Dear Parents

When our ‘babies’, start school, it is natural for them (and also often ‘mums and dads’) to be feeling nervous, uncertain and even scared.

Some kids are keen, can’t wait to get their new schools on and all to ready to say ‘see-ya’ on the first day of school at the classroom door. Other children are naturally more tentative and shy for which there can be many reasons and circumstances. One of the common grounds for our children’s hesitation when coming to ‘big school’ is Separation Anxiety.

If this is the case in your family, I am hopeful the information in this newsletter will be insightful in equipping you as you fill your child’s back pack with positiveness (along with their lunch box) from the first day of their school journey.

Most children stop crying 3-4 minutes after the parent leaves. As a parent it can be a little heart wrenching. but fortunately most children outgrow this reaction quickly once they adapt to kindergarten.

Stay patient and being consistent by gently setting firm limits is important.

Ease the Transition

There are several things you can do to ease the transition for your child from home to Kindy

- Organise a play day with one or more of the children that will attend their class because they will be happy to see their friend again.
- Give your child a lot of reassurance that you are coming back.
- If they have a backpack you can put a small family picture in the pack.
- Keep your goodbyes short.
- Introduce a special little wave or quick kiss to develop a positive routine of dropping them off.

If you are anxious and hover around your child will sense the anxiety and react.

- Never bribe or bargain your child to behave. Children have to be allowed to have their own feelings to become a little more independent.
• As best you can, be clear with the message that they are expected to attend school no matter how much they fuss, cry or stamp their feet.

Taking your child home, because they are acting out does not help you or them. Boundaries are important for children and actually promote a safe atmosphere for them to grow.

• Having your spouse or a grandparent drop your child to school can help with the difficult goodbyes.
• Discuss problems with the teacher in the morning as necessary but save more interactive questions for after school.
• Involve the teacher if your child is having difficulty making the transition.
• Don’t be surprised if you think you have resolved the problem then after a few vacation days it returns, but usually just briefly.
• Introduce the Fabulous 3 to your after school routine, where your child is encouraged to find 3 favourite moments of the day to tell you about each afternoon.

Believe that your child has the ability to make this positive change as they begin school life.

• Story times at home can provide healthy perspective for your children when starting school. Some helpful titles include:

  I love you all day long
  (Francesca Rusackas)

  Good Night Owl (Pat Hutchins)

  Tell me something happy before I go to sleep (Joyce Dunbar)

  Wemberly Worried (Kevin Henkes)

  Mumma Don’t Go (Rosemary Wells)

  Goodbye Book (Judith Viorst)

Available via Amazon.com or check your local bookstore and community library.

Starting school and the changes that come along with that, is a special time that we as parents and educators hope is special and memorable.

However, your child transitioning to school is not only about them. Embracing this new chapter in your child’s life is an adjustment for the whole family.

I am looking forward to meeting the children of Kindy 2013 and sharing the journey that are schools days are.

Chaplain Heather

Supporting students, families and staff of Narara Public School Community