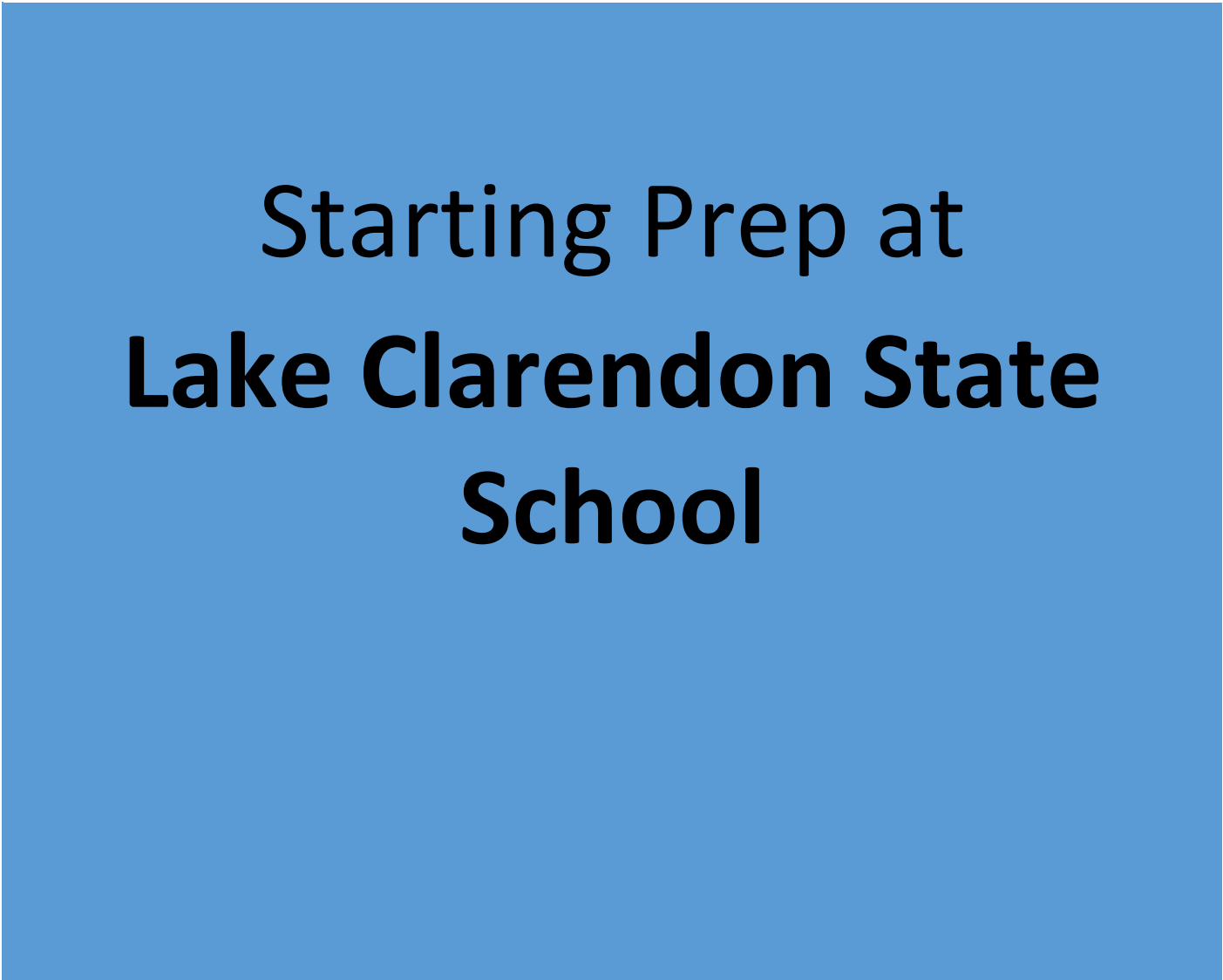




**PREP PARENT INFORMATION
BOOK**



**Starting Prep at
Lake Clarendon State
School**

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

We look forward to your child starting our school. It is a time of change and great excitement and parents often ask what they can do to assist the educational progress of their child. This guide has been prepared to give you some ideas. It accompanies our general Parent Handbook which you will find in the Enrolment Pack. This Pack is available from our school office or on the web site at www.lakeclarendonss.eq.edu.au

It is important to teachers that positive contact with parents is established and maintained early in the year and we are happy to initiate this partnership with parents in this guide.

Please do not hesitate to call on your child's teacher or myself at any time you have a question or concern about the educational progress or development of your child.

I hope you will find the information in this package useful.

Regards

Sandra Wright

Principal

Lake Clarendon State School

PREPARATORY YEAR - Curriculum

It is widely accepted that the early years of learning are among the most significant periods of growth for children. Experiences during this time not only affect cognitive, social and physical development, but deeply influence dispositions to learning and children's view of themselves as learners.

The **five key components** of the Prep year are:

1. Understanding Children: Prep teachers provide children with a holistic curriculum, based on understanding how children learn and develop and how they interpret responses into learning experiences. Prep teachers respond to each child's interests, ideas, needs, concerns and support their future learning.

2. Building Partnerships: Effective partnerships exist between children, with families, with communities and with other professionals. Effective partnerships include the formal and the informal relationships and processes in which people or groups participate to support children's learning and development.

Effective partnerships in Prep are characterised by the sharing of common goals and expectations, communicating openly and treating each other with respect.

3. Flexible Learning Environments: Prep teachers organise the physical, social and temporal environment in collaboration with children and other partners to provide a high quality learning environment. Effective learning environments are designed to:

- promote co-construction of learning through interactions with others and the environments.
- enable children to actively engage socially and intellectually in their learning.
- promote aesthetic awareness by providing children with opportunities to engage in sensory experiences.

4. Contexts for Learning: Prep teachers purposefully create four main contexts for learning and development:

REAL LIFE SITUATIONS - these situations allow teachers to take into account and draw on social and cultural diversity and local community priorities and/or needs. Real Life learning situations enable children to build connections between their home, community and classroom experiences.

INVESTIGATIONS - generally investigations involve children interacting with people, objects and representations as they enquire, explore and test ideas. Investigations in Prep provide opportunities to explore ways to communicate; investigate social, natural and built environments; and experiment with artistic, scientific, technological and mathematical ideas and processes.

ROUTINES AND TRANSITIONS - routines include regular organised events as well as major teaching and learning strategies that form regular parts of the Prep program. Organisational routines are valuable for developing independence and personal identities while transitions times are used to introduce concepts, provide meaningful practice of skills, recall information, and make connections between classroom discussions and share knowledge.

FOCUS LEARNING AND TEACHING - whether planned, child or adult initiated or occurring spontaneously, focus learning and teaching provides opportunities in which teachers purposefully and skilfully make learning explicit.

5. Exploring What Children Know: The Prep Curriculum encompasses the Australian Curriculum subjects of English, Mathematics, Science, and HASS. As well as, The Arts, Technology, LOTE, and PE.

The Prep classroom at Lake Clarendon State School is lively, colourful, dynamic and ever changing. Within our Prep classroom you will find passionate professionals and actively engaged children, who together will produce a year of exciting education! Prep operate under the same policy and procedural guidelines as the rest of the school, so please consult the relevant areas of the Parent Handbook for any questions you may have regarding Prep.

BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS

WE SUGGEST YOU:

- Introduce the school. Drive past many times. Talk about what will happen. Show your child around the school so they know where the toilets are, where you will pick them up, where the buses arrive, etc
- Visit your family doctor or clinic to get complete physical examinations, including speech, hearing and vision, and let us know if there are special circumstances we need to cater for. Early identification of these issues can save a lot of angst in the future.
- Check that all relevant vaccinations are current.



HELPFUL HABITS:

Encourage your child to develop helpful habits. Please take the time to mark off the things you know your child can do, then practise or discuss the others.

- Can put on and fasten own shoes (laces, Velcro, etc)
- Can put on and fasten own clothes (buttons, zips, etc)
- Cooperate and share with others
- Use Common Courtesies. The school has a list of Common Courtesies that are encouraged by all staff. Some important ones are:
 - asking to go to the toilet politely
 - not interrupting adults
 - using names when speaking to people
 - saying 'please' and 'thank you'
- Be responsible – help with household chores, etc.
- Be safe – able to use a road crossing, etc
- Be a good listener – give your child simple instructions to follow.
- Be organised and tidy – have a regular tidy up time at home.
- Persist with a task to completion, seeking help if needed
- Have a regular home routine – medical advice recommends that Prep and Year 1 children have 10-12 hours of sleep each night.
- Be able to dress themselves – encourage independence.



- Organise their school bag each night before a school day.
- Be responsible for their own belongings as this will be necessary to organise their home reading.
- Be able to use the toilet and wash hands independently. This includes routines such as paper use and hand washing. Children need to be able to monitor when they need to use a toilet and should not need reminding. Parents are asked to talk with their children about the signs that tell them when they need to go.
- Manage his/her own lunchbox (i.e. take off lids and unwrap food) and drink bottle.

TEACH YOUR CHILD TO BE SAFE

Your child should know the following and should be able to answer clearly:

- Full name – **first and surname**
- Phone number **and** home address
- Method of getting home. Unless previously organised, children are collected by an adult from the Prep classroom.
- Traffic rules, i.e. crossing the road
- Discuss **some protective behaviours** with your child, i.e. who to go to for help, appropriate touching.



FOOD AND EATING AT SCHOOL

It is essential that children have a **nutritious** meal at Munch & Crunch, morning tea and lunch breaks – a meal that helps get them through the busy day. There have been many studies on child nutrition and we are bombarded with what is best for our children. Water is so important, and in Prep we ask children to drink water through the day. Cordials are not encouraged and we ask that water be the only drink sent to school or juice as a treat in the lunch box. Fresh foods such as fruit, cut up vegetables, yoghurt and cheese are terrific lunch items. 'Packaged' foods such as rollups, chips and sweets are discouraged. Munch & Crunch is a quick snack break in class. This must be fruit or vegetables. Please consider whether your child can easily eat their fruit, and cut up if necessary.

At Prep and in Year 1 students eat their main meal such as a sandwich, salad, pasta or meat selection at first break. This is when children are most hungry. Often breakfast is eaten early in the morning and is rushed as busy house holds start their day, so children can be quite hungry by first break.



SHOW THAT LEARNING IS FUN

Show your child that learning is fun. Do not force learning on your child but enjoy these activities together.

PRE-READING AND PRE-WRITING

- Encourage climbing, jumping, running, skipping
- Cut and paste pictures – make an 'animal' book, a 'flower' book, a 'car' book etc.
- Sew up pieces of paper or material
- Model with dough or clay
- Put jigsaw puzzles together
- Draw shapes/pictures. Display and discuss these.
- Trace over patterns, letter, child's name.
- Provide a blackboard and chalks.
- Finger painting
- Play word games such as Memory and Concentration, simple card games.
- Play rhyming games and word games like 'I Spy'.
- Learn Colour names.
- Read and discuss story books daily.
- Read and discuss alphabet books.
- Correct 'baby' speech patterns by encouragement,
 - eg. t.b. = T.V.
 - fank you = thank you
 - wolly = lolly

PRE-MATHEMATICS

- Sort shells, buttons, etc into:
 - different shapes, eg. circle, square, rectangle, triangle
 - different sizes, eg. big, little
 - different colours, eg. red, blue, green, yellow
 - different thickness, eg. thick, thin
 - position eg. behind, between etc.
- Count actual objects up to 10
- One to one correspondence – touching, pointing, crossing out when counting
- Help with cooking – discuss measuring, temperatures, time.
- Recognise coins – e.g. 5c, 10c, 20c, \$1, \$2

GETTING READY FOR THE FIRST DAY CHECKLIST

- Make full payment of the Prep levy by the end of February, so that all equipment and consumables can be purchased promptly.
- Give your child a few practice lunches. They will need practice at opening new lunchboxes, drink bottles, yoghurt containers, unwrapping plastic wrappers, etc. on their own
- Ensure your child has a school bag large enough to accommodate all items required each day – including a foolscap-sized reading folder, lunch box, drink bottle, hat, spare clothes, library bag, jumper in Winter, etc
- Have your child in the habit of wearing a hat outside – **No hat - No shoes – No play** is one of our school rules.
- Clearly name all items of clothing – hats, jumpers, and school bags. (Have a change of underclothes in a named plastic bag left permanently in their school bag.)
- Discuss travel/pick up arrangements beforehand. Don't wait until the first morning to give your child important details about where to wait/who'll be meeting them, etc.
- Discuss coming to school often, and in as positive and enthusiastic a manner as possible. Highlight the fun and interesting aspects such as making lots of friends, learning new things. Don't reinforce unrealistic expectations, e.g. learning to read or write in a day or two!
- Discuss problem solving skills to help social interaction with other students.

THE BIG DAY HAS ARRIVED

Some points to remember for your child's first day at school:

- Arrive on time, but not too early, as a long wait may add to the strain and tension – at the beginning, the classroom will be open about 10-15 minutes before the first bell.
- Tell your child that you will be back to collect them from school at finishing time. Practise when this is at home: after lunch, keep checking the clock with them for when it is time.
- Leave cheerfully – letting go may be hard, but don't let your doubts or nervousness dampen your child's enthusiasm. PLEASE DON'T REMAIN AT SCHOOL UNLESS THE CLASS TEACHER INVITES YOU TO. This only prolongs uncertainty for your child and may start a habit which may be difficult to break.
- Name **ALL** clothing (including underwear), lunch boxes and drink bottles.
- Make arrangements for transportation and meeting your child. Make sure they understand these clearly. Unless other arrangements have been made with the class teacher, all Prep children are picked up in the classroom.
- Provide your child with a clearly named hat - remember '**No hat – No shoes – No play**'.
- Let the teachers know if anything is happening in your family that might upset your child at school

COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR CHILD

During the first week of school you can expect your excited child to be telling you about many things. These are very important to your youngster. Please find time to talk about what is happening at school with your child. She or he will:

- meet teachers. Say 'Hello' each morning.
- discover the wonders of the classroom environment.
- be very aware of the 'big kids'.
- learn the rules of his/her classroom and school.

Some children, when they first start school, find it so stressful they don't want to go. They may get tummy aches or be tearful in the mornings. If this happens to your child listen to their fears. Try not to let them see you are worried. Let them know that you believe that they can manage to go to school and you will help them. Ask them what they think would help, for example, going with a neighbour instead of you may help. If the worries don't get better, talk to the teacher about the best way to help your child. Forcing children sometimes does more harm than good. See your child's teacher immediately.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We are keen to have you in our classrooms to help with some activities. It is, however, necessary that this takes place in an organised manner rather than a drop in situation, which can be unsettling for children and for successful classroom management. We will require helpers on a regular basis for reading, and will let families know when this begins.

Parent volunteers are asked to read and sign an agreement before working in classrooms. This is to ensure safety and confidentiality of all children. Please see our fabulous admin team for a copy.

BECOMING SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS

To become successful learners children need:

- Love, kindness and friendship
- Regular routines for meal and bed times, and also for TV viewing
- Good health, including plenty of sleep and nutritious food
- Encouragement and legitimate and genuine praise
- Appropriate teaching techniques and committed teachers.
- Interested adults and communication between home and school.
- Realistic expectations
- Discipline and firmness
- Rules and guidelines
- Desire to learn and purpose for learning
- Regular attendance at school

WHEN THEY LEARN: People learn all their lives. Children learn best if they are safe and secure, if they are loved, healthy and happy.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY: Play helps a child learn how to:

- Meet new people
- Make friends
- Get along with others
- Share toys, books
- Give and take
- Take turns
- Adapt and cope

HOW TO ESTABLISH AN INTEREST IN READING

- Read to your child each day
- Discuss books and story characters with them
- Encourage them to talk about the books
- Ask questions about the book and really listen to the answers given
- Borrow books from the local libraries
- Show your child that you enjoy reading for your own pleasure. One of the reasons given for the high incidence of reading difficulties in boys is that men rarely model reading behaviour to their sons. It is very important that **both** parents be seen as **READERS**.
- Teach children to care for books
- Encourage correct pronunciation when speaking. Baby talk or poor speech patterns make reading and writing difficult. Insist on initial sounds being clear. Reading and Spelling depend heavily on speech and hearing. Do your utmost to help in this area.
- Join a local library



Note: Reading books doesn't happen on the first day. Remind your child of all the things they can read such as stop signs, food packets, etc

ALPHABET

These are the letters that your child will be learning to write. Please use these letters to model hand writing for your child. Using all capitals to write names is to be discouraged as it is a very difficult habit for children to break.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n
o p q r s t u v w x y z

NUMERALS

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

REMEMBER

- Everyone is unique. Every child has special interests, certain strengths and particular learning styles
- Everyone develops at different rates. (Age is not a determinant of ability!)
- Everyone needs to have success, to feel good and to have confidence to tackle new tasks.
- Everyone needs to enjoy learning in order to learn.

For further ideas and information please see us. We are willing to assist in any way we can.

The early years are the most receptive time in a child's life for learning. The time you put in now will reap valuable rewards in later years always. Keep it a fun filled exciting experience. If children resist any activities don't pursue them, try something else. Children simply may not be ready or the activities may not suit their particular learning styles.

We look forward to seeing you in the new year and helping your child in their new adventure.