PREP INFORMATION HANDBOOK

WHAT IS PREP?

The exciting journey of learning begins at birth and continues throughout life. As we interact with others and the world around us, we are constantly learning, especially through experiences at home, in the wider community and at school. Prep is a step in the continuum of lifelong education and refers specifically to that year of school experiences prior to entry to the Year One class. At St Andrews Lutheran College we acknowledge that Prep is an integral component of schooling.

Our Prep teaching is based on the belief that all students are unique and worthy individuals. We are committed to the holistic development of the learner – spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically. Therefore, our curriculum endeavours to cater for different learning styles and offers a variety of experiences to develop each child as a lifelong learner.

The program offered through Prep strives to:

- Promote the child’s development in each Foundation Learning Area:
  * Thinking
  * Communicating
  * Sense of Self and Others
  * Social Living and Learning
  * Health and Physical Understanding
  * Cultural Understanding
  * Understanding Environments

- Foster the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes, which will assist in further learning.

- Use the Queensland Early Years Curriculum Guidelines along with the Queensland Studies Authority syllabus documents to implement a quality program, incorporating the five key components:
  * exploring content through the foundation learning areas
  * providing a flexible learning environment which encourages children to make choices and negotiate
  * understanding children to assist us to provide an equitable program which caters for individuals
  * supporting and valuing quality play as a child’s first hand experience, and promoting quality interactions
  * building partnerships and establishing effective communication between children, parents and teachers

- Assist each child in making a smooth transition from home to school, with a gradual introduction to school life: e.g.
  * cooperative learning in the classroom
  * feeling of security away from the home environment
  * familiarisation with routines, physical amenities and membership of the wider school environment
**AIMS OF OUR PREP PROGRAM**

The aim of our Prep program is to help each child:

- To know that Christ is central to children’s lives and is always with them, loves them and forgives them
- To know that he/she is a unique and special gift from God
- To develop independence and a positive self-esteem
- To communicate effectively, cooperate with others, appreciate the rights of others and to make friends
- To have confidence in his/her own abilities as problem-solvers and critical thinkers
- To develop physical skills such as fine and gross motor skills, and to enhance co-ordination
- To develop Literacy, Numeracy and complex reasoning skills
- To experiment with individual creativity and expression
- To develop an understanding of school routine and make a smooth transition into formal schooling
- To identify and support those with special needs
- To develop an appreciation of and enjoyment in caring for the environment

**HOW DOES THE PREP PROGRAM OPERATE?**

At St Andrews we believe that learning opportunities are maximized when children actively engage with materials and experiences to make meaning of the world around them. The Prep curriculum at St Andrews Lutheran College encompasses an inquiry based program, based on the principles and practise of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program (PYP) which includes active learning, play-based learning and skills-based activities. Our Prep program is designed to stimulate thinking and reasoning. We create meaningful contexts where children can inquire, explore, manipulate objects and respond in their own ways. This helps to develop their spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive and physical abilities. For this reason, a wide variety of activities may be offered throughout the day in a variety of challenging contexts.

St Andrews Lutheran College has three Prep classes where cooperative planning between teachers takes place. Each class is under the care and guidance of a qualified Early Childhood Teaching specialist who is supported by a full-time Teacher Assistant.

The three classes come together on a regular basis as a Year Level and will also have many opportunities to interact with other year levels. This interaction has valuable benefits such as:

- The children become acquainted with one another, allowing for positive interaction with peers across all Prep and other year levels;
- The children become familiar with all Prep and other staff and feel more confident when they encounter them elsewhere, e.g. in the playground;
- The children are exposed to a variety of teachers with expertise in particular areas.

*Semester One* is a time of transition for the children as they become familiar with the school environment and its expectations. During the first weeks classes are flexible and may be changed as we get to know the individual children better. Opportunities for inquiry, investigations and play are encouraged as well as structured teaching/learning activities that develop more specific skills.
There is a gradual introduction of a more formal and structured approach with a focus on reading, writing, phonics and mathematical activities. Students are involved in daily literacy rotations where they take part in fun activities which have been specifically designed to provide enough challenges to build on each child’s skills to provide encouragement, and to increase confidence. Students are involved in Units of Inquiry that integrate their learning. The use of symbolic, dramatic and imaginative play can be used as a tool for inquiry to promote higher levels of communication and language development, complex reasoning and critical thinking.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY

Learning Through Play and Inquiry

Play is the fundamental medium for young children’s learning. Play facilitates learning across all subject disciplines and is a major focus for the process of inquiry. It provides a pleasant, non-threatening vehicle for learning as children interact with one another and with a variety of materials as they make sense of the world around them. Through play and inquiry, children are empowered as learners and develop a sense of mastery over their world, which enhances their self-esteem and builds positive attitudes towards lifelong learning.

Children are provided with opportunities to: socialize, explore, establish and build close friendships; develop and improve their physical abilities; be creative in problem solving; and interact in a variety of activities that enhance their development and build confidence.

Benefits of Play

Children are...

• Learning to represent their ideas in a variety of forms – inquiring, talking about their thoughts, constructing, painting, building, drawing and taking on roles
• Developing social skills – communicating, caring, negotiating, cooperating, sharing
• Engaging with the perspectives of others as they negotiate roles and solve problems
• Building foundations for early Literacy and Numeracy through games that enhance cognitive skills
• Accessing and applying prior knowledge through exploration and recreation of familiar events
• Acquiring new knowledge about themselves and their world as they play with others
• Developing imagination – using flexible and creative thinking in adapting to situations and finding solutions to problems
• Making meaning of their world by exploring a range of community and family roles
• Experimenting and making discoveries in a non-threatening way
• Able to work at their own pace and at their own level

INFLUENCING BEHAVIOUR

St Andrews Lutheran College has an Influencing Behaviour in a Relational Framework Policy, which applies to Years P-12. Details of this policy are available on the College website.
The principles of the **Influencing Behaviour in a Relational Framework Policy** are that:

- Appropriate behaviour is influenced positively when clear and consistent expectations and consequences are shared through partnership between home and school.
- All members of the College community have the right to be treated with dignity and respect in a caring environment.
- Responsible behavior is reinforced and processes for dealing with irresponsible behaviours are established.
- Through developing positive relationships with staff and students, self-esteem and self-discipline can be promoted and enhanced.
- Students have the right to learn and teachers to teach, in a secure, success-oriented, empowering learning environment.

**CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Prep students will be involved in a wide variety of whole school activities to enhance their learning throughout the year. Some of these include:

- Assembly and Chapel
- Special Sunday Church Services (one per year)
- Student Led Conferences
- P&F functions, e.g. School Fete
- Sports Day - Mini Olympics

A benefit of being part of a school is that children are able to participate in the following activities, with the assistance of a specialist single subject teacher in some areas. These include:

- **Health, Physical & Social Education**
- **Additional Language of Instruction (Japanese)**
- **Music**
- **Library**

In addition to these activities that are integral to the Prep curriculum, the following extra-curricular activities are available for Prep students:

- Piano
- Music extension

Further details regarding co-curricular activities are available from the College website: [www.standrewslutheran.qld.edu.au](http://www.standrewslutheran.qld.edu.au)

**DAILY ROUTINES**

**School Times**

Prep begins at **8.25 am** and finishes at **2.55 pm**. At the beginning of the year all children should be walked to the classroom door in the morning **no earlier** than **7.50 am** as there is no-one on duty before this time. From 2.55 pm, children may be collected from the Prep foyer by the designated adult. Those with older siblings are escorted by the Prep Assistants to the Bus Shelter in the afternoon from Week 3. They are supervised until they are collected by their older brothers or sisters. From Week 3 onwards, the Prep students are delivered to the Prep verandah via the side gate. Any children remaining...
at school at **3.30 pm** will be taken to the Main College office.

On arrival, please note the following:

- From 7.50 am – 8.00 am children are supervised on the verandah by Prep Assistants who are on duty from 7.50 am, as all teachers attend daily meetings until 8.25 am.
- Children are permitted to play on playground equipment before school from 8.00 am, and are supervised by Prep Assistants.
- Once your child is settled, we ask that you leave fairly promptly. This assists in developing independence in your child and allows staff to commence the daily program on time.
- If you wish to socialise with other parents, please do so out of the sight of the children as this assists students to settle in and focus on their learning for the day.

**Quiet Time**

During their time in Prep, children are constantly gaining new knowledge through active learning. They are encouraged to think, reason and solve problems for themselves as much as possible. Children involved in this type of Prep program use a lot of energy and may require a rest period during the day. Every day after the 2nd break play period the children will have an opportunity to rest. Music or story tapes will be played during this time to assist the development of auditory skills. Later in the year Quiet Time becomes Silent Reading Time.

**EATING AND PLAY ARRANGEMENTS**

**Breaks**

A **fruitbreak** is held in the middle of each morning session at which time the children will require a piece of fresh fruit.

Two breaks are held each day, **1st Break and 2nd Break**. Lunch is eaten at first break and afternoon tea is eaten at second break. Please note that staff members supervise all children at all times during the breaks. During the earlier part of the year, eating times are extended for Prep to allow for a more relaxed eating environment.

**Suggestions for Lunch are:** A sandwich, roll, or cracker biscuits with a healthy filling. Fruit, yoghurt, cheese, health bars, vegetables, etc. and a drink (fruit juice, juice-based cordial or water, not soft drink).

**Suggestions for Afternoon Tea are:** Fruit (fresh/peeled/cored, dried), vegetables - sliced/diced/cubed, yoghurt (with spoon), health bars, cracker biscuits, cheese and a drink.

Some snacks are not appropriate for school as they provide little nutritional value for busy children always on the go. Please **do not** send chocolates, chips, lollies, twisties, sweet biscuits, fairy bread, roll-ups etc. Sharing of food from lunch boxes is not permitted and we ask that you **do not send any nut based foods** i.e. peanut butter or nutella sandwiches or whole nut snacks as some children have nut allergies. As we encourage your child to eat whatever you have provided for them, please ensure that you only pack foods that they enjoy, and are ready to eat in just the right amount. Children at Prep are often too busy to eat a lot!

**Tuckshop**

A tuckshop operates daily. Orders for 1st Break and 2nd Break must be written on
separate paper bags with the correct amount of money in each. The paper bags are placed in the class tuckshop box upon arrival at school, (we request that you allow your child to do this under your supervision); the orders are then delivered to the classroom at the breaks. Prep children are not permitted to go to the tuckshop to make individual purchases.

Drinks

At all times throughout the day, your child has access to and is encouraged to drink water from the Prep bubblers.

Hygiene

Your child’s health is of primary importance to us and we encourage students to be conscious of their personal safety. As part of this training, time is set aside each day before 1st and 2nd Breaks for handwashing (in addition to incidental cleanups after paint etc). Each child will have their own space to hang their personal hand towel (from the Uniform Shop in the House Colour).

PLAYTIME ARRANGEMENTS

The children are given the opportunity to play at 1st and 2nd break times on the play area adjacent to the Prep buildings with other children in Years P-3 and under the supervision of teachers and Prep Assistants. This provides the children with an opportunity to interact with older children to build friendships, and develop social skills as well as time to engage in unstructured play. The College provides all play equipment and, therefore, children are not to bring their own toys.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

The staff members of St Andrews highly value open communication between home and school. A formal structure has been put in place to facilitate this:

- **Three-way conferences** are conducted at the end of Term One and every parent is encouraged to attend. Student Led Conferences are scheduled at the end of Term 3.

  A report card is sent home at the end of each semester (July & December).

- Parents are welcome to speak with the class teacher regarding your child’s progress at any stage throughout the year. However, we do request that you make an appointment for these meetings, as teachers cannot give you their full attention while supervising children.

- Each child will have a message book. If you have a message for the teacher simply write it in the book and place the book in your child’s blue reading/homework folder or ‘Notes to Teacher’ box. Your message will be replied to and then returned to your child’s bag.

- Emailing teachers is also encouraged. Email addresses will be provided at the beginning of the year.

- Throughout the terms you will receive the ‘PREP PRESS’ which keeps you informed of upcoming events etc. You will find these and any other bulletins in your child’s blue reading/homework folders. Please check it each day.
HOW PARENTS CAN BE INVOLVED IN THE SCHOOL

Parent involvement and support is encouraged and valued at St Andrews Lutheran College. In Prep we recommend that parent help commences in Term Two. This allows your child to have time to settle into school and develop some independence. Parents have assisted in a variety of ways, some of which include:

- Praying for staff and children
- Volunteering for regular rostered duty, e.g. washing art shirts
- Assisting teachers and assistants with preparation and clean-up of craft activities, sharpening pencils, washing paint pots etc
- Making games and puzzles
- Encouraging your child to read any books which he/she has borrowed from the College
- Encouraging your child to look for letters and words of the week
- Encouraging children in their active learning
- Sharing parent skills and interests
- Offering time or donations during school fundraisers
- Thoroughly reading all newsletters with your child
- Being involved in classroom activities
- Participating in the parent education programs offered by the school, e.g. Support-a-reader
- Providing information about your child’s interests and abilities
- Volunteering as a Traffic Safety Assistant
- Attending Chapel services and Assemblies and special occasions, e.g. Mini Olympics, Preps’ Special Sunday Service
- Active support of the P&F Association
- Collection and supply of recyclable materials (boxes, margarine/ice-cream/yoghurt containers, cardboard egg-cartons, plastic lids, old magazines, yarns of wool, empty cotton reels, string, old chamois, lace/fabric remnants etc.- anything you are throwing out may be useful to us). Before throwing anything out – check with us first!

GENERAL INFORMATION

Birthdays

We love to share your child’s special day with him/her and encourage you to bring in cakes or ice blocks to help in the celebration. We recommend:

- **Little patty cakes** be prepared for each child (28 per class), as a large sponge cake is difficult to share between a large number of children
- All **party invitations** are to be handed to the Class Teacher or Prep Assistant who
will put them into children’s homework folders. Little ones feel very disappointed when others receive an invitation and they don’t.

**Unit of Inquiry Resources**

Books and items related to the current Unit of Inquiry are used in the classroom. This encourages the children to expand their experiences, and stimulates their language, speech and reading. We always need help in the supply of these items and request that parents take a keen interest in the unit and send along any items you feel are relevant.

**Personal Property**

All uniform items, school bags, lunch boxes and other personally-owned items should be **clearly labelled with the child’s name**. When naming items and when teaching your child to write his/her own name, please use a capital for the initial letter ONLY and then lower case for the remainder of the name e.g. ‘Sarah’ NOT ‘SARAH’. To help your child get a headstart with their writing skills, a copy of the Queensland script handwriting is included in the back of this booklet.

Any items for Show and Tell must also be clearly labelled. Please note that toys are not permitted at school for Show and Tell. Your child’s teacher will provide recommendations of suitable items that may be related to Primary Years Program Units of Inquiry/letter of the week etc., as well as a roster with your child’s day for Show and Tell.

**PREP BOYS UNIFORM REGULATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sports top</strong></td>
<td>House coloured polo shirt (P-6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unisex shorts</strong></td>
<td>Navy with College name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hat</strong></td>
<td>Floppy, broad-brimmed navy sports hat with College crest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socks</strong></td>
<td>Ankle-length socks with College name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shoes</strong></td>
<td>Mainly white lace-up or velcro sports shoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tracksuit</strong></td>
<td>Blue, red and white zipped jacket with College crest. Matching tracksuit pants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>College bag</strong></td>
<td>Navy blue with College crest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note: Unisex shorts may be worn under tracksuit pants.

**PREP GIRLS UNIFORM REGULATIONS**

<table>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sports top</strong></td>
<td>House-colour polo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unisex shorts</strong></td>
<td>Navy blue with College name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hat</strong></td>
<td>Floppy, broad-brimmed sports hat with College crest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socks</strong></td>
<td>Ankle-length socks with College name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shoes</strong></td>
<td>Mainly white leather sports shoes (lace-up or velcro)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tracksuit</strong></td>
<td>Navy, red and white zipped jacket with College crest. Matching tracksuit pants.</td>
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<td><strong>College bag</strong></td>
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Please note: Unisex shorts may be worn under tracksuit pants.
PREP ATTENDANCE POLICY

Please ensure regular attendance, as each day’s work is built upon the previous day’s work. However, a sick child does not give his/her best, so he/she should be kept at home for maximum care to ensure a speedy recovery. Please phone the College on the morning of a child’s absence and send a written note explaining the absence to the class teacher when the child returns to Prep.

Any requests for leave, other than for illness, should be sent to the Deputy Head of Junior School (P-3), well in advance of the anticipated absence.
PENCIL GRIP & PAPER POSITION

Pencil grip

Left-handed

Right-handed

Paper position

Left-handed

Right-handed
BEGINNER’S ALPHABET

a A b B c C

d D e E f F

g G h H i I

j J k K l L
CORRECT WRITING POSTURE

- Forearm on the table
- Relaxed hand
- Hold pencil between tip of thumb and index finger
- Second finger underneath
- HB pencil is best