



APPLEWOOD

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Pre-Primary Parent Guide



WELCOME

Welcome to Applewood Preparatory Pre-Primary School. It is a privilege for us to be teaching your child and we trust that the children in our care will have a productive and positive experience with us. Please read through this booklet carefully as it contains all the information that you require about our Pre-Primary.

OUR CLASSES

- Apple Blossoms Grade K (18 months – 3 years)
Teacher: Melissa Meiring
Classroom assistants: Nessa Hammer & Quizelle de Villiers
- Apple Pips Grade 000 (3 – 4 years)
Teacher: Tanja Hill
Intern: Porsche Valetine
- Busy Bees Grade 00 (4 – 5 years)
Teacher: Liezelotte van der Merwe
Intern: Luyanda Dastile
- Clever Cats (5 – 6 years) Clever Cats
Teacher: Marisa Malan
Classroom assistant: Rachel Steenkamp

OUR EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

Applewood believes in a holistic approach to education - the development of the whole child. Our dedicated teachers foster positive values through love, nurturing and guidance. We strive to create a rich and natural learning environment with plenty of opportunities to explore, discover, create and play. Our aim is to develop confident and creative children with a solid educational foundation and a love of learning.

OUR TEACHING PRACTICE

An innovative curriculum with a strong emphasis on movement and play is enhanced by specialised staff on certain school days. Building Blocks, Drama, Swimming/Physical Education and Music form part of the Pre-Primary curriculum and are included in the school day.

Open Class

We are proud of our modern teaching practice and child-centred approach. Twice a week we combine classes for Open Class sessions where the children move freely between a wide variety of activities. During these sessions the teachers observe and facilitate learning and encourage questioning, exploring, critical thinking, collaboration and foster social responsibility.

Parents are welcome to arrange (with their class teachers) an opportunity to come and observe these classes.

Movement Class

The Grade 00 and Grade 0 classes participate in a daily 10 minute movement class where the children do exercises specifically for neuromotor development. These exercises enhance postural control, eye-hand coordination and balance.

SCHOOL TIMES

Drop off from: 07:30

Daily programme: 08:00 – 12:30

Collection from 12:30 – 12:45

Aftercare: 12:45 – 17:00 (Monday – Thursday)

Aftercare: 12 45 – 16:00 (Friday)

SEPARATING FROM PARENTS

Some children experience separation anxiety when they are dropped off at school. This is a normal behavioural pattern in most young children and nothing to be concerned about.

If your child experiences separation anxiety, we will assist you in creating a smooth and enjoyable transition from home to their new environment. Please allow your child time to adjust.

When dropping dropping your child off at school it is advisable to settle your child at an activity by spending a few minutes working/playing with him/her. Try not to drag the goodbyes out too long. Sticking to a drop-off routine can help alleviate any anxiety your child may be experiencing.

COMMUNICATION

Because the family is the most important component of a young child's life we strive to build a strong bond between home and school. This will allow the child to feel confident as his/her world expands.

Communication between teachers and parents is essential. We want to talk to you about your child. If present, we will include your child in the conversation and make every effort to respect his or her feelings. For some questions, concerns, and/or comments, you may want to talk to the teacher when your child is not present. Your child's teacher will arrange a discussion time with you if and when it is needed.

It is important to remember that children are very alert to what is being said even if it appears they are not listening. Comments adults make about a child's character or behaviour tell that child what we think of him or her, and this helps shape their self-image. Teachers and parents should carefully consider what they say in front of the children.

For informal communication, arrival and departure times are great opportunities to exchange information. Notes, sms, whatsapps and occasional phone calls are also an easy way for parents and staff to communicate.

In addition to this, we have parent interviews at the end of Term 1 and Term 3 to communicate our observations. You will also receive written reports in June and December regarding your child's progress.

Please refer to the school's communication policy which is on the Applewood website.

DROPPING OFF

Points to remember:

- One of the teachers, interns or teacher's assistants will always be in the classroom or close at hand to greet you and your child on arrival.
- Please encourage your child to unpack his or her own school bag in the mornings.
- Place blue bags in the allocated container or on top of the lockers.
- Please settle your child at an activity or hand him/her over to the teacher and leave as soon as possible. Maintaining a 'Dropping –off' routine is very important.
- Rest assured that we will always contact you if we cannot settle your child within 20 minutes. Feel free to SMS if you are concerned.

FETCHING TIME

- The daily programme ends at 12:30 but children will be supervised in the classroom by teachers/assistants until 12:45. Thereafter they will be sent to the aftercare classroom.
- Please note that aftercare is run by Porche Valentine at a cost of R20 per hour.
- Should somebody else be collecting your child, please verbally inform either the class teacher or assistant and **write this information in your child's message book**. Please note that children will not be permitted to go home with someone other than their parents if this has not been written in their message book. Alternatively, you can call or email the school secretary of any changes to the usual collection of your child. Children must be signed out from aftercare AND please remember to keep gates closed at all times.

THE SCHOOL BAG

Please make sure that the following items are in your child's bag every day:

- Extra change of clothes (including underwear).
 - A cooler and warmer option.

- Please place these clothes in a freezer bag (Ziploc works the best) to prevent them getting wet should their bag get wet.
- In summer, please include sandals/slip slops if they wear 'takkies' to school in the morning.
- PLEASE MARK every item that comes to school (especially shoes and jackets/jerseys).
- Please remember to unpack and check the bag at home daily.

MESSAGE BOOK

In the second week of school your child will be issued with a Message Book. This book is for communication between the parents and the teachers.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU CHECK YOUR MESSAGE BOOK DAILY and sign when required to do so.

We will use the book for:

- Plotting the week ahead with a 'diary page'.
- Communicating any minor accidents or injuries that have occurred at school.
- General communication about your child.
- Newsletters

SNACK TIME

At school your child is encouraged to:

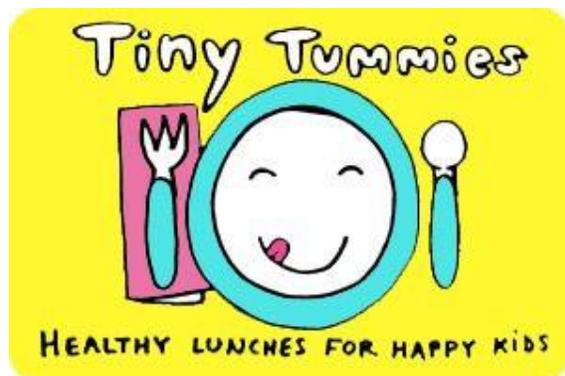
- Sit on a chair at a table or on a carpet for the duration of snack time.
- Wait for their friends to finish eating.
- Pack their lunch back in their lockers when snack time is over.
- Excuse themselves from the table.

It is helpful if you encourage these behaviours during snack time/meal times at home too.

SNACK BOX - SOME POINTS TO REMEMBER...

- Please choose a box with a lid that they can open and close themselves.
- Please send two different snack boxes if your child is staying for aftercare.
- Please pack food that you know your child eats.
- Examples of food that we see regularly:

- * Sandwiches
- * Cheese blocks
- * Cut up vegetables
- * Raisins
- * Pretzels
- * Cheddars
- * Healthy biscuits
- * Cereals bars
- * Fruit
- * Dried fruit
- * Yoghurts (own spoon)
- * Biltong



- Please do **NOT** include sweets, cookies, chips, fizzy cool drink, unless they are treats for aftercare.
- Please - **NO** glass bottles.

SUN SAFE

Sun safety is especially important for young children. We encourage parents to buy the Applewood Pre-Primary wide brim hat (R100) at the school. We keep the individually marked hats in class and they are washed at school.

We also encourage parents to apply sunscreen (water resistant SPF 30) to their children before bringing them to school and to provide extra sunscreen with a note should your child require a second application.

BIRTHDAYS

It is important to make a fuss of the children's birthdays. You may decide the best way to do this for your child. We will have a special birthday ring for them at school and we like to blow out candles and sing to them, each teacher create a unique routine. Should you decide to send a cake or cupcakes we will incorporate this into the birthday ring. It does make the child feel very special. Please discuss this with your class teacher beforehand.

Please be very discreet when handing out birthday invitations especially if you are not including the whole class.

TOYS AT SCHOOL

We do not allow children to bring their own toys to school unless they have a special birthday present to show and then once it has been shown, gets put away safely. Items for show and tell which are THEME related may be brought to school and used at the discretion of the class teachers.

THEMES

Weekly themes will be communicated to you via the message books. Please participate in these Themes and discuss them with your child. This will only enhance their learning. Theme related items from home are always most welcome for our display table and to enrich our learning environment.

ART

We do some form of Art/Creative Work every day. We have a stock of Art aprons which we put on the children during Art but there is no guarantee that their clothes will not get messy. Please dress your child with this in mind. They should wear comfortable old clothes as paint and glue is very difficult to wash out.

ALLERGIES

Please be sure to alert us to any allergies your child might have so that we can manage these effectively.

ABSENTEES

Please notify the school and teacher if your child is not coming to school. This can be done telephonically or via SMS or email.

On this note....please do NOT send your child to school if he/she is ill. Our primary concern is the health and comfort of all our children. If your child has been ill, please keep him/her at home until symptom and temperature-free for 24 hours. Children need their parents more than ever when they are sick. They do not feel like playing or doing activities when they are sick so they do not cope well being at school.

Should your child fall ill at school, we will contact you immediately.
We may not administer medication.

OUTINGS

We try and take the children on a number of outings throughout the year. This is always a highlight for them. We travel by bus on these occasions and parents also assist by transporting children in their own vehicles. Each child will be appropriately restrained when traveling in a motor vehicle. Parents are welcome to accompany us on these outings. Notification re outings will be in the message books.

BEHAVIOUR

Applewood encourages positive behaviour, self-respect, respect for others and our environment from a young age. Personal, social and emotional development forms part of our curriculum and forming positive relationships is encouraged at all times.

Young children are constantly testing boundaries and learning how to behave correctly. Our approach to discipline is restorative and not punitive. We encourage positive behaviour by giving positive verbal feedback which reinforces a child's good feelings about his/her behaviour and serves as an example for the other children to follow. We also use positive guidance techniques such as modelling and encouraging expected behaviour, redirecting children to a more acceptable activity, and by setting clear boundaries.

Misbehaviour is avoided by structuring the environment to minimize conflicts, providing children with choices, maintaining a consistent and predictable routine, anticipating problems, giving gentle reminders, injecting humour and pointing out natural or logical consequences. Asking a child to stop and think about unpleasant behaviour enables the child to work at self-control.

Should the unacceptable behaviour continue, we handle it in the following way:

- When a child is not cooperating in a group listening situation, the child is seated next to a teacher and reminded of acceptable behaviour.
- Removal from the group/play area for a period of 'time-out' is also a tactic used for a child who continually demonstrates unacceptable behaviour.
- Time-out will always be administered in a positive manner and the child will be given something to occupy him/herself.
- This time-out is not a punishment, but rather an opportunity for the child to calm down and regain some self-control, recall the kind of behaviour the teacher is asking for, and decide for him/herself when he/she is ready to re-join the group and behave appropriately.
- If behavioural problems persist, the parent is asked to attend a meeting to discuss what may be helpful in motivating the child to behave in an acceptable way.

Hurtful behaviour is dealt with in a restorative approach. We aim to show children the impact of their actions through sharing of feelings and then providing an opportunity to find solutions together.

Please refer to our Hurt Free Policy on the Applewood website.

SPECIAL EVENTS

These are some of the events on the Pre-Primary calendar that support our curriculum.

Grandparents Day

Sensory Day

Friendship Day

Multisport

Pre-Primary Concert

Wacky Walk

Theme Weeks (Literacy, Numeracy, Technology, Art, Afrikaans and Science)

EXTRA MURAL ACTIVITIES

Children (from Grade 00 to Grade R) have the opportunity to sign up for additional sport and cultural activities.

- Playball
- Hip Hop
- Extra Art
- Private Music
- Tennis
- Dance Mouse

Please note that further details regarding these activities will be communicated to you.