



**2024**

**Prep  
Information**



## PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR SCHOOL

### Starting School

Starting school is a great time of excitement and change for students and their families. It presents a lot of new exciting experiences. Some of these experiences such as the increased structure, longer days, rules and increased numbers of people may take some preparation to become accustomed to.

It is completely normal for students to sometimes feel a little worried or sad. Talking about these feelings and issues is important in preparing them for school. Listen to how they feel, reassure them and talk about strategies to help.

As a parent you may find the changes affect you as well. Some parents find it difficult when they no longer spend as much time with their child and others find it difficult to adjust to their child's world expanding. While these may require some adjustments they are an important step in your child's life. Try not to highlight your negative feelings.

Everyone will adjust differently and talking to other parents and families can often help.

### Transition Program

To support students and their families through this we run a transition program. This program involves a parent information session, teacher visits to the kindergarten, kinder students have 5 orientation days at the school and they will meet their Grade 5 buddy.

Their visits to school will involve orientating the students with their classroom, toilets, playground and other important areas at the school.

We also facilitate an informal parent session with current Prep parents to give you the opportunity to ask questions and for them to share their experiences and tips.

### Tips for preparing your child for school

Encourage independence with skills such as:

- Dressing themselves.
- Putting their shoes on and doing them up.
- Opening their lunch box and containers or packages of food you will pack.
- Establish routines around getting ready for school, after school and getting to bed on time each night.
- Opening drink bottles.
- Packing, carrying and unpacking their bag.
- Applying sunscreen.
- Going to the toilet.
- Practice the journey to and from school.
- Label all belongings.



## Starting School

Your child might need some support when school starts and there are some simple things you can do to assist them.

### The First Day

Arrive early to allow time to say goodbye before the bell.

Have a planned goodbye routine ready if you think your child may have some worries around this. Sticking to this routine will best help your child.

Give a confident goodbye and move from the room. If you want to chat to other parents you can do this in the staffroom over a coffee.

### The First Few Weeks

Some children might be tired after school for the first few weeks. They may be too tired to do any extra activities. This is completely normal as they adjust to their new routine.

Be patient and understanding – they may want to share everything or they may want to share nothing. Listen and try questions such as ‘what made you laugh today?’ rather than broader ‘what happened at school today?’ type questions.

Don’t expect too much academic progress too soon. There are a lot of instructional routines and school expectations to learn at the start of the year.

Try to be flexible with other areas, as more down time might be needed at home as they adjust to the longer hours and demands on their time.

### Prep Testing

This testing is carried out over the first 3 days of the year. This gives the teacher a greater understanding on the starting points of where each child is. It also gives the students some one on one time with the teacher to get to know them and become more comfortable with them and the room. You can use this as another chance to share any important information or concerns with the teacher.

### How you can help at home

- Foster confidence by giving your child simple duties around the home.
- Admire the work your child does.
- Select suitable stories, radio and television programs. Limit TV, especially in the morning.
- Be very patient and understanding when your child comes home tired and irritable.
- See that your child has sufficient sleep.
- Ensure that your child knows how to use a handkerchief, wash his/her hands and flush a toilet.



## Reading

One of the most exciting things your child will learn in the Prep year will be how to read. You can help him/her by taking an interest in the work brought home and reading with them frequently. Sharing books with your child even once they become a proficient reader is one of the best ways to help them to read, build fluency, develop a wider vocabulary and develop a love for reading.

Our home reading program starts with a sound book. This book has all the sounds stuck into it (added to each time they are introduced to a new sound). This book should be revised daily as the building block to reading.

## Readers

Students begin with a 'shared reader'. This is a picture story book that is sent home for you to read to your child. It is accompanied by a discussion page. The book is kept for the week and there are questions and discussion points to look at each night. The program is important for building understanding about books, joy in the reading process and for oral language development.

Reader bag & Communication book will be provided when your child starts school.

## Word Lists/Boxes

When your child has good grapheme – phoneme correspondence (identifying letters with the sounds they make) they will bring home lists of decodable words to build their blending skills. These lists will be kept for multiple nights to build up automaticity when blending/reading the words. These lists follow the order we teach the sounds in and are the important first step.

## Independent readers

Once your child has shown mastery with the word lists they will bring home their first decodable reader. This reader will contain words that can be fully decoded using the graphemes they have mastered. There will be some high frequency words in these books which will have been explicitly taught to your child already.

When supporting your child with these books you can use the following prompts:

- Say the sounds (point to each of the 'sounds' in the word)
- Stretch the sounds and push them together to read the word.
- Blend the first two sounds, then add the next sound. Eg. m – a – t blend as ma - t
- Read the whole word (slide your finger along under the whole word)

## No School Wednesdays

**For the first term, Preps only attend four days a week (stay home on Wednesdays).**

Every Prep child is required to have the following:

- An Art smock (ALL SCHOOL CHILDREN) – (an old adult shirt will do fine).
- School bag that is big enough to hold their lunch box and reader bag.
- Library Bag - The prep enrolment bag is perfect for this. :)