Caboolture State School

PREP

Parent Information Book
AIM

• To provide a programme that is both challenging and responsive to the diverse needs of the young child;
• To be the first link in the educative process for the young child as we participate in appropriate activities within our school;
• To continue to foster good and appropriate early childhood practices in all that we do; and
• To build partnerships with parents and the school community to provide the optimum opportunity for children to develop, learn and have a smooth transition to school life.

CABOOLTURE STATE SCHOOL’S

PHILOSOPHY OF EARLY CHILDHOOD Education Queensland

STAFF

➢ Prep A: Teacher Deb Young
Teacher Aide Jacky Truin

➢ Prep C: Teacher Michelle Woods
Teacher Aide Candi Crispin

➢ Prep D: Teacher Nerida Gibson
Teacher Aide Jenny Eden
IMPORTANT NOTICE

It is the policy of Caboolture State School that all prep children MUST be escorted into and from prep by a responsible adult. We need to be notified if someone other than one of the parents is collecting the child. We will not let your child leave prep with another mum or another adult unless being told of the arrangement beforehand. (A simple phone call will do if your situation changes after arrival time). We're sure you'll understand the reasons for this policy.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE PREP UNIT?

ARRIVAL

The unit will always have the door open from 8:40am. Please feel free to come in with your child before the session time begins but be prepared to stay with your child until the designated starting time of 8:50am.

❖ Just before starting time, help your child to complete a puzzle or game and put it back neatly in the cupboard. Please tuck chairs into tables. Developing these habits helps a child move towards independence.

❖ Once the program starts you are free to leave.

❖ If you arrive at school after 9:00am a late slip must be obtained from the first aid room.

DEPARTURE

❖ To help children stay focused on the teacher, the door will be closed when you arrive. Please wait outside until we open at 2:55pm.

❖ For safety reasons the children will be waiting on the carpet until you arrive. Please come right up to the carpet area to collect your child.

❖ Please try to be on time when collecting children as they can worry. Please phone and let us know if you are going to be late.

❖ Please let the teachers know whether children are being collected by daycare providers or going home on buses.
DRESS - SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Please dress your child in school uniform to attend prep. These are available from the tuckshop. Opening times can vary so if you are not sure, please check with the school office.

BAGS

Please choose a big bag that can be operated by your child. Although we will always help, becoming independent and taking responsibility is what children are moving towards. Small bags with small openings are too hard to pack.

PARENTS AT PREP

Parents play the most important role in the education of their child, so we welcome parents to become involved in the Prep Centre.

Parents can help by:

- Visiting the centre and joining in the program;
- Collecting junk mail and collage materials; and
- Offering to share hobbies eg. Music, pottery, carpentry, sewing etc.

SUPPORT SERVICES

A number of support services are available to help our children develop towards their potential and can be accessed in their Prep year. These include:

- A Guidance Officer;
- Speech Therapists;
- School Health Nurses;
- Dental Clinic; etc
SPECIALIST SESSIONS

The children will attend weekly Music, Physical Education and Library lessons with specialist teachers throughout the year.

SICK CHILDREN

Even though your child may want to come, school is not the place when your child is sick. Runny noses, temperatures, cold sores, open sores or discharge from ears or eyes are all indicators of possible infectious conditions. As well as risking the health of others, your own child is placed at risk of further infection at a time when immunity is low. Please keep your child at home during such times. Phone 5431 4560 (school’s absence line) if your child is unable to attend.

HYGIENE

Viruses and bacteria spread very quickly and easily amongst children in close contact. To minimise cross infection:

- Children will wash hands before eating and after toileting; and
- Children will be sent home if they appear unwell.

INFECTION AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

These can occur from time to time and parents are asked to immediately contact the school if your child has a contagious disease. Medical recommendations would then follow.
IMMUNISATION

The centre advocates immunization programmes for young children as recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council. Please ask if you are unsure of the recommended immunization schedule.

Children with the following contagious conditions must remain at home until the condition has cleared:

- Chicken pox and shingles;
- Conjunctivitis;
- Diarrhoea / Vomiting;
- Hepatitis A;
- Rubella;
- School sores (can return if treated and covered);
- Measles;
- Mumps;
- Ringworm (can return if treatment has commenced); and
- Whooping cough

HEADLICE

It is the policy of our school that children with head lice are to remain at home until their hair has been treated. If your child is found to have head lice at school, you will be contacted.

MEDICATION

Please note the following information regarding the administering of medication to students during school hours:

Should your child be required by their medical practitioner to take medication while at school, we wish to inform you of Education Queensland regulations with respect to this matter.

1. The parent or guardian must, in the first instance, make a written request to the school. (Forms are available to do this)
2. The student’s medication, with pharmacist’s written instructions on the container must be lodged with the school for security purposes.
3. Administration of that medication will be carried out by an adult staff member.
4. Non-prescribed medications should not be brought to school and will not be administered by staff.
TOYS/TREASURES

It is best to leave these at home, as upsets occur when they are lost, damaged or “moved”. However, for some children a soft toy helps them to stay - we leave this judgement to you the parent, but trust you will be working towards leaving them all at home.

JUNK

Junk materials or recycled bits and pieces are needed in the prep program. Children use these in their games for constructing the ideas they have. We need an endless supply!!

If you could help in bringing some of these from time to time, we would be very grateful:

- Off cuts of paper from printers - any shapes, sizes or colours;
- Off cuts of lace, ribbon and material;
- Packaging material;
- Dress up things - eg. Hats, glasses, necklaces, clothes, etc;
- Sample books of wall paper, material etc;
- Small plastic bottles and boxes from chemists;
- Beads, buttons and wool;
- Soft wood;
- Computer keyboards;
- Old appliances, eg. Toasters, hairdryers, radios; and
- Leftover flowers (silk or material) from florists.

And finally……

We welcome you. We welcome your visits and your interest. Please feel free to discuss your child’s progress with us at any time.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How will the new preparatory year change the school starting age?
From 2008, the compulsory school starting age will increase by six months. Children must be six by 30 June in the year they enrol in Year 1. Research shows that children who are older when they begin compulsory schooling are more likely to engage with, enjoy and have greater success throughout their education.

When can my child enrol in the preparatory year and Year 1?

Children will need to be five by 30 June in the year they start in the preparatory class:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birthdates</th>
<th>Eligible for prep year in:</th>
<th>Eligible for Year 1 in:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child born 1 July 2010 - 30 June 2011</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child born 1 July 2011 - 30 June 2012</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child born 1 July 2012 - 30 June 2013</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child born 1 July 2013 - 30 June 2014</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>2020</td>
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Will all children be able to access a preparatory year?
All children of appropriate age will have access to the preparatory year. There are no waiting lists for the preparatory year as it will be available to all children attending state primary schools.

Community kindergartens and other child care providers will continue to provide programs for children prior to the preparatory year. You may choose to use these programs for your children before or instead of the preparatory year. Children born in the second half of the year will be able to access these programs or childcare until they are eligible to start their preparatory year. The State government provides funding to the Creche and Kindergarten Association and this support will continue. The Government will work with this sector to ensure their services complement our new preparatory year.
Why have a preparatory year?

All other Australian states and territories offer a full-time year of education for children prior to Year 1. National and international research highlights the importance of quality full-time early education and smooth transitions to formal schooling to aid children’s long-term educational outcomes. Research shows that providing a quality full-time year of schooling prior to Year 1 has benefits for children, teachers and families. Preparatory programs improve children’s social and problem-solving skills, and encourage a greater interest in learning. For teachers, there is more time to expand and individualise the curriculum, and for parents, a full-time option better suits many families’ needs.

Will my child be disadvantaged if they do not attend a preparatory year?

The preparatory year is designed to provide children with a solid base to the early years of education and make the move to Year 1 easier. The preparatory year has been developed to link with the early phase of learning - Prep to Year 3.

How will I get my child enrolled in the preparatory year?

Enrolment in the preparatory year will be the same process as currently exists for Year 1. Contact the school for an enrolment pack.

If Prep is non-compulsory, does my child have to attend five days a week?

Yes. Children enrolled in the preparatory year are expected to attend full-time, to obtain maximum benefit from the program.

How formal will the preparatory year be?

The preparatory program is child centred and play-based. During play children learn as they engage socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually with people, objects and symbols. For example, children are developing their physical skills by daily sessions on an obstacle course or building their literacy skills through language games.

Will preparatory students have to wear a uniform?

At Caboolture State School, it has been determined that students in the preparatory year will wear a school uniform. This will give children a sense of belonging to the whole school.
What will children be learning in the preparatory year?

The Queensland Early Years Curriculum has been developed by the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority. It focuses on the factors that help children to be successful in school including:
- Social and emotional competence;
- Health and physical wellbeing;
- Early literacy and numeracy;
- Active learning processes; and
- Positive attitudes to learning

Will children learn to read and write in the preparatory year?

Yes. The Prep curriculum is based upon the Australian Curriculum. Children participate in English, Maths, Science, History and Geography programs. Within English the development of early literacy skills is a core focus. By the end of Prep students should be able to read short predictable texts using a small range of reading strategies. They should be able to identify the name and sound of most letters. When writing students should be using sound and letter knowledges along with familiar words.

In Maths, students will learn the number names, numerals and quantities to ten, count to and from 20 and begin to explore simple addition.

What is inquiry-based learning?

The essence of inquiry-based learning is where children and teachers work together to explore, observe, ask questions, discuss observations and seek answers about everyday experiences. By selecting topics to study that interest them, children build on what they already know and do. Answers are discovered by exploring resources such as books and the Internet and talking to visitors to the school. Children are encouraged to think about what they have learnt and how best to communicate their findings.

What are children doing when they play?

When children play, they make decisions, solve problems, develop thinking skills, collaborate, communicate and develop a positive sense of self. There are many different types of play and these change as children grow older. In Prep, children participate in fantasy, exploratory, directed, educational and free play, as well as physical play and games with rules.
It also means that children will play in different ways at different times of the school day. Play can occur indoors and outdoors. What children learn during play will depend on the questions they pose and the way that they investigate.

In this way, play develops social and personal learning, language and communication, early mathematical understanding, health and physical ability and active thinking processes.

How will the Preparatory year help children when they go to year 1?

Prep is designed to provide the foundation that children need to succeed at school by developing:

- A positive approach to learning;
- Independence and confidence;
- Thinking and problem-solving skills;
- Language skills;
- Early literacy and numeracy skills; and
- Health and physical development, including gross and fine motor skills.

What will Prep classrooms look like at Caboolture State School?

The Prep classroom is a fun and exciting place for children to learn and will generally consist of an open space for group and individual activities with a carpeted area for storytelling and singing, and a wet area for painting and construction. The classroom will also include a kitchen and preparation area and access to an outdoor learning space.

What services are available for children prior to the Prep year?

There are many early childhood education and care options available to families prior to the Preparatory year. These include centre based services such as day care centres, kindergartens and occasional care centres, and home based care services such as family day care schemes. Alternatively, parents may choose to keep their children at home. Parents requiring a service for their child prior to Prep should consider all the early education and care options available to them and place their child’s name on waiting lists if necessary.

At Caboolture State School we offer a weekly playgroup for Pre Prep children where they can begin to develop early learning areas such as literacy, numeracy, perceptual and fine motor skills. Our playgroup is run by a qualified Early Years Teacher. In Term 4, we also offer a Pre Prep Oral Language program for students who are enrolled to attend Prep in the following year. The aim of this program is to develop essential oral language skills children require to springboard their literacy development.
The Department of Communities offers a free state wide Child Care Information Service that provides up-to-date information about child care services including kindergartens, child care centres and family day care schemes. Contact details for the Child Care Information Service and early childhood education and care options can be found at: www.communities.qld.gov.au/childcare