



# Waterford West State School

*Learning for Life*

## Prep Handbook



Updated: 31-05-2023

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*Learning for Life*



**School Principal:** Allison McClean  
**Deputy Principal Prep –Year 2:** Emily Quinn  
**Deputy Principal Year 3 – 4:** Karley Taylor  
**Deputy Principal Year 5 – 6:** Jordan Harrison  
**Office staff:** Jenny  
Nadine  
Kayla

**School Address:**  
3-15 John Street  
Waterford West QLD 4133

**Postal Address:**  
P.O. Box 584  
Waterford West QLD 4133

**Telephone:** 3442 0333  
**Student Absences:** 3442 0336  
**Email:** [admin@waterfordwestss.eq.edu.au](mailto:admin@waterfordwestss.eq.edu.au)

**Office hours:**  
Monday to Friday 8.00am – 4.00pm



## **A Note from the Prep Teachers**

Dear parents and carers,

We are very happy to welcome you and your child to our school.

At Waterford West State School, we strive to ensure a successful transition to school for your child. We are committed to providing a quality Prep program, promoting a love of learning, celebrating success and establishing the building blocks for future learning.

This handbook has been written for families so that you may gain a greater understanding of the Prep Curriculum and to help you and your child prepare for their first year of school.

After reading this book, if you have any further questions you are very welcome to contact one of us, or the school administration team.

Best wishes,

Waterford West Prep Teachers

## Contents

Starting School in Prep.....	5
Enrolling your child in Prep .....	5
What resources do I need to supply? .....	5
Dress Code .....	6
Prep Procedures .....	6
Medication .....	6
Health .....	7
Getting set for Prep .....	7
Making the first week a success .....	8
Packing the school lunch .....	8
Prep Curriculum .....	9
Our Prep Program .....	10
Daily Routines .....	10
Specialist lessons .....	10
Special School Events .....	11
Communication .....	11
Attendance .....	11
Get Involved .....	12
How do I help in my child’s classroom? .....	12
Transition to Prep program .....	12

## Starting School in Prep

Prep is the first year of school and provides the foundation for your child's education. It is a full-time program where children attend Monday to Friday, from 8.45am – 2.45pm.

Children must be 5 years old by 30 June in the year they commence school.

To determine when your child can commence their prep year, use the prep ready reckoner (<http://www.qld.gov.au/education/earlychildhood/prep/pages/enrolments.html>) calculator.

## Enrolling your child in Prep

Parents intending to enrol their child in Prep are encouraged to contact the school office the year prior to commencement of school.

Information about the school's enrolment process and documentation is located on the school's website under the enrolments tab (<https://waterfordwestss.eq.edu.au/Enrolments/Pages/Enrolments.aspx>), or at the office.

Waterford West State School has an [enrolment management plan](http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/catchment/plan-w/waterford-west-ss.html) (<http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/catchment/plan-w/waterford-west-ss.html>) in place, which means enrolments are managed according to the policy.

You will need to bring an original copy of your child's birth certificate on enrolment. Children will not be able to enrol until this documentation is provided. We recommend if you don't currently have an original birth certificate, to order one as soon as possible so that there are no delays for your child.

## What resources will I need to supply?

Parents and carers are encouraged to join the student resource scheme and pay the required contribution that will cover the costs of your child with stationery, art resources, construction materials and a school hat.

You will need to provide a school bag (big enough to easily fit lunch box and homework folder), lunch box and water bottle.



## Dress Code

Prep students follow the school's dress code. The boy's uniform consists of our school shirt and shorts. Girls wear the school shirt, culottes or shorts. Both boys and girls are required to wear joggers or enclosed footwear. Children without appropriate footwear may not be able to participate in certain school routines and activities due to Workplace Health and Safety regulations. During the winter months, students are required to wear blue or red jumpers and blue track pants.

Information about the school's dress code is located online at <https://waterfordwestss.eq.edu.au/Supportandresources/Formsanddocuments/Documents/Dress-code.pdf>. The uniform shop opening hours and pricing is also located online at <https://waterfordwestss.eq.edu.au/Facilities/Uniformshop/Pages/Uniformshop.aspx>. A copy of these documents can also be obtained from the office.

## Prep Procedures at Waterford West State School

### Prep Drop off and Collection

Prep children need to be dropped off and collected in the classroom by an adult or responsible older sibling. If you are unable to do this, please make arrangements for another adult to drop off and collect your child, or alternatively, book your child into before and/or after school care.

You need to inform the office if someone different to the nominated persons on your child's enrolment form will be collecting your child.

### On arrival

We ask that each student **arrives at school by 8.30am** and waits with the accompanying adult.

Arriving at this time will ensure that students are ready to start the school day. On arrival, please encourage your child to organise his/her lunch box, school bag, water bottle and any other items rather than doing it for them. At the beginning of the year, they will need more support and reminders as they learn the school routine.



First Bell: **8.35am** (warning bell, time to line up/get ready)

Second bell: **8.45am** (start of learning time)

If your child arrives after the second bell at 8.45am, you must collect a late slip from the administration office.

### On departure

School finishes at 2.45pm. Please be prompt when collecting your child from the classroom.

## Medication

Department of Education and Training has strict guidelines concerning the administration of medication to students.

These guidelines state that medication can only be given to a student when it is:

- Accompanied by a school medication form completed and signed by the parent/carer
- In the original packaging, with the student's name, and pharmacist instructions printed on it.
- Children who use asthma inhalers regularly should complete a long term medication form for the year



All prescribed medication is administered at the office by admin staff. Medication is registered and signed off for each child and their dosage noted.





## Health

Children with infectious diseases must be excluded from Prep for specified times. In cases of minor ailments (eg. cold or headache), parents are asked to exercise good judgment about whether or not their child is well enough to benefit from attending school.

Information about infectious diseases and exclusions is provided by Queensland Health [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/timeout\\_poster.pdf](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/cdb/timeout_poster.pdf)

## Getting set for Prep

Starting school can be an exciting but stressful 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.

Families can support the transition from home to Prep by helping and encouraging your child to:

- Recognise his/her name in print
- Pack, open, close and carry a school bag
- Identify personal property
- Open lunchboxes and food items
- Open and close water bottles
- Wash hands properly
- Use the toilet independently
- Listen to family members read stories regularly
- Recognise some letters of the alphabet, especially those in his/her name
- Identify basic colours, shapes and some numbers from 0 to 10

Work with your child to develop his or her communication skills. Help your child to:

- make his or her own needs known
- ask for assistance
- express their own ideas and thoughts
- use appropriate greetings
- respond verbally when spoken to



Information and strategies about supporting your child's transition to Prep can be found at <https://www.qld.gov.au/education/earlychildhood/prep/pages/preparing.html>



## Making the First Week a Success

There are some simple steps you can take to make your child's first week at school more enjoyable and relaxed. Be prepared. The best thing you can do is to make these first days as stress-free and relaxed as possible.

### Before the first day:

- Make sure you have uniforms, school bag, lunch box, water bottle and a change of clothing. A school sun safe hat will be provided for all Prep enrolments.
- Familiarise your child with the school environment and routine by driving or walking by the school a few times so that the school becomes a familiar place
- Attend our prep transition program so you can meet our staff and see the classroom
- Visit the school, if possible, when other children are there so that your child can get used to the number of children, the playground and the movement of children around school grounds
- Make sure all possessions are clearly labelled with your child's name
- Check with your pre-Prep provider (kindy, childcare) about how they can help children make a smooth transition to school

The day before write a list of all you'll need to organise, such as food and a change of clothing. Stick the list to the fridge and tick each item off with your child as you complete it.

### On the day:

- leave plenty of time to get ready
- make a nutritious breakfast — this is essential for sustained energy and concentration
- talk through the daily routine — start, lunch and finish times
- talk through a few simple self-help ideas — for example, asking teachers for help or directions
- be positive and encouraging about your child's attendance at school
- be flexible in the early days of school, children may take a little while to settle in.
- When dropping off your child, say goodbye and leave quickly so that they can settle.
- Don't worry if your child becomes upset. We will call you if they don't settle.

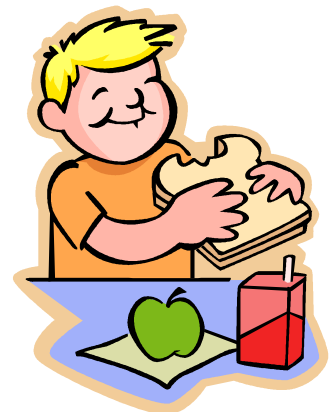
## Packing the school lunch

Being at school is hard work, so by lunchtime your child will be hungry and thirsty. They will need a nutritious and filling lunch.

When packing your child's lunch:

- provide healthy food and drink in realistic quantities for morning tea and lunch
- ensure that your child can open and unwrap their lunch — plastic film wrap can be very difficult for little fingers
- provide a variety of smaller items rather than one or two large items
- pack an ice brick to keep food fresh – there is no refrigeration available for student lunches
- check with the school for information about healthy food and drink choices
- provide a named water bottle every day and encourage your child to drink from it
- keep sweets, chips and other party food for parties or special occasions.
- The school provides a small piece of fruit for each child each day.

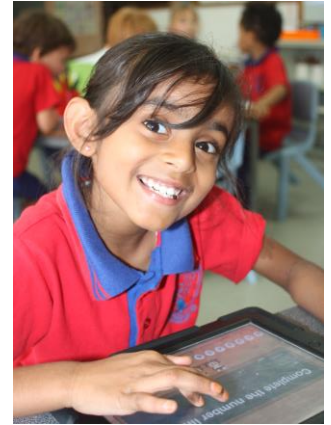
\* It is important you inform the school if your child has any food allergies





## Prep Curriculum

At Waterford West State School, Prep teachers use the [Foundation Year of the Australian Curriculum](#) to guide children's learning.



## Foundation Year Achievement Standards V.9

### English

By the end of Foundation, students listen to texts, interact with others and create short spoken texts, including retelling stories. They share thoughts and preferences, retell events and report information or key ideas to an audience. They use language features including words and phrases from learning and texts. They listen for and identify rhymes, letter patterns and sounds (phonemes) in words. They orally blend and segment phonemes in single-syllable words.

They read, view and comprehend texts, making connections between characters, settings and events, and to personal experiences. They identify the language features of texts including connections between print and images. They name the letters of the English alphabet and know and use the most common sounds (phonemes) represented by these letters (graphs). They read words including consonant–vowel–consonant words and some high-frequency words.

They create short written texts, including retelling stories using words and images where appropriate. They retell, report information and state their thoughts, feelings and key ideas. They use words and phrases from learning and texts. They form letters, spell most consonant–vowel–consonant words and experiment with capital letters and full stops.

### Maths

By the end of Foundation Year, students make connections between number names, numerals and position in the sequence of numbers from zero to at least 20. They use subitising and counting strategies to quantify collections. Students compare the size of collections to at least 20. They partition and combine collections up to 10 in different ways, representing these with numbers. Students represent practical situations that involve quantifying, equal sharing, adding to and taking away from collections to at least 10. They copy and continue repeating patterns.

Students identify the attributes of mass, capacity, length and duration, and use direct comparison strategies to compare objects and events. They sequence and connect familiar events to the time of day. Students name, create and sort familiar shapes and give their reasoning. They describe the position and the location of themselves and objects in relation to other objects and people within a familiar space.

Students collect, sort and compare data in response to questions in familiar contexts.

### Science

By the end of Foundation students group plants and animals based on external features. They identify factors that influence the movement of objects. They describe the observable properties of the materials that make up objects. They identify examples of people using observation and questioning to learn about the natural world.

Students pose questions and make predictions based on their experiences. They engage in investigations and make observations safely. With guidance, they represent observations and identify patterns. With guidance, they compare their observations with their predictions. They share questions, predictions, observations and ideas about their experiences with others.

## Our Prep Program

It is through the curriculum outlined that our experienced Prep teachers and fulltime teacher aides will deliver a quality program catering for each child's needs and abilities. When children start Prep, they progressively move towards a more structured learning environment throughout the year.

During the Prep day, children may be involved in learning experiences such as:

- Construction using blocks, collage and manipulative equipment to develop early mathematical concepts and skills, such as sorting, patterning, size and colour.
- Writing stories and copying signs as part of their play, constructions and art.
- Engaging in dramatic play to build an understanding of the world around them.
- Actively participating in teacher-led reading, writing and maths sessions.
- Using computers to draw pictures, make signs, play educational games and find out about the world.
- Playing and investigating ideas independently, in small groups and as a class.
- Designing, constructing and negotiating obstacle courses to develop gross motor skills.

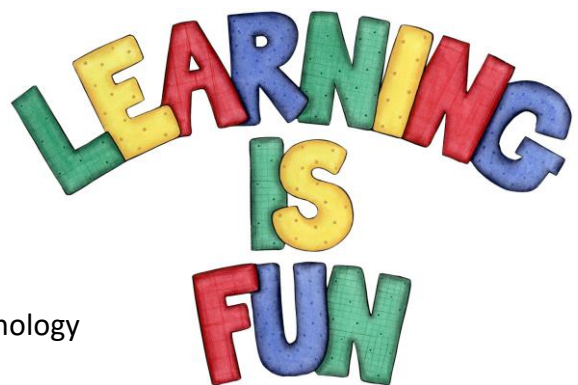


## Daily Routines

As the year progresses, the program will become more structured as we strive to best prepare the students for year one. Teachers will adjust the daily timetable accordingly.

Below shows our session times and an example timetable.

8.35 am	First bell
8.45 am	2 hour literacy block
10.45 am	Playtime
11.15 am	Eating time
11.30 am	Maths
1.00 pm	Gross and Fine Motor
1.30 pm	Supervised eating and playtime
2.00 pm	Science/History and Geography/ Technology
2.45 pm	Home time



There are two lunch breaks at Waterford West State School. At first break, we begin with 30 minutes of supervised play time, the children can choose to eat or play during this time. After 30 minutes, the bell sounds and 15 minutes of eating time occurs. Teachers encourage children to eat sandwiches and healthy food items, such as yoghurt. At second break, play and eating time is combined.

The school day finishes at 2.45 pm. Upon seeing you, the teacher will personally dismiss each child from the carpet area. We ask that you arrive promptly as late arrivals may cause distress for your child.

## Specialist Lessons

Prep students will participate in Music, Cultural Studies and Physical Education lessons. The regular classroom Teacher Aide will accompany and support students during these lessons.

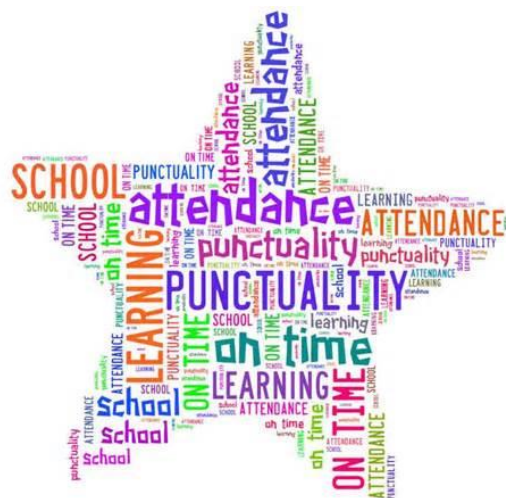
## Special School Events

As the year progresses, there will be several special school events, such as parades, ceremonies, incursions and our Sports Day. As each event approaches, information will be provided to families through the newsletter, assemblies or our school's Facebook page.

## Communication

Communication is essential to ensure a strong partnership between school and home. We offer a variety of communication methods, including:

- A comprehensive school website
- Parent information sessions
- Informal conversation before and after school
- Mutually suitable appointments
- Parent/ teacher conferences
- A school newsletter
- Report card



Informal assessment of students is ongoing and takes place throughout the year. Teachers provide parents with information and feedback on student progress at parent teacher interviews that are conducted towards the end of terms 1 and 3. Accompanying these interviews will be a student report card.

## Attendance

Every day counts in Prep because going to Prep every day ...

- will make sure your child gets the most out of their important first year of school
- will make your child's transition into Year 1 easier
- improves your child's reading, writing and maths
- builds a positive approach to learning
- strengthens your child's independence and confidence.

### What will your child's school do?

- Monitor your child's attendance
- Talk to you about any unexplained absences
- Work with you to overcome problems affecting your child's attendance
- Give your child support for any additional learning needs they may have
- Offer developmentally, socially and culturally appropriate learning opportunities

### Support for families

If your child is having problems attending Prep each school day, speak to your school for advice and support.



## Get involved

As a parent, you play a vital role in your child's education. By getting involved in the school you can help your child to make a smooth and happy start to their education.

You can do this by:

- introducing yourself to your child's teacher
- keeping the teacher informed of any changes that may affect your child
- talking with your child about their day
- attending parent information sessions
- reading the school newsletter
- visiting the school website
- checking class notice boards
- attending parent meetings and talking to other parents
- helping your child to complete their home reading and homework tasks.



## How can I help in my child's classroom?

Teachers welcome parent help. In the first weeks of Prep, you may be keen to prepare materials at home while the students are busy settling into Prep. Toward the end of term one, a parent roster will be displayed asking for help with a range of activities, including reading with individuals, playing literacy games with small groups or preparing materials, such as cutting up collage materials. The children thoroughly enjoy having family members in the classroom and we do too!

## Transition to Prep Program

Every year Waterford West SS will connect with local childcare centres and families to provide a transition to prep program. The aim of the program is to better prepare and support children to make the transition to school, and to support parents to become involved in their child's education.

A positive start to school leads to a greater and ongoing connection with school and is linked to positive educational and social outcomes. Children who have a positive start to school are more likely to regard school as an important place, have high expectations regarding their ability to learn and succeed at school with better attendance, achievement and attainment.

The transition to prep program consists of:

- Transition sessions – small groups of children and parents engage with staff to build relationships and start to familiarise themselves with the physical school environment. Parents and carers hear from school staff about the expectations of Prep.
- Enrolment meeting – parents and carers meet with the school staff to discuss the enrolment process and complete enrolment documentation.

Information about the transition to prep program is shared with the community early in term 3 through the school's website, Facebook page and by a community leaflet drop.