, apart from shoes and swimming costumes.

3. External Developmental Support and Learner 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 have a learner support teacher on campus who will offer assistance during the school day. We also 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 their 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 drills 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.

Grades 1 to 3 teachers will notify you of homework that should be done as and when necessary by means of 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.

Extra credit activities will be provided for the April, June and September holidays. These activities are voluntary and can be completed to earn extra credit points which are awarded at Prize-giving. We ask that you encourage your children to participate to keep up their thinking skills during the holidays.

➤ **ADAM**

ADAM is a digital platform that you as parents can access to view your children's academic progress and performance. ADAM is the school's database and has a parent interface and can be used to view marks in all subjects across the curriculum. This measure has been taken to allow for optimal parent-teacher support of a child's learning journey. Each parent will be provided with the means to join ADAM. We encourage you to communicate with teachers as soon as you are concerned about something.

➤ **Language Development**

You are encouraged to speak to your child about anything and everything! This is particularly important at the Foundation Phase age. 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're going to the shop to buy apples, bananas, bread and milk. Ask your child to try and remember the list. 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.

Encourage your children to think and to question. Let them express their opinion about something and get them to explain why they think that way. Think about asking questions differently. For example instead of "Can you see the rainbow in the sky?" try "I wonder how a rainbow gets into the sky?" Instead of "What is this part of the elephant called?" (pointing to the trunk), try "What would you do if you had a trunk?" 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 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 that no reading has been done. To make good progress, your child must read at home every day. Do not stop reading stories to your children once they start to read themselves. It is important for them to hear and see good reading practices from adults.

FOR ANY DAMAGED OR LOST READER, A R50 PENALTY WILL BE ISSUED.

➤ **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, 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 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. 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 Preparatory School
Foundation Phase Head of Department
Grade 1 Co-Ordinator
Grade 2 Co-Ordinator
Grade 3 Co-ordinator
Learner Support

Sue Altenroxel
Alana Allen
Yomandi Maartens
Mariet Bronkhorst
Maria Tlagadi
Thelma Moloko

altenroxels@pepps.co.za
allena@pepps.co.za
maartensy@pepps.co.za
bronkhorstm@pepps.co.za
tlagadim@pepps.co.za
molokot@pepps.co.za

External Service Providers

Stimuzone

Karate

Ballet

Aftercare

Contact Person

Petro Loggenberg

Pieter Bronkhorst

Melisa Gilfillan

Busi Makwarela

contact number/email

082 740 3758

szpolokwane@gmail.com

082 962 8592

karatekidpolokwane@gmail.com

079 490 9529

melisagilfillan@gmail.com

0738952082

bmakwarela@yahoo.com

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 Google Classroom and our Facebook Page. We try our best to work hand in hand with you to help your child.

Welcome to the PEPPS Preparatory School Family!