Will my child cope at school? If your child is experiencing problems, either social or academic, help will be given to them by the class teacher or other personnel. Individual learning programs are organised for social or academic skills as required. Many Kindergarten class activities focus on the development of concentration, listening and cooperation. If you feel that your child is not coping discuss your concerns with the teacher. Remember that a day at school is very busy and your child will come home tired. Perhaps an earlier bed time would be good idea for the first few weeks.

How is Literacy taught? Literacy is the focus of many Kindergarten activities. We have several excellent programs that are run at our school. Best Start - All Kindergarten children are given individualised assessments in literacy and numeracy at the beginning of Kindergarten to inform the teacher of your child’s learning needs. L3 - Mittagong Public School is an L3 accredited school. We implement the specialised literacy program in Kindergarten which focuses on explicit and systematic instruction in literacy.

Who will my child play with? Some young children are a little fearful of older children or crowds so for the first few weeks Kindergarten children are encouraged to play with their own classmates in a “Kindy Only” area. They are welcome to go into the general playground when they feel brave enough. Also, we initiate a Kindy Buddies program with year 6 students. We incorporate this starting during Kindergarten Orientation where the new Kindy children are introduced to Year 5 students who will become their buddies when they start school. The children meet for activities in the classroom and the Kindy children will often seek out their Year 6 buddy for help and friendship in the playground.

Will my child be safe at school? Teachers are used to keeping an extra close eye on new Kindergarten children in the playground, as are the Year 6 Student Representative Council members who are recruited to play with the new students for the first weeks. The children are quickly taught about the appropriate areas of the school to be in so they are supervised and safe at all times. There is always a teacher on duty to supervise your child from 8:25am to 2:55pm and for the first few weeks extra supervision is provided for Kindergarten.

Should my child catch the school bus? Until your child is settled at school we recommend that someone delivers them to and picks them up from the school playground. If it is necessary to have them catch the bus it’s best to arrange for an older friend to collect them from the classroom in the afternoon to take your child to the bus lines. Please ensure that your child’s bag name tag also indicates which bus they are to catch and that all emergency contact information at the office is up to date. The behaviour of students on the bus is monitored by the driver.

What food should I pack for the day? Fruit break – at 10:00am, during the morning literacy block, all children are given five minutes to eat a piece of fresh fruit. Please ensure any difficult fruits are cut up and in containers to avoid the teacher having to cut or peel fruit during the session. Morning Tea – 10:55am to 11:25am. A small snack and a drink packed separately from lunch at first eg. Fruit, cake, biscuits. Lunch eating time – 1:10pm to 1:25pm, a sandwich and extra fruit or small snack with a drink bottle filled with water. Please do not pack excessive amounts of food as we have found children will not eat it. We encourage the children to take home food not eaten so you can monitor their diet. Sometimes we find lunches in the bin as children are concerned about taking uneaten food home. Some lunch boxes are difficult to open, please ensure your child can manage all equipment for themselves. Food is kept in their school bag and in the classroom so as to stay fresh as possible. As with all school equipment thorough name labelling on lunch boxes is essential.
Will my child get to the toilet? During the first few weeks teachers schedule many toilet breaks throughout the day. The aim is to train children to use the toilet before school, at recess and at lunch time, but this can take some time. Make sure your child knows to ask to go to the toilet if they need to. It is also a good idea to pack emergency underwear in their school bag as we find accidents do happen.

What about personal belongings? Children are encouraged to keep belongings in their bag on a hook outside the classroom. Thorough labelling of all personal belongings is essential eg. Jane Smith in a permanent marker.

What is the discipline policy within the school? Children are taught rules of the school, playground and classroom which reflect the culture of fairness and respect for all members of the school community. We focus on positive reinforcement for good work and behaviour, which may include awards, stickers, stars and heaps of praise. Punishments, when necessary, never include corporal punishment (smacking) but may involve exclusion from desirable activities and counselling. Punishments of any sort are rarely applied in the case of new Kindergarten students and all staff will show patience and understanding as your child settles in to school.

How are the children taught to respond to being bullied? Children are expected to follow the rules. Bullying is not tolerated and is dealt with. Young children are encouraged to play with others of similar age rather than older kids, and to report problems to a teacher.

Will my child mix and make friends? Many children are happy to play alone for quite some time in Kindergarten but if you would like to encourage closer friendships inviting a friend over after school or on the weekend is a good start. We encourage children to respect one another and be friendly to everyone in their class. Some will make friends readily and some will take time. Efforts are made to ensure all children are happy at school. Talk to the teacher if you are worried about social problems.

How do teachers handle the “natural wildness” of young children? The personalities of all children are valued at school and opportunities are provided for all kinds of children to express themselves, including naturally wild children. Of course the children are expected to begin to comply with the requirements of formal learning as well as having fun in a social setting. This means school days for Kindergarten children are marked by frequent changes of pace and focus as we train children to adapt to various settings. All behaviour is of course expected to conform to school rules both in the classroom and in the playground. Two playground surprises for some children are the rules that sticks and stones must stay on the ground and that trees and fences are not to be climbed on.

What does it mean if my child is placed in a composite class? Composite classes are those which may include children from two or more grade groups, for example Kindergarten and Year One. Children in all school classes are grouped to cater for individual needs and this principle operates just as effectively in a composite class. When a composite class is formed the children are included according to their needs and in recognition of the benefits which students can gain from working with a class containing more than one age cohort.