

Parent Information Guide to Investigation Time

2013



Meg Moore, Amanda Callahan
& Julie Stanley

Eastwood Primary School

Welcome to Eastwood Primary School. The Prep Team would like to particularly welcome all new families whose child is starting primary school this year. We look forward to many happy years spent with you and your family at Eastwood.

The purpose of this handbook is to educate parents on the philosophy behind play-based structured learning or Investigation Time.

Developed by teachers, for preps at Eastwood Primary School, this resource will help you understand the importance of play during the early years of a child's development. We also explain the importance of making solid connections between children's development and the values of Eastwood Primary School, in line with our school motto

Enthusiasm precedes success

This informative handbook will lay the foundations for your understanding within these early years of your child's schooling, while helping to build essential relationships between your family and Eastwood Primary School.

Please take the time to read through this information and we would be more than happy to answer any questions you have regarding Investigation Time.

Yours sincerely,

Meg, Amanda, Viv and Julie.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Investigation Time

<http://earlylife.com.au/info/>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/earlylearning/eyldf/default.htm>

Notes

Why does Eastwood Primary School use this approach?

This approach enables a smooth transition from pre-school to primary school, providing children with similar experiences and familiarity.

- The program is engaging and interesting
- Students complete meaningful writing following purposeful investigations and projects
- We focus on fine motor skill development to improve handwriting and pencil control
- We encourage cooperative work between students
- The children are immersed in rich oral language experiences
- We allow for a fully integrated environment where children can work in all curriculum areas – eg, science, art, spelling.
- We encourage further deeper understandings through communication and interaction with students in a one on one capacity.
- Teachers can easily cater for specific areas of interest and the individual developmental needs of students.
- All work is valued and students gain a sense of achievement and importance
- We provide a range of stations to cater for different learning styles eg, through music, through language, through movement.

Some facts about 'play'

- Children's play is work – children have been learning this way since birth
- Play is supported by current educationalists and research
- Structured play-based learning promotes high levels of concentration and problem-solving abilities in young children
- Play provides high motivation and fun whilst learning
- Play encourages social interactions and collaboration
- Play encourages independence
- Play encourages risk taking
- Play allows children to make connections, master skills and apply the knowledge to their real world.
- Play allows for active learning and hands-on experiences



LEARNING STATIONS:

Reading area
Writing centre
Create & Make area
Sensory
Outdoor area
Dramatic play area
Fine Motor
Maths station
Block area

ITEMS WE NEED:

Small boxes (eg. muesli bar, toothpaste, jelly), well washed yoghurt tubs, cardboard cylinders.

Metal pots, pans, spoons for the sandpit

Dolls clothes, dress ups and old electrical items for tinkering with.

Due to health regulations we are unable to accept: toilet rolls, nut containers, meat trays or egg cartons. Thank you.

What is Investigation Time?

Investigation Time is a structured play-based program combining child-directed play and learning, guided play and learning and adult-led learning.

Teachers carefully monitor and conference with students to set goals, stimulate ideas and address their learning needs.



Why incorporate Investigation Time in the primary classroom?

Through play-based structured learning, children develop an understanding of the social and physical conditions that define their world and the language and symbols that are used to describe it.

Children that are encouraged to learn and grow through play-based structured learning, learn to use their brains in different ways to understand and solve problems. Children develop skills in decision-making, persistence, negotiating and risk-taking.

Research on the brain demonstrates that play is a scaffold for development, a vehicle for increasing neural structures and a means by which all children practice skills they will need in later life. This research recognises play for what it is – a serious behaviour that has a powerful influence on learning.

Through play, children develop and refine motor skills, experience the joy of mastery, and develop and use academic skills such as reading, writing and counting.

The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework outlines the importance of play for children up to the age of eight.