

PREP INFORMATION HANDBOOK



Learning, Caring, Growing, Achieving



INTRODUCTION

We would like to extend a warm welcome to the Yeronga learning community. The information in this booklet is designed to give you a snapshot of Prep at Yeronga State School. Information sessions held at the school and the Orientation Day in November are provided to ensure you have the opportunity to gather all the information you need to make the transition to school and the Prep year successful.

Once children are enrolled, an invitation will be sent to all families to come for a discussion with members of the Leadership Team during Semester 2. Parents will complete an information sheet, which supplements the enrolment form to ensure the best transition possible. Please also bring any information from medical specialists, agencies or intervention services to the interview. At the discussion your child will bring along their favourite toy and be asked questions to get to know your child and your family. The information shared and gathered will help prepare for a successful start to learning in Primary School.

Please take the opportunity to read the detailed School Handbook for further information about Yeronga State School operations.

Kind Regards

Handwritten signature of Eunice Webb.

Eunice Webb
Principal

Handwritten signature of Tracy Freeman.

Tracy Freeman
Deputy Principal

ABOUT PREP

Prep is an early education program only offered in primary schools. It is a full-time program and children attend from Monday to Friday during normal school hours. It is available in all Queensland state schools and most non-state schools offering a primary program. Prep is integrated fully into the rest of the school. Classrooms and other facilities are located in school grounds.

Children must be 5 years of age by 30 June in the year they start Prep.

Children whose birthday falls in the month of July, or children who have previously enrolled at school in another state or country, may be able to commence Prep early if they are engaged in the Early Entry to Prep process with the end result being determined by the school Principal as being ready. These are the only circumstances in which early entry to Prep is permitted under Queensland legislation. A July birthday or previous school enrolment in another state or country does not guarantee early entry to Prep however as the Principal determines eligibility for enrolment in these circumstances.

Prep provides the foundation for your child's success at school by developing:

- a positive approach to learning
- independence and confidence
- thinking and problem-solving skills
- language skills
- early literacy and numeracy
- physical abilities, including gross and fine motor skills
- a collaborative approach to learning
- social and emotion co-regulation and self-regulation



BELIEFS ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD

We believe that children in the Early Years:

- are unique individuals with special needs, interests and abilities
- are physically active, enthusiastic, creative, curious and social learners
- develop holistically and at different rates and that sequences of development can vary from child to child
- come from different social settings and begin prep/school with a complexity of knowledge, values, experiences and attitudes which vary from child to child
- have an intense interest in self-chosen tasks where they can inquire into and explore ideas in purposeful contexts
- can have confidence in their own abilities
- benefit from explicit teaching of literacy and numeracy.

CURRICULUM, STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENT

- Prep teachers will be using the Australian curriculum in the areas of English, Mathematics (supported by Education Queensland's C2C units) and multi-disciplinary Inquiry units to cover Science, HASS, Health and The ARTS, to teach, assess and report in Prep.
- Fostering a curious approach to learning through play, project based and inquiry learning opportunities help children to develop a love of learning.
- Prep is a critical time in the learning of foundation knowledge and skills in the areas of literacy and numeracy.
- Literacy and numeracy standards for Prep students to achieve by the end of the school year are set each year at Yeronga State School. Progress of students throughout the year is carefully monitored and early intervention strategies are accessed if we believe a child may benefit from some additional support with their learning. The focus of this support in Prep is usually around oral language development.
- Report cards are issued twice a year to provide information on how your child is progressing. Any concerns you may have can be discussed with your class teacher.
- Parent-Teacher interviews are held twice a year in your child's classroom to formally update you on your child's progress. You will have many short informal updates throughout the term and year.

PREP AS PART OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

- Prep students will access specialist teacher delivered lessons in Spanish, Music and Physical Education. They will also visit the library each week, once ready.
- Tuckshop is open from Tuesdays through to Fridays and is available for Preps after Term 1 Week 3, excluding cold treats. Our tuckshop volunteers deliver orders to the classroom. In Term 2, Preps will be able to order all items. Ordering is done online through Flexischools. Students are not allowed to purchase over the counter until Year 3. Please see School Handbook for further details.
- Preps will attend the school assemblies when they have settled into school. Assemblies are at 2:00pm on Thursday (on the even weeks of the Term). Parents are very welcome to attend.

GETTING YOUR CHILD SET FOR PREP

Starting school can be an exciting time for you and your child. For some children it may be the first time that they have been away from their parents. They may be going into a strange environment with unfamiliar people and things around them. There are some simple steps you can take to help make your child's transition to school more enjoyable and relaxed.

Encourage your child to be independent by helping them to get used to:

- putting on and doing up shoes
- eating and drinking without help (opening lunchboxes, wrapping and unwrapping school lunches and drinking from drink bottles)
- caring for and putting away play things
- using a handkerchief or tissue
- going to the toilet independently
- using playground equipment safely
- carrying his or her own bag
- identifying belongings
- using words to make his or her own needs known
- using appropriate greetings
- responding verbally when spoken to
- knowing their name
- knowing their parents' names.



Familiarise your child with the school environment and routine by:

- driving or walking by the school a few times so it becomes a familiar place. If possible, do this sometimes when other children are there so that your child can get used to the number of children, the playground and movement around school grounds
- attending the orientation morning so you can meet the teachers and see the classrooms
- showing your child where to put his or her things, such as a school bag and hat
- making sure your child knows where to wait for you in the afternoon. If someone else is picking them up, they need to know who that will be. If they are to go to Yeronga Out of School Hours Care (YOSHC) they will wait in the room
- checking with your pre-Prep provider (kindy, childcare) about how they can help children make a smooth transition to school
- encouraging children to understand that teachers are at school to help.

THE PREP DAY

The Prep hours are the same as the rest of the school i.e. 8:50am – 3:00pm.

The Prep program starts promptly at 8:50am so please ensure that your child is at school on time. This way, your child does not miss out on any valuable group learning experiences.

Things to note:

- all children must be brought to the Prep classroom and collected by a responsible adult known to the teacher. There are sign-on sheets outside each Prep classroom. **All Prep children need to be signed into the class.** If at Yeronga Out of School Hours Care (YOSHC), a supervisor will bring the children to the classroom and pick them up at the end of the day
- at 3:00pm Prep children are collected by a parent or caregiver from the classroom. Please ensure you have signed the sheet outside the classroom. Please notify us if you are going to be delayed in collecting your child as children can become worried if they are not collected on time
- when children arrive at school they should be encouraged to
 - place their bags on the rack
 - place their water bottles in the container provided
 - place their healthy 'Munch and Crunch' snack in the container provided
 - place their hat in their bag if not going to play
 - go to the toilet.
- the attendance roll is marked soon after 8:50am and the school program of instruction commences promptly.
- the structure of the school day is:
 - 8:50am school bell rings
 - First teaching session 8:55am to 11:00am
 - 'Munch & Crunch' at 10:00am
 - First break Eating at 11:00am -11:15am
 - First break Play at 11:15am – 11:45am
 - Second teaching session 11:45am to 1:15pm
 - Second break Eating at 1:15pm - 1:25pm
 - Second break Play at 1:25pm – 1:45pm
 - Third teaching session 1:45pm to 3:00pm



Please Note:

There is no structured teacher supervision of the playground before school. Only children who are organised in supervised activities should be at school before 8:00am otherwise 8:30am is an appropriate time for children to arrive. **No students are to be dropped off in the Junior School prior to 8:30am as no supervision is available.**

School finishes at 3:00pm. Adults collecting children are asked to supervise their children at all times after 3:00pm. Please be aware that school rules around playing in out-of-bound areas still apply and must be followed.

PREPARING FOR PREP

Parents -

- please ensure the Transition Statement and Permission form from the kindy or child care centre have been forwarded to the school
- please ensure you have organised payment of the Student Resource Scheme for your child's stationery and book requirements
- label absolutely everything – bags, shoes, lunchboxes, hats, library bags and clothing with the child's full name
- ensure your child wears the school uniform which can be purchased from the Uniform shop run by the P and C Association.
- ensure you keep the school office informed of any changes of phone numbers, address, or emergency contact numbers in event of illness or accident
- check immunisations are up-to-date and that vision and hearing have been checked
- ensure your child has a school bag big enough to hold the lunch box, reading bag, hat, a library bag on library day and jumpers or raincoats if necessary.

MAKING EVERY DAY A GOOD DAY

Please ensure your child:

- has had a healthy breakfast to start the day
- is in school uniform and has a hat at school each day
- has lunch in containers that are easy for them to open
- food items should be nutritious with “treats” only small and eaten after the other lunch items. Ice packs are great as we are not able to put lunches in the fridge
- is able to be independent in toileting
- has a spare change of clothes and underwear (in a plastic bag), “just in case”. These can be kept in your child’s bag at all times.

Other points of note:

- if a child is absent from school, parents are asked to notify the school on the Student Absence Line. A valid reason and approx. length of absence needs to be provided
- the teachers are always happy to discuss any matters. Please make an appointment at a mutually convenient time
- birthdays and other celebrations are wonderful ways to build understanding about one another. For birthdays, party cakes are more practical to share than large birthday cakes
- parents are asked to sign the Visitors/Voluntary Helpers book when staying at Prep for any purpose. These are located in the classroom
- toys and trinkets from home very often become lost or broken at school, so it saves a lot of time and heartache if these are left at home
- sometimes items get lost and these can be looked for in the lost property box located just inside the entrance to Block L.

SUITABLE HEALTHY CHOICES FOR LUNCH

We encourage children to eat healthy choices first and leave ‘treats’ for later. Containers need to be easy to open, food should not need reheating or cutting up, and spoons or forks need to be included, if needed, so that your child can independently manage their food. Some examples of great lunch ideas are below:

- sandwiches, rolls, pita bread etc.
- crackers, savoury biscuits, cheese, salami / meat
- boiled eggs, yoghurt
- fruit – fresh or dried
- salad / vegetables – carrot sticks, beans, capsicum
- natural popcorn / cereal
- tuna / salmon (in a container they can open)

Unsuitable food for lunches:

- chips or lollies
- cakes with lots of icing or cream
- chocolate or chocolate-flavoured or chocolate-coated foods
- sugary snacks
- soft drink

Due to the occurrence of students with allergies, especially to nuts, parents are asked to avoid sending any nuts or nut-related foods to school.

Munch and Crunch

At around 10:00am each day our children will be given a ‘brain food break’, to allow them to have a healthy snack during the 2-hour session that begins our day. Foods such as sliced fruit, carrots, celery or seeds are great for this break.

EARLY DEPARTURE

From time to time you may need to pick up your child early from school. You will need to inform the class teacher about this beforehand and sign your child out at the school office before collecting your child from the classroom.

EVENTS IN FAMILY LIFE

Events such as a major illness, visits by grandparents or other relatives, an accident or death of relatives, friends or pets can impact greatly upon children and may markedly affect their behaviour. It is important for home and Prep to share information that may affect your child. We would be most grateful if parents would inform the teacher of any unusual happenings.

MEDICATION

There are state-wide regulations governing the practice for school personnel to administer medication to students.

If your child should need short-term medication at school:

- a medication form, available from the office, will need to be completed to provide information regarding the child's name, the type of medication and dosage; and when the medication is to be administered
- medication must have a pharmacy label, be given to the teacher in its prescription container and will be administered according to the doctor's instructions
- a school register is kept of all medication administered
- over-the-counter medications (Panadol, cough mixture) should not be brought to school and will not be administered by school staff unless part of a prescribed course of medication. Over-the-counter medications will need to have a pharmacy label showing student's name and dosage.

For an ongoing medication condition, parents/carers must provide:

- a written medical practitioner letter notifying the school of a health condition requiring ongoing medication at school
- a written request to administer prescribed medication
- a written guideline for the school personnel from medical practitioner including potential side effects or adverse reactions
- medication in **original pharmacy labelled container with student's name, dosage and time to be taken**, and ensure medication is not out-of-date
- the school with information when a change of dosage is required. Any instruction will need to be accompanied by a letter from a medical practitioner

Parents will need to collect medication when it is no longer required at school.

School staff will not administer prescription medications, unless the above criteria have been met.

For life-threatening medication, please discuss with your child's teacher. This medication must be kept with the student at all times, however some medication (i.e. EpiPen) must be stored where other children cannot access. Individual Health Plans must be provided with the medication.

For asthma-relieving medications such as Ventolin, parents/caregivers are to notify the school in writing if their student has been prescribed this medication by a medical practitioner. Students can keep asthma medication in their bag or in their classroom.

Please do not hesitate to contact the school should you need clarification on any of the above. Your help with following the above guidelines is appreciated.

ILLNESS

If your child should become ill or have an accident:

- first aid will be administered
- parent or emergency contact will be contacted
- parent or contact person will need to sign the child out at the classroom or office
- an ambulance will be called if needed.

CONCERNS

If you have any concerns, please make an appointment with the class teacher to discuss these. If you still have concerns or are not sure how to approach an issue, please contact a member of the Leadership Team. It is often better to raise any issues you have sooner rather than later, as they can usually be resolved quickly and are often the result of communication difficulties. The partnership between school and home is an invaluable one and children quickly pick up on any tension you may be feeling about issues. We find it is not helpful to approach other parents with your concerns as it generally just creates confusion/ anxiety for others. Working proactively with us, usually resolves any issues in a timely manner and we can continue to move forward positively and confidently together.

THINGS YOU CAN DO AT HOME

The partnership between home and school is a vital one in assisting children to learn. There are many ways you can support your child's education in the day-to-day activities you engage in. The most important factor in preparing children is to engage in regular conversations to develop their oral language. Children with a wide vocabulary and good world knowledge are more likely to achieve success in the school setting.

You can help your child progress at school by taking some simple steps at home:

- show an interest in your child's schooling and the value and importance of attending. Ask your child over dinner: "What new things did you do at school today?"
- read aloud to your child. Reading aloud helps develop the imagination, because it allows listeners to form a picture in their minds. It also helps develop an awareness of the patterns of language
- provide a variety of experiences to stimulate your child's imagination – for example, visit the zoo, park or airport
- play card games and board games with your child. This helps to develop mathematical, problem-solving, language and social skills such as turn-taking and accepting loss
- spend time together as a family – activities such as shopping, going to the park or working in the garden build children's awareness and knowledge of the world around them as well as develop language skills
- find opportunities to write with your child. This includes making lists for grocery shopping or things to build children's awareness of vocabulary and the importance of reading and writing
- sing familiar songs and nursery rhymes together with your child
- help your child become responsible by encouraging him or her to pass on school notices and newsletters or to pack his or her school bag each day.



The school regularly provides Parent Education workshops and opportunities for you to participate as a volunteer in our classrooms to help you feel confident in supporting your child's learning. If you would like to volunteer in your child's class, please let the teachers know. The class teacher may not begin this in Prep until later in Term 1 due to the need to have children settled and in a routine.

CONCLUSION

We look forward to meeting you and your child as they embark on a learning journey where we as a school are committed to creating literate, numerate, curious and community minded citizens.