Great state. Great opportunity
Our School Vision

The school’s vision statement “Riding the Waves to Success” utilises our school’s unique coastal environment as a basis for a shared understanding of teaching and learning that sums up our belief that all students can enjoy success if they are empowered with the skills, knowledge and time to meet meaningful challenges.

Students participate in dynamic challenging units of work to explore the elements of the world in which they live, the lives and cultures of its people and the challenges of the future. Just like the constancy of the waves, our vision promotes to students that learning is a continuous life-long process. The Currimundi State School Prep year offers an exciting educational experience which is designed around the five early learning areas of the Early Years Curriculum Guide. These components are – Social and Personal Learning, Health and Physical Learning, Language Learning and Communication, Early Mathematical Understandings and Active Learning Processes.

At our school, individual student needs are recognised and catered for. Learning activities are provided to meet the needs of student abilities, preferred learning styles and interest areas. As the student's skills and confidence improves, then the height of the learning wave is increased to keep challenging the student to grow and further develop his/her skills.

Our school is committed to achieving consistent high standards in literacy and numeracy, and also behaviour management in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. The waves of the beach symbolise this type of relaxed atmosphere. Our school sees the importance of recognising the magic of childhood and uses this childhood magic to ensure part of coming to school is having fun. Staff and students negotiate together to achieve the best for the students in their learning at our school.

Our school’s vision, “Riding the Waves to Success”, tells all students that they can all have success - that success takes many different forms and we need to value and celebrate all successes. At Currimundi State School, there will always be learning waves there for us to ride. We need to be confident to have a go. The lifesavers - our teachers and teacher aides - will make sure that the conditions are right for us to dive straight into our learning waves.

Principal’s Welcome

For many of you this will be your first contact with school since your departure from High School. You will find the Preparatory Year a great adventure for your child and yourself. Through the experiences gained here, you and your child are making an ideal start to his/her education. Enjoy this year! Watch your child grow. Support your child and your school in any way you can. The rewards are worthwhile.

So welcome to your new school - Currimundi. We, the school community, look forward to working with you.

Regards,

Corrie Connors

Acting Principal

We Welcome You!

We hope this school will become very much "YOUR SCHOOL" as we work together to help your child develop and learn.

We consider YOU, the parent, as the most important influence in your child’s education.

We are looking forward to a happy, learning year with you and your child.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide you with some information on what we do specifically in the Prep Year.
**PREP YEAR CURRICULUM**

The Queensland Government has introduced a Prep Year of full-time schooling for children who turn five by June 30 in the year they start school.

International research shows the benefits of children taking part in full-time quality programs before they start Year 1. This research also shows that if children start formal schooling when they are a little older, they generally do better than their younger peers.

An early years curriculum has been developed specifically for use in schools with prep classes. The Prep Year builds on your child’s learning at home and in other places like kindergarten and child care.

**PRINCIPLES FOR PRACTICE**

The following set of principles provides a framework for practice that guides teachers as they make curriculum decisions and scaffold children’s learning in the early phase of learning.

1. **Children are capable and competent and have been learning since birth.**
   
   Recognising children as competent learners means recognising what they know and can do, and using that as a starting point for new learning. Teachers support and encourage children as they learn by building on their prior knowledge, making links to new learning and making implicit knowledge explicit.

2. **Children build deep understandings when they learn through all senses and are offered choice in their learning experiences.**

   Children develop complex cognitive structures when they take in information through all senses including touch, kinaesthetic (body movement) and smell. Children engage more enthusiastically in learning when they are able to participate in decision making about learning experiences.

3. **Children learn best through interactions, active exploration, experimentation and by representing their learning through a variety of modes.**

   Children actively construct knowledge of their world by investigating new materials, ideas and events. Therefore they learn most effectively through interactions with people, concrete objects, ideas and representations, which invite attention, exploration, manipulation, elaboration, experimentation and imagination. Teachers support children by encouraging them to represent their learning in a range of modes such as movement, painting, drawing, speaking, writing, construction and socio-dramatic play.

4. **Children’s positive dispositions to learning, and to themselves as learners, are essential for success in school and beyond.**

   Teachers have an important role in encouraging children to develop dispositions such as perseverance and a willingness to engage in new learning. Children develop dispositions such as these when they receive constructive feedback as they question, investigate, analyse, innovate and interact with others. Positive dispositions towards learning are also fostered by providing learning experiences that are relevant to children’s lives and interests.

5. **Children learn best in environments where there are supportive relationships among all partners in the learning community.**

   Teachers develop supportive partnerships with children, families and carers, communities and professional colleagues by:
   
   • building a sense of the child by collaboratively planning with children;
   
   • involving families in supporting children’s learning through sharing information and allowing families to contribute their own knowledge and perspectives;
   
   • working with specialist personnel, teachers, teacher aides, administrators and support staff to provide quality learning programs.
6. **Early childhood programs are most effective when they recognise, value and build upon the cultural and social experiences of children.**

Children have diverse experiences in homes, communities, early care and educational settings. Teachers collaborate with partners to ensure that learning environments reflect this diversity of cultural and social experiences as well as shared ideas, values, beliefs and identities. Learning programs therefore acknowledge or build on children's diverse ways of thinking, knowing and behaving.

7. **Building continuity of learning as children move to and through school provides foundations for their future success.**

Children successfully manage transitions into school and through school when teachers establish continuities between children’s prior, current and future learning. Schools plan transition processes that engage children, families and the school community.

8. **Assessment of young children is an integral part of the learning–teaching process and is not a separate activity.**

Assessment involves the purposeful, systematic and ongoing monitoring of children’s learning. The information gathered is used for future planning and to make judgments about a child’s learning and development. Children’s everyday learning experiences offer rich opportunities for gathering evidence of learning. It is important that children have opportunities to participate in their assessment and to demonstrate understandings, capabilities and dispositions towards learning in a full range of learning contexts. In the early years, “point–in–time” assessment external to learning contexts is inappropriate, because young children’s performance can be adversely affected by unfamiliar language and misunderstandings about the purpose of the assessment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early learning areas</th>
<th>Specific focus within the early learning areas</th>
<th>Key learning areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social &amp; personal learning</td>
<td>• Social learning</td>
<td>• Studies Of Society &amp; Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Personal learning</td>
<td>• Health &amp; Physical Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health &amp; physical learning</td>
<td>• Making healthy choices</td>
<td>• Health &amp; Physical Education</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Gross-motor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fine-motor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language learning &amp; communication</td>
<td>• Oral language</td>
<td>• English</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Early literacy</td>
<td>• Languages Other Than English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early mathematical understandings</td>
<td>• Early numeracy</td>
<td>• Mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Active learning processes</td>
<td>• Thinking</td>
<td>• Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Investigating</td>
<td>• Studies Of Society &amp; Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Imagining and responding</td>
<td>• Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The Arts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SOCIAL AND PERSONAL LEARNING

The focus in Social & Personal Learning has two dimensions. The social learning dimension focuses on building children’s awareness of being members of many social groups, including family, cultural and community. In this area, learning experiences contribute to developing children’s abilities to respect and cooperate with other people. Social learning develops understandings, capabilities and dispositions related to constructing understandings about social and cultural identities and sustaining relationships.

The personal learning dimension focuses on developing children’s positive identity, self-esteem, resilience, personal organisation and independence as they interact successfully with others and their learning environments.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL LEARNING

The focus in Health & Physical Learning is on gross and fine motor development, and making healthy choices to foster a sense of wellbeing in children. In this area, learning experiences contribute to developing children’s positive health choices and movement skills as they interact successfully with others and their learning environments.

LANGUAGE LEARNING AND COMMUNICATION

The focus in Language Learning & Communication is on spoken language and early literacy. In this area, children construct, communicate and interpret meanings for a range of purposes and in a range of contexts as they speak & listen, read & view and write & shape.

In the Prep Year, language experiences involve children in learning about the purposes for using language, the patterns (grammatical structure) and conventions (expected practices in particular contexts) of language, the concepts of print, phonemic awareness and alphabetic knowledge.

EARLY MATHEMATICAL UNDERSTANDINGS

The focus in Early Mathematical Understandings is on children investigating their environment and communicating their mathematical ideas. In this area, children develop those mathematical understandings that are the foundations for future success in mathematical thinking. Early mathematical understandings promote children’s developing understandings, capabilities and dispositions related to number, patterns & algebra, measurement, chance & data and space.

ACTIVE LEARNING PROCESSES

The focus in Active Learning Processes is on thinking, investigating, imagining and responding. In this area, children develop investigative processes, positive dispositions towards investigating, and understandings about natural, built, social, technological and virtual environments. Children also develop their abilities to express ideas creatively using a variety of experiences, media and artistic forms related to dance, drama, media, music and visual arts.

Thinking processes are embedded in all early learning areas. Teachers need to consider explicitly what types of thinking are included in learning experiences when planning for, interacting with, monitoring and assessing, and reflecting on learning across the curriculum.

Some important thinking processes evident in the learning statement overviews include inquiring, exploring, investigating, challenging, planning, evaluating, considering alternative strategies/ways, analysing, reflecting, predicting, designing and comparing.
FIVE CONTEXTS FOR LEARNING

Within flexible Prep learning environments, teachers purposefully create five main contexts for learning and development:

- **Play**
- **Real-life situations**
- **Investigations**
- **Routines and transitions**
- **Focused learning and teaching**

Children have opportunities to learn within each of the five contexts in both indoor and outdoor Prep environments. The contexts for learning and development are designed to actively engage children, parents, teachers and teacher aides as partners in learning. Together, these partners co-construct, reconstruct and reflect on new ways to make sense of their world and relationships with others.

A balanced curriculum provides opportunities for children to participate in all five contexts for learning regularly and a range of contexts daily. Longer blocks of time for engaging in active learning through play, real-life situations and investigations are interspersed with meaningful routines and transitions, and short, appropriate, focused learning and teaching. Children are also likely to shift between contexts as learning progresses. For example, initial investigations using art materials may lead to play with materials and then shift towards real-life art-making.

**PLAY**

In the early phase of schooling the purpose of play is to support children’s learning and development. Play occurs in both indoor and outdoor environments. It provides a powerful context in which children learn as they actively engage socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually with people, objects and representations.

Through play, children develop thinking and problem-solving strategies. They use and extend oral language capabilities, learn literacy and numeracy practices, explore a range of ways to symbolise experiences and develop imagination and creativity. Play-based experiences provide children with opportunities to build their personal identities as successful and responsible learners. In play, children are able to learn through all their senses, make connections with their prior knowledge, practise and master learning, sustain concentration and take risks in enjoyable and non-threatening contexts.

Play, however, also involves children in role-playing challenging life experiences as they seek to make sense of their world. Some play can have a harmful effect on developing identities, and may reinforce inappropriate stereotypes and power relationships. Play, therefore, provides meaningful contexts for sensitively examining with children underlying assumptions and issues, such as fairness and bias. This can enable children to consider alternatives and take action to address inequities.
TYPES OF EDUCATIONAL PLAY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of play</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socio-dramatic</td>
<td>Children setting up and running a flower shop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>Children creating props for space adventures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Exploring the properties of new manipulative or construction materials; looking through magnifier / lenses to see how they work and the effect they have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulative</td>
<td>Doing puzzles, making necklaces or constructions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Running, hopping, skipping, climbing, moving through obstacle courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games with rules</td>
<td>Playing board and card games; outdoor games; child-created games with rules.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While early childhood teachers view play through an educational lens, children engage in play for different purposes. For children, play is a way to develop relationships or organise and make sense of their world. When children engage in play, they bring diverse background experiences, developing identities and perceptions about their own and others’ social and cultural experiences. They draw on their own experiences and perceptions of others to create contexts in which to play.

Play is particularly effective for learning the foundational concepts, oral language, thinking processes and social competence that children require to be successful learners in school. When children learn through play and are actively engaged in learning, new understandings, capabilities and dispositions are more likely to be sustained and extended over time. With experience, children's play changes to become more socially and intellectually complex.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key component</th>
<th>Brief description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding children</td>
<td>Discusses characteristics of young learners, and ways that teachers develop understandings about children’s prior experiences and respond to diversity, including: • understanding children’s prior experiences; • understanding children’s learning; • understanding learning and development in educational contexts; • building understandings about children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building partnerships</td>
<td>Describes key partnerships and the teacher’s role in building and maintaining partnerships. Partnerships in the Prep program involve: • children; • families and carers; • communities; • other professionals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishing flexible learning</td>
<td>Describes key aspects of flexible learning environments, including: • physical environments; • social environments; • temporary environments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating contexts for learning and</td>
<td>Explores decision making about contexts, and identifies five important contexts for learning: • play; • real-life situations; • investigations; • routines and transitions; • focused learning and teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploring what children learn</td>
<td>Describes the understandings, capabilities and dispositions developed during the Prep Year, and gives some examples of the links between them. The early learning areas are: • Social &amp; personal learning; • Health &amp; physical learning; • Language learning &amp; communication; • Early mathematical understandings; • Active learning processes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHAT WILL MY CHILD LEARN IN THE PREP YEAR?**

The learning experiences in the Prep Year will help your child to:

- *take on responsibilities;*
- *become more independent;*
- *respect other people;*
- *cooperate with others;*
- *make sensible choices about their health and safety;*
- *develop their physical skills;*
- *develop their oral language;*
- *develop their understanding of literacy and numeracy;*
- *learn how to be thinkers and problem solvers;*
- *use their imagination and creativity;*
- *learn about their environment.*
WHAT WILL I SEE MY CHILD DOING?

Your child will be:

- investigating interests;
- making choices;
- talking with teachers and other children;
- planning with their teacher about the things they might do, and carrying out their plans;
- designing and making things;
- singing, dancing and painting;
- listening to stories;
- playing games indoors and outdoors;
- climbing, balancing, jumping;
- planning and sharing in make-believe play;
- using computers to draw pictures, make signs, play games and find out about the world;
- taking part in everyday experiences like gardening, cooking and tidying up;
- writing and copying signs during their play;
- learning about size, shape, weight and measurement as they construct things indoors and outdoors.

LETTERLAND

Letterland is a unique multi-sensory English literacy program. Letterland is a special place where letters live. The Letterland system uses pictograms to help children learn:

- Phonemic awareness.
- Phonics instruction.
- Reading.
- Spelling skills.
- Handwriting skills.

The Early Years Letterland Program teaches children to:

- Recognise capital and lower case letter shapes.
- Form letters correctly.
- Link letter sounds to their shapes.
- Sort out letter reversals.

Letterland is everywhere where there are letters and words. Letterland can be in the supermarket, on the bus, at the zoo, in the classroom and of course in books. The friendly Letterland characters bring the alphabet to life and make the job of mastering letters and words a memorable adventure.
Tripod Grip

1 - Tall Finger (side)
2 - Thumb (pad)
3 - Pointing Finger (tip)
All fingers are slightly bent.

Don't do this!
Pressure on the pointing finger.
All fingers pulled into a fist.
HOW DOES PREP HELP MY CHILD FOR YEAR 1?

The Year 1 curriculum builds on the curriculum in the Prep Year. The curriculum in the Prep Year is designed to provide the foundation that children need for success in later schooling. International research has identified several factors that influence success at school. These are:

- Independence;
- social learning;
- health and physical development;
- language development;
- early understanding of literacy and numeracy;
- ability to think and solve problems;
- imagination and creativity;
- a positive approach to learning.

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD?

- Share information about your child with the teacher. This information is always confidential.
- Chat with your child about what they're doing at school.
- Visit the classroom for a brief chat or to take part in daily activities or special events.
- Encourage your child to experiment with various materials and equipment.
- Encourage your child to explore different ways to organise areas, eg their bedroom, play area, cubby.
- Read together and talk about everyday items such as signs, notices, letters, catalogues, magazines, TV guides, food packaging and bills.
- Read and talk frequently about storybooks, factual books and rhymes.
- Make available a variety of materials and containers for measuring such things as water, grain and sand.
- Involve your child in family activities that investigate mathematical ideas eg cooking, setting the table, matching socks, sharing a meal.
- Provide “junk” materials for drawing, making patterns, and building things.

LEARNING THE SYMBOL SYSTEMS

Children have a diverse range of early experiences with the shared symbol systems of literacy and numeracy. Children living in communities where symbols and print abound can discuss why and where they are used. These children know the symbols for such things as petrol stations, railway crossings, fast food outlets, stop signs and traffic lights. They look through catalogues for the toys, scooters, DVDs and computer games available for purchase. They understand that menus are used to order food in eating places. Children in environments not well supplied with symbols and print may still identify culturally significant symbols, favourite logos, and words from television, computer games and magazines. They realise that symbols have meaning.

Some children are engaged in many literacy and numeracy events — such as writing party invitations, birthday cards and lists, assembling toys from instructions, sharing food and toys equally with their families, and grouping objects. Some have been using quantitative thinking about fixed quantities — counting cars, shells, oranges — and continuous quantities like sand and water, for some time. If an adult or older child has been present, children may also have learnt some of the language that is part of those literacy and numeracy experiences.

Being read to, reading books and talking about symbols may be new experiences for some children. Playing with language and learning rhyming verses may also be a new experience for many children. When teachers understand children’s prior experiences, they are able to select rhymes, songs and texts that are understandable and enjoyable to all children.

Children develop their early understandings of reading and writing through experiences involving reading and writing with more experienced people. Through these experiences, children develop many understandings about written language and its social purposes and will develop products like menus and notices for their play. Initially, children do not understand that words can represent speech written down — that realisation comes through many experiences of co-constructing texts with literate people demonstrating how they turn their thoughts into speech and their speech into written words. Once children understand this, they experiment with representing their spoken thoughts using their emergent understandings about letters and symbols.
REPORTING

Report cards are issued at the end of Semester 1 and Semester 2. These reports are quite comprehensive but we encourage all parents/guardians to make an appointment to see the prep teacher at any time during the year if they have any questions regarding their child's progress, or aspects of the Prep Year curriculum or management.

Teachers monitor and assess by gathering information and evidence over time to build an overall picture of the children’s learning.

Teachers:

- Observe children as they learn.
- Talk with children about their learning.
- Help children identify what they have learnt.
- Gather the things children produce during their learning.
- Comment on children’s learning in relation to the curriculum.
- Have formal and informal discussions with parents, carers and professional colleagues.

Teachers and children will organise evidence of learning into individual folios. This folio becomes a dynamic record of the examples of a child’s learning in the Prep Year.

Teachers will use the early learning record to document judgements made about a child’s learning in relation to the Prep Year learning statements. The early learning record uses four phases to describe a continuum of learning in relation to the learning statements.

These phases are:

- Becoming Aware.
- Exploring.
- Making Connections.
- Applying.
**THE PHASES OF LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Becoming aware</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rely on their personal observations and habitual behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Need explicit support to engage with new learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use their learning in limited contexts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children become aware of new things in their lives. They watch and listen to an activity and discuss new objects, representations, people and practices. They may randomly explore the attributes of new materials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exploring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Construct personal understandings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Need support to engage with new learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use their learning in familiar contexts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children explore new objects, representations and social practices for their own purposes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Making connections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Make connections between their personal understandings and commonly accepted understandings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Need some prompts to engage with and talk about the new learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are beginning to transfer their learning across familiar contexts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children begin to represent their ideas and understandings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Applying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More readily recall and explain their conceptual understandings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Apply their knowledge of the new learning independently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Confidently transfer their learning across familiar contexts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children confidently plan, explain and reflect on their learning.

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**BIRTHDAYS**

We like to help celebrate birthdays in our Prep classes. Please feel free to send a cake on this day and we can have a “Birthday Party” at school. Please let the teacher know beforehand.

**TREASURES FROM HOME**

Toys or jewellery can often get lost or broken when brought to school, so it saves anxiety if these are kept safely at home. Electronic devices (e.g. iPods, electronic games) are not permitted at school.

**OTHER SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

Please ensure your child has all items as listed on the booklist. In addition, they will need a school bag, lunchbox, cooler brick and drink flask. Please make sure the child’s school bag is large enough to easily accommodate your child’s lunchbox, drink bottle, school hat and school jacket.

**STUDENT SAFETY**

Children are to be brought to and collected from their Prep class by a responsible adult known to the teacher. We will not release any child to a stranger. If your child is to be collected by anyone other than the usual person, please let us know beforehand. Most parents are very thoughtful about collecting children at the correct time. If, on the rare occasion, you are held up, a phone call would be appreciated.
HEALTH POLICY

If your child is sick, he / she should be kept at home until the illness passes. With so many children together, it is very easy to pass on sickness. Definite periods of exclusion apply to sufferers of the common childhood illnesses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Illness</th>
<th>Exclusion Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CHICKEN POX</td>
<td>Should be excluded for at least 5 days after the onset of the illness and until the last lesion has healed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEASLES</td>
<td>Should be excluded for at least 4 days from the appearance of the rash or until a medical certificate of recovery is produced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GERMAN MEASLES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUMPS</td>
<td>Should be excluded for at least 9 days or until swelling goes down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHOOPING COUGH</td>
<td>Should be excluded for 14 days from onset of coughing or until child has taken 5 days of a 7 day course of antibiotics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEAD LICE</td>
<td>Should be excluded from Prep until treated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have any concerns regarding illnesses, please talk to your child’s teacher. Please phone the school if your child is to be absent for more than two days.

MEDICATION

The school cannot administer any medication unless it is accompanied by written instructions from the doctor. The medication must be sent in the original box or bottle with a chemist label attached. Over the counter medications cannot be administered.

ESTABLISHING ROUTINES

Try to establish ‘before’ and ‘after’ school routines, such as getting dressed and packed before breakfast. This will help the mornings and afternoons run a little more smoothly.

Roads around schools are busy during ‘drop off’ and ‘pick up’ times. Please assist your child in developing good road safety habits by supervising them crossing any roads.

Please observe all signage and traffic laws to ensure maximum safety for all road users and pedestrians. Please be patient and tolerant on the roads around our schools. When picking up or dropping off your child, remember the other children at the school. Avoid the temptation of parking in the easy, yet illegal spot next to the crossing. It puts everyone at risk. To ensure the safety of all students, make sure you do not park in any ‘No Parking’ area. Parking in these areas may obstruct the vision of other road users and pedestrians. The driveway into the Administration block is not an access road for the general public. Driving into this area endangers our students.

KEEPING UP HOME AND SCHOOL LINKS

Read newsletters and notes that are regularly sent home. This will keep you in touch with what’s happening at school. If you are unsure of the details, of up-coming events, phone the school for information or ask the teacher.

Family involvement is highly valued in our Prep rooms. Collecting junk, helping in classrooms and sharing your valuable expertise are all wonderful ways that can enhance your child’s education.

Sometimes, after having gone to school for two or three days your child may not want to go any more. This is not uncommon. Your child may have just realized that going to school and leaving mum and dad behind is a regular event. Be sensitive and respectful of your child’s needs and emotions when handling this problem. In cases where children are just not happy within a few days of school, there may be greater problems involved and these must be investigated. Don’t be afraid to talk with the teacher about this.

Maintain open communications with the school. If you have any concerns about your child’s welfare or development, discuss them with your teacher.

Sometimes children seem to take a step backwards in their learning before advancing forwards. Give your child time to adjust to school. It is only when they are comfortable at school that they can be expected to learn and advance.
THE FIRST DAY!

MAKING IT EASIER

The ‘Big Day’ has finally arrived. The best way you can help your child is to be relaxed and positive. This will help your child to feel this way too.

ARE YOU PREPARED?

- Does your child know who is picking them up? This is very important.
- Is the appropriate food packed for the day? If you give your child too much food, they sometimes feel that they have to eat it all and they don’t have time to play.
- Is their schoolbag too heavy for them to lift by themselves? Let them carry it themselves - it will make them feel independent and like a ‘big school’ person.
- Are all school clothes labeled clearly with your child’s name?
- Have you packed everything the school has asked your child to bring?
- Have you given yourself plenty of time to get ready, so you can stay calm and relaxed?

HOW TO LEAVE YOUR CHILD

If your child is crying, remember you will have to leave eventually. If you are having a problem, ask the teacher for help. Teachers of children in this age group have acquired a lot of skills and experience in these matters and will suggest strategies that have had proven success. Some strategies they may suggest include:

DO

Try to make the leaving brief, but not hurried. Tell your child a few minutes ahead of time that you will be leaving.

Let your child know what time you will be back to pick them up. Explain this in a way that they will understand, for example, after lunchtime.

Accept your child’s protests at leaving, sympathetically and reassure them that you will be back to pick them up.

Let the teacher try to involve your child in an activity. This will ease his / her crying.

When saying goodbye, be calm yet definite. This will help your child to accept the separation.

DON’T

Don’t slip out quietly without saying goodbye. It will be difficult for your child to trust you in future goodbyes.

Don’t show your child you are upset. This will cause your child to become more upset.

If you are worried about your child after you have left, don’t return to the classroom before it is time to pick them up. This will only make your child upset again. Instead, ring the school to ask if he / she is okay.

REMBEMBER

The moment you leave is usually the most distressing for a child.

The crying often stops within minutes.

He / she will then be occupied with interesting things for the rest of the day.
THE END OF THE DAY

The end of the day is as important as the beginning of the day. For the first few weeks, it is better to meet your child yourself if you can manage it. Knowing that mum or dad will be there at the end of the day can be reassuring. If this is not possible, have the same person pick him/her up each day.

If your child is not very talkative at first, don’t keep asking him/her what he/she has been doing. He/she is probably very tired and overwhelmed. He/she has had many new experiences and will need a chance to sort them out.

Be sure to collect ON TIME, especially if he/she is experiencing anxiety. It can be very frightening to be the last child to be picked up.

TOWARDS A GREAT SCHOOL YEAR

It would be nice to say that after the first day, it is clear sailing. However, school life is full of ups and downs. Here are some handy hints to keep the school year running smoothly.

- Going to school is very important. For children to understand the value of school, parents must support its value. Therefore, try to make appointments such as doctors and dentists outside school hours and only keep your child home if he or she is sick.
- At the end of the day, try not to ask questions such as ‘What did you do today?’ A child’s answer to this question will normally be that he or she played or did nothing. Instead, ask a directed question such as ‘What story did you read today?’ or ‘What song did you learn today?’
- Develop good eating habits for school life. A child who has breakfast each morning and who eats nutritiously at school is able to concentrate more at school.
- Praise any work your child brings home. Look for good things he or she is doing and talk positively about them.
- Your child’s friends matter a great deal. Show an interest in his or her friends and encourage him or her to invite friends over to play.
- Pack a spare pair of underpants and set of clothes in your child’s school bag. These will help in those embarrassing moments.
- Don’t worry if your child plays alone. Developmentally they may not be ready to play with another child. This is very normal. As children mature, they will move from playing alone, to playing with other children. Allow plenty of time for hobbies and play. Avoid the temptation to over-organise your child’s life with sport and other formal activities after school.