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School Readiness

The phrase 'School Readiness' is used often these days in relation to Early Childhood settings, but what does the phrase 'We offer School Readiness' really mean?

At Terrey Hills Community Kindergarten we believe that every day children are already engaging in 'School Readiness' as early learning **IS** School Readiness. They are learning environments that are set up to prepare your child for school and life.

When asked "Do we do School Readiness?" I explain that at Terrey Hills Community Kindergarten School Readiness is happening all around us.

- It is learning to separate from Mum and Dad at drop off,
 - Independently playing in the playground,
 - Focusing on activities for short periods of time,
 - Playing and socialising with friends,
- Learning interpersonal qualities such as empathy and cooperation,
 - Conflict resolution and resilience,
 - Group times and following a routine,
 - Eating our morning tea and lunch together,
 - It's what we do all day!

Research shows that children who participate in quality Kindergarten programs are more likely to arrive at school equipped with social, cognitive, and emotional skills that they need to help them to continue learning.

The Department of Education lists the following 3 points as being important for 'Being ready for school'.

- School readiness is more than being able to read, write and do basic math's. Rather, it's as much about developing a child's: ***Social and emotional skills to get along with others.***
- ***Physical capabilities***, like improving hand/eye coordination, and performing more complex craft activities.
- ***Communication and cognitive abilities*** to follow instructions and express their needs.

At Terrey Hills Community Kindergarten, we believe in a play-based curriculum, where children learn through their play. Children's individual interest, strengths, ideas, and knowledge form the foundation of our program. Our educators also plan purposeful/ meaningful and deliberate experiences to further interest and challenge the children.

We believe that by focusing on each child's emotional and social development, this ensures a successful transition to school for your child.

We have outlined below what we believe are important for 'School Readiness' at Terrey Hills Community Kindergarten:

- **Independence-** We believe in children having success in independently doing things by themselves and for themselves, such as toileting, looking after and packing away their own belongings, identifying and opening their own morning tea and lunch boxes.
- **To follow simple instructions in a sequence-** Listening to instructions and being able to follow through with directions being asked.
- **Self-Regulation and wellbeing-** Being able to recognise emotions and how to regulate their bodies throughout the day through mindfulness, relaxation, quiet spaces, and yoga.
- **Develop problem solving skills-** Giving children the opportunity to work out a problem by themselves and giving them the skills and knowledge of how to best solve a problem independently, "what do you think we can do? You have a go first and then I can help you if you need help". Working with others in a shared outcome.
- **To approach adults with confidence.** We believe in supportive and trusting relationships between our educators and children.
- **Take risks!** Children are encouraged to take risks and learn to understand that its okay to have a turn and sometimes you may fail. It's a good skill to learn so children learn to persist even if they don't have success right away.
- **To maintain concentration on specific activities, such as planned tabletop experiences-** Children are given lots of opportunities to participate in tabletop experiences, such as puzzles, drawing, writing, games and art and craft experiences.
- **To sit, listen and participate within a group, during group time discussions, music, and movement, and stories on the mat.** To encourage a love of learning through books, songs, dancing, and movement.
- **To develop pro-social skills-** Forming friendships, learning to be a good friend, resolving conflicts with friends, waiting their turn, sharing, helping peers, cooperative play and caring for others.

- **All things fine motor-** Participating in drawing, writing and craft experiences, using scissors, paint brushes and developing their fine motor skills to develop strong finger and hand muscles for lots of writing and learning at school.
- **Easily separate from Mum and Dad at drop off and build resilience.**
- **To start to have a love of learning numbers and mathematical concepts.** Measuring in cooking experiences, estimating, height and measurement at the block building, and counting and numbers in everyday experiences.
- **To develop an interest in letters and writing-** Engaging children in play-based experiences to support children's development of early literacy skills through games, words and reading.
- **Have Fun!!** Learning happens in everyday experiences and making it fun to encourage children to develop a lifelong love of learning.

Sophie Gould our 3 Day Group Early Childhood Teacher has written some words below about '*School Readiness*'.

The transition to school is an exciting time. Our job as early childhood educators is to assist with this transition by helping set the children up for success. As a former kindergarten teacher, I would like to share some of my experiences and what I see as 'school readiness'.

The children will transition from having an open, play based environment to a classroom environment. Having strong executive functioning will help them with this change and ensure they are at the required level for learning.


In a classroom setting children are expected to cope with transitions throughout the day, practice self-control, make decisions, have some independence and hold their attention for periods of time (this will increase as the year goes on).

I've had children walk through the door who couldn't write their name but had the grit and passion to work hard which allowed them to thrive. I've also had students arrive who could count beyond 100 but struggled when faced with a challenge.

When we think about traditional schooling it may seem like knowledge of literacy + numeracy = school ready but a successful formula for school looks more like independence + autonomy = ready to learn.

Handwriting in the Early Years

In NSW public schools, students learn to use the NSW Foundation style writing font. The page below contains an overview of lower case and upper-case letters and numbers in the NSW Foundation Style.



NSW Foundation Style writing guide

a b c d e f
g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t
u v w x y z

A B C D E F
G H I J K L M
N O P Q R S T
U V W X Y Z

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

The NSW Foundation Style writing guide and activities have been included as things you can do with your child before they start school.
There are no specific skills your child needs to have before starting Kindergarten.

Getting Ready for School

It is nearly time to start school! Here are some things you can practise at home to help you get ready for school.



Self-Help and Independence

- I can wash and dry my hands.
- I can wipe my nose.
- I can put on / take off my jumper and shoes and socks independently.
- I can use the toilet independently.
- I can dress/undress independently.
- I am happy to be away from my parents or carers. I know they will be back soon.

Playing with Others



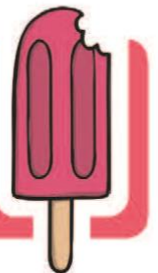
- I join in games and activities with other people.
- I can share and take turns.

Speaking and Listening

- I can talk about my ideas, needs and feelings.
- I can ask a grown-up for help.
- I can follow simple instructions.

Eating and Drinking

- I can open and close my lunch box as well as wrappers and packaging.
- I can drink from a water bottle.



1 2 3 4 5 Numbers


- I can count a small number of items.
- I like singing number rhymes or songs.
- I am learning to say numbers to ten.
- I can recognise some numbers.

Reading and Writing

- I can recognise/read my name.
- I can hold a pencil to draw.
- I am learning to write my name.
- I enjoy listening to stories and rhymes.




So, what can you do at home to help your child get ready for School?

- Read! Read! Read! 

- Encourage self-help skills and promote independence.
- Help your child with some problem solving? "I wonder if you can help me? What do you think we can do next?"
- Organise a play in the park with another child who may be going to the same school?



- Look at letters and numbers in your everyday environment and point them out. "Look at the number 4 on that letter box" "I wonder what letters you can see on the sign?"
- Continue to strengthen their fine motor skills. You may ask them to help write out your shopping list, help peg the clothes on the clothesline, play with some play dough. 
- Allow your child to take risks and let them fail.
- Get your child to follow a 3-part instruction. If they can't do 3 parts, start with 2.

Is your child ready for School in 2024?

Educators will always chat with you if they have any concerns about our child's social, emotional, language, communication, or motor skills. If you have read the above information and you have questions, please reach out to Emma, and arrange for a chat with one of your child's educators.

School Uniform Day

In Week 8 Wednesday 29th November we are inviting the children to come dressed in their new school uniforms.



This Friday 20th October, we will be going on an excursion to Terrey Hills Public School. The children will have the opportunity to visit one of the classrooms, read a book in the school library and have a play in the playground.