



Wollemi College

Expectations of responsibility

Accumulated wisdom from parents of 7 and 8 year olds.

Expectations of some parents for their boys at the start of Year 3.

Every child has his or her strengths, as well as level of development. Nevertheless it can help to have some benchmarks for expectations. The lists that follow have been contributed by parents. Use them as a starting point to consider the level of expectation you have for your son in early primary years.

Care of own belongings

Clothing

- Things should not be allowed to get lost.
- Hanging up one's coat.
- Polish own shoes
- Placing dirty clothes into the washing basket
- Help take clothes off line for mum.
- Put folded washing away.
- Get uniform ready each night.
- Rugby gear ready for game on Saturday.

Room

- Bed to be made before school.
- Tidy room - no mother should have to tidy a room - perhaps an older child can sponsor a younger child and the two children can keep 2 rooms tidy.
- Toys put away. Try using "organiser" boxes. Care of one's own belongings.

School belongings

- Pack own bag and remember which day it is, i.e. sport/library/music. Make a list for each day of the week.
- Make own lunch. Put lunch in their bag themselves. Unpack lunch box when they come home and take to kitchen.
- Hand over any notes from school on arrival home.

Personal hygiene and care

- Personal hygiene e.g. teeth, hair etc.
- Get up on time – 6.30am, get dressed and have breakfast in time to catch bus.

Prayers

- Morning offering.
- To pray on a nightly/daily basis
- Pray before meals, pray before sleeping, morning prayers.

Respect/Attitude

- Respect in speech and manner, personal boundaries of other siblings and family (physical and belongings).
- Raise your head from your book when you are spoken to, be polite especially to his mother.
- Love and treat his siblings well, honour and always obey mum and dad.
- Do your best, be grateful and happy for yourself and others.
- Offer assistance, kisses, be flexible in cultural differences, be genuine.
- Laugh it off, you are not the centre of the universe – this family is, it's everyone's job to look after everyone else.
- Manners
- No "silliness" (out of control carrying on) when mates turn up, be a leader.
- No excuses.

- Control temper and avoid sulking.
- Answer the phone well, good manners e.g. pardon, may I be excused, grateful, not wasteful.
- Accepting his bed time is 8.00pm and not debating it.
- Ask permission to switch on TV or computer.
- No TV without asking or computer usage by timer, Internet password needed.

Jobs

Raise the expectation that jobs will be done: insist on the more routine jobs.. Regular jobs should be done without being asked. Raise the expectations that jobs will be done for others. Expect a consciousness of time. Insist even on some jobs the child may not like. It is necessary to teach and encourage jobs and be prepared to put up with mistakes and/or messes while the child learns. Take the time to show them how to do jobs and make allowances for the fact that it may take time for them to learn.

Inside

- Encourage the taking of responsibility for younger brothers and sisters. For example, changing the baby's nappy. Bath a younger child. One father has his Year 2 son teaching his preschooler the alphabet. His year 2 boy is earning a reward - membership of the school computer club.
- Dining room: setting table, cleaning away. Bing dinner plate to serve.
- Scrub and rinse dishes after meals.
- Kitchen/table setting. Some Year 2 children "cook" one night per week. Find recipes that Year 2's can cook. Cook a simple breakfast.
- Keep a Job Jar.
- Vacuuming the bedrooms. One family uses a "garbage bag" approach... if the room is not cleaned up, out comes the garbage bag and toys go in the ceiling indefinitely.
- Generally, teach consideration of hygiene and for others.
- Clean skirting boards. Give a spray bottle and have clean windows.
- Pack dishwasher.
- Unpack part of the dishwasher.
- Clean wash basin.
- Ask your son to help when he sees a need.
- Put washing/ironing away
- Feed animals and make sure the bowls are clean.
- Get up when firsts called.
- Empty bins.
- Take out garbage at the end of the day.
- Sweep the kitchen floor.
- Tidy bathrooms.
- Write own party invitations.
- Answer telephone courteously.
- Polish and clean shoes especially on Sunday before Mass.
- Practice piano daily (15 minutes minimum)
- No TV until all homework completed satisfactorily.
- No TV during the week.
- Turn off lights, electrical device when not in use.

Outside

- Gardening - specific task before play, clean lawn before mowing.
- Pick up sticks, help with weeding.
- Wash car. Clean the car. Vacuum the car.
- Simple shopping. Check the change.
- Empty bins. Bring in the bins.
- Take leaves out of the pool.
- Clear spider webs.
- Bring in things from the car.
- Water vegetable garden.
- Dog for walk when asked.

Timetable and homework

Try to establish a standard routine. Vary it rarely. Beware of "The Return of the Feral Child" in holidays. Find the appropriate level of supervision for the child and consistently keep to it. Younger ones will follow older ones.

- Do homework without being told to and completely.
- Do homework after afternoon tea.
- Keep to schedule on a whiteboard. There needs to be a personal timetable for the boy as well as a parent's timetable.
- Require simple and reasonable goals on holidays/weekends.
- Homework needs to be tidy and "up to scratch". Get it done and then reading time is on.
- Have a nightly routine of learning spelling, reading, and learning tables for a few minutes, several nights each week. This is a foundation for good study habits in later years.
- If an instrument is being learned, a routine of nightly music practice develops responsibility to make good use of the expense and opportunity.
- Time consumed with out of school activities eg. driving children to extra curricular activities.
- Try homework "contract" in return for extra sport involvement.

Honesty and Openness

Don't let habits of not telling the truth develop. Some mothers notice that many children seem to go through a stage where they lie. We should understand this but insist on telling the truth. Remind your son that you were 7 once... you know a story when you hear one. Make eye contact - it makes it more difficult for a child to lie. Be sensitive to the *possibility* that your son's suspected lying is really a product of forgetfulness or dreaming.

- Ensure there is reward as well as punishment. Show that honesty will be treated with love and respect.
- To help children never be afraid of telling the truth because of the punishment, ask "What do you think is a fair punishment?"
- Explain the consequences of telling lies
- Forgiveness – don't punish for telling the truth about a wrongdoing and give praise for courage of telling the truth/give child a way out.
- Teach the importance of saying sorry to God through prayer.

Participation when guests are visiting

- To be a good host when there are visitors.
- Have children all come to greet guests when they arrive, even adult guests; and also farewell them. If child has some habit of monopolising the attention of guests think about some rules: maximum of four questions per guest, stay with guests for the first five minutes only.
- Learn to speak to visitors confidently and welcomingly. Say "hello" nicely.
- Learn not to interrupt.
- Look after other kids and stay away from the adults.
- Expect good table manners when adults and children eat together at same table.
- Children should be aware of eating at correct times and the right amount. Encourage the children to have 3 meals a day plus afternoon tea to try everything on the plate and to eat the right proportions.
- Bringing money to school is not necessary – do not encourage them to have money with them.

Caring for others/Helping others

- Boys learning to help girls.
- Helping in looking after his younger siblings.
- On occasion, read a bedtime storybook to his younger sister/brother.
- Helping siblings with homework/reading, caring for elderly people e.g. granny.
- Minding younger siblings to allow parents time together.

Communication

- Regular family meeting to talk about what has been done during the day, check our goals periodically.
- Communication (daily briefs)