



Plenty Parklands Primary School

48 Blossom Park Dr Mill Park VIC 3082

Ph: (03) 9404 4311 Fax: (03) 9404 4702



Prep Readiness

"Is my child ready for school?"

We hear this question often from families whose children are age appropriate for beginning school (i.e. turning five before April 30 in the year they start school). This year may see more parents question school readiness as children will have had an interrupted kinder program due to COVID-19.

"What is school readiness?"

School readiness is determined by much more than a child's chronological age. Plenty Parklands PS believes that the key for a successful and happy start to school is for children to have a firm grasp of communication skills (not necessarily in English), a degree of independence, motor coordination, and social and emotional skills. The development of these skills enables students to be ready for and receptive to new learning.

Plenty Parklands PS acknowledges that children are individuals and will have different strengths and experiences. However, if your child has the majority of the following behaviours in place then they are well on the way to having a successful start to their schooling.



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COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Can your child ...?

- Initiate and sustain conversations with adults and other children?
- Speak clearly and audibly and maintain eye contact?
- Speak without shouting or whispering?
- Understand requests and seek clarification?
- Carry out three directions in sequence?
- Describe recent experiences?
- Recite rhymes and sing songs?
- Retell stories?
- Interrupt conversations appropriately?
- Listen attentively and answer questions in a group situation?
- Listen to a story being read or told without becoming distracted.
- Talk reciprocally with peers, family members and take part in conversation?

Things families can do to support the development of Communication Skills

- Read stories and talk to your child every day.
- Sing Nursery Rhymes.
- Teach your child to state their full name, address and age.
- Talk to your child about different shapes and the shape of things around them
- Get your child to recognise own first name.
- Assist your child to recognise different colours.





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INDEPENDENCE SKILLS

Can your child ...?

- Put on/remove socks, shoes, jacket?
- Do up buckles/velcro (laces can be tricky) on shoes/sandals?
- Do up large buttons?
- Go to the toilet independently?
- Wash and dry hands independently?
- Blow and wipe their nose effectively?
- Unwrap and eat lunch, peel fruit, manage their lunchbox?
- Use a spoon and fork independently?
- Unscrew a drink bottle?
- Recognise belongings amongst others e.g. raincoat?
- Take care of own belongings e.g. put bag in a designated place?
- Tidy up own things, pack away toys, put their washing away?
- Make their own bed?

Things families can do to support the development of Independence Skills

- Encourage your child to look after and take responsibility for their things, e.g. being careful not to break toys, pack up things they are playing with, carry their own belongings.
- Teach your child how to dress themselves and use the toilet independently.
- Encourage your child to take responsible risks. e.g. attempt something they don't think they can do but you



MOTOR COORDINATION SKILLS

Can your child ...?

- Move about confidently at preschool/kinder?
- Manage unfamiliar environments?
- Manage changes in the environment independently e.g. stairs, obstacles, uneven ground?
- Understand spatial concepts e.g. up/down, next to, left/right?
- Move with a line of children at routine times?
- Use a wide range of gross motor equipment e.g. swing, slide, climbing frame?
- Play imaginatively (indoors and outdoors)?
- Catch and throw a ball with a partner?
- Kick a ball, ride a scooter, peddle a bike?
- Play actively with friends outside for 50- 60 minutes?
- Understand the need for safety e.g. roads, heights?
- Hold a pencil correctly?
- Cut with scissors?

Things families can do to support the development of Motor Coordination Skills

- Take your child to playgrounds (when COVID-19 restrictions are lifted).
- Make an obstacle course in the backyard.
- Explore and play in the outdoors.
- Complete simple jigsaw (8-10 pieces).
- Build with Lego/Duplo/blocks.
- Cut with scissors, cut simple shapes.
- Hold a pencil using thumb and index finger.
- Draw recognisable pictures of people.
- Copy simple shapes e.g. circle, triangle, square.
- Play with playdough





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SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Can your child ...?

- Face a person when they are talking and give 'eye contact'?
- Comply with requests including ceasing an activity when requested?
- Manage frustration and avoid tantrums?
- Wait patiently for several minutes for adult attention?
- Sit at a table and complete a task for 10 minutes e.g. draw, colour in?
- Separate from parents?
- Independently begin an activity?
- Ask for and accept help if needed?
- Play at an activity for 20 minutes or more?
- Play co-operatively with friends?
- Share their own toys with siblings and friends?
- Take turns in a small group game without assistance?
- Understand the needs and feelings of others?
- Be a good winner and a good loser?

Things families can do to support the development of Social and Emotional Skills

- Encourage your child to socialise with others (adults and other children).
- Allow your child to experience disappointments and deal with them with a positive mindset.
- Attempt to solve problems independently.
- Play games that have a winner- focussing on playing the game, not just winning.
- Don't say "Yes" to every request and support your child to accept "No".
- Give your child appropriate responsibilities and tasks that are not attached to a reward, e.g. help you to unpack the shopping, unstack the plastic things in dishwasher or take their washing to the laundry.





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Technology and Screens

A WORD OF CAUTION

There are many websites that provide ideas for parents to support the development of children. Be mindful that many will have a commercial element. It is not necessary to spend money on any website or commercial program. The Raising Children website is full of free activities.

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/play-learning>

A few moments browsing sites such as these can result in a many ideas of things that you can do at home with everyday household items and toys. No financial outlay should be necessary.

There are also many education, interactive and engaging sites and programs for children. The fact that we live in a world highly dependent on technology cannot be ignored.

Plenty Parklands PS advocates the following screen time advice and recommendations from The Australian Government Department of Health.

<https://www1.health.gov.au>

Screen time - kids 2 to 5 years

- Evidence suggests that long periods of screen time are connected with:
 - less active, outdoor and creative play
- slower development of language skills
- poor social skills
- an increased risk of being overweight

Recommendation

For children 2 to 5 years of age, sitting and watching television and the use of other electronic media (DVDs, computer and electronic games) should be limited to less than 1 hour per day.

Kids will benefit more from talking, singing, reading, listening to music or playing with other kids.

Turn off the Screen

- When kids watch TV or DVDs or use other electronic media like computers, hand-held games and other electronic games, they miss out on active play.
- If kids stay up at night watching TV and DVDs – they also miss out on sleep.

