

Biddeston State School

Get Set for Prep
2018



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Education is a partnership

WELCOME!

We extend a warm and hearty welcome to you, as parents of our Prep year students at Biddeston School. We hope that this will be an enjoyable year for both you and your child as we work together to provide the best possible learning opportunities for your child.

Biddeston State School offers a wonderful start for your child's learning. Developing a love of learning, celebrating success and establishing the building blocks for future learning are the core elements of a quality Prep curriculum program.

Our teaching assistants help to deliver a variety of direct teaching lessons, indoor & outdoor learning experiences, group tasks and individual activities.

The teacher is responsible for the planning, implementation and organisation of the programs based on the Australian Curriculum.

Every day counts! Absenteeism causes loss of continuity in learning and disadvantages your child. Consistent attendance enables your child to make learning successes more readily.

Prep is the first year of the Early Phase of Learning which spans from Prep to Year 3.



Whole School Philosophy



Creating and sustaining a
LEARNING COMMUNITY
Where everyone continually learns and grows

Through

Learners who:

- are unique individuals
- have a broad interest in knowledge and life experience which affects the meaning they gain from new learning
- learn in many different ways and different stages
- are resilient and self confident

Learning which:

- is a lifelong process
- is more effective when it is
 - a.) is supportive, collaborative, challenging, relevant, meaningful and fun
 - b.) involves active partnerships

Leading To

- Lifelong Learners who:
- Are enthusiastic about continued learning
 - Have a breadth of grounding with a strong moral and ethical foundation



Early Years Philosophy

These Understandings and Beliefs about Young Children underpin our Early Years Philosophy.

Our children:-

- come from diverse backgrounds, are at varied stages of development and have varied learning styles
- work best in a safe environment with flexible, meaningful activities
- benefit from strong working partnerships between families and the school community

How Young Children Learn

Our children learn best:-

Through multi-sensory experiences and active exploration incorporating Physical, Intellectual, Language, Emotional and Social skills

- in a non-competitive environment where efforts are valued
- in a supportive environment where learning is built around prior experiences
- when involved in developmentally appropriate decision making
- where flexibility and routine co-exist

The Role of the Early Childhood Teacher

The teacher:-

- is a facilitator
- is a co-ordinator
- develops social skills
- values child-centred learning
- develops partnerships
- develops and implements age appropriate curriculum
- is a resource manager
- supports all stakeholders
- understands the phases of child development



The Early Years Curriculum

The Australian Curriculum, in conjunction with the Early Years Curriculum Guidelines, has been designed for use in all Preparatory Year classes. The curriculum is designed to provide all students with a solid foundation to their learning and provide the springboard to future learning success. The Preparatory Year is focused on *child-centred, play-based learning. Inquiry-based learning and investigations* are key elements of the curriculum.

Our teachers plan for children's learning using English, Maths, Science, History & Geography (Australian Curriculum) and the *Early Learning Areas (Early Years Curriculum Guidelines)*:

- Health and physical learning
- Active learning processes

These *Early Learning Areas* are linked to our school's curriculum with a strong focus on literacy and numeracy. In the Early Years, children learn through:

- Focused learning and teaching
- Investigations
- Routines and transitions
- Play
- Real Life Situations

Some of the learning experiences that your child will encounter include:

- Constructing using blocks, collage and manipulative equipment to develop early mathematical concepts and skills
- Initiating and participating in dramatic play to build an understanding of the world around them
- Drawing and painting to encourage oral language, reading and writing skills
- Writing stories and copying signs as part of their play, constructions and art
- Playing and investigating independently, in pairs, small groups and as a whole class
- Actively making choices about what and how they learn
- Investigating and learning how to inquire about their interests
- Planning collaboratively with the teacher using a plan-do-reflect model
- Participating in music and language experiences

These learning experiences assist children to:

- Develop early literacy and numeracy skills
- Understand and use language to group, sort and describe objects and to communicate ideas, feelings and needs
- Become independent thinkers and problem-solvers
- Learn how to co-operate with others
- Develop physical co-ordination skills
- Listen, respond to and give directions
- Become confident at taking risks in their learning
- Make good choices

The teacher's planning responds to the children's needs and interests. Teachers monitor, assess and reflect on children's learning by:

- Understanding children
- Building partnerships
- Establishing flexible learning environments
- Creating contexts for learning
- Exploring what children learn



The Preparatory Year of Schooling

Prep is a full time five day per week program. Students born within the following dates are eligible to enrol in Prep.

- For 2017 – 1 July 2011 – 30 June 2012
- For 2018 – 1 July 2012 – 30 June 2013

Prep Staff

Our Prep Class has a qualified Early Years Teacher who develops and delivers the learning experiences for your child. In addition, we are fortunate to have the support of teacher aides full time in the Prep/Year 1 class. These are warm, friendly, experienced, skilled and creative ladies who enable the teacher to run a multilevel program with great efficiency.

Prep Enrolment Process

1. Parents may place their child on the *Prep Future Student List* at any time at the administration office.
2. *Completed enrolment forms* will be accepted at the office any time during the year prior to your child beginning Prep. Enrolment forms for students on the Future Prep list will be posted to parents in Term 3. Once completed, they need to be returned to the office for processing. Along with an *Application for Enrolment*, parents are asked to complete an *Interview Form* which gives details of the student's life experiences to date and helps the teacher to accommodate differing situations.
3. A *Prep Parent Information Session* will be held during Term 4.
4. *Prep Enrolment Interviews* will be conducted as part of the Orientation Days. The administration staff will contact parents to make a suitable appointment time.

Specialist Programs

Prep students will participate in Music and Physical Education and other school activities. Students participate in these lessons each week.

Swimming is conducted in Term 4. The swimming program is conducted by qualified swimming instructors. In 2017, we are using the Oakey Pool. Students travel to and from the pool on the school bus. A group of eight lessons spread over four days has proven to bring great results. The cost of admission and lessons is approximately \$70.

Resource Centre

Each week in class time, Prep students will go to the library for borrow library books. Students **MUST** use a library bag to protect the books whilst they are in the students' care. Mrs Shaw looks after the library. There is a range of titles on various subjects available for parents to borrow as well. If there's a topic of interest, don't be afraid to talk to Mrs Shaw.

One day a week, Mrs Shaw conducts craft activities in the Resource Centre for those students who wish to participate.

School Events

As the year progresses there will be several whole school events or year level activities for Prep students to participate in, for example Athletics Carnival, Book Fair, Under 8's, Swimming Carnival or other school activities. As each event approaches information will be provided to parents via the newsletter and/or class letters. It is vital that parents read these notes to ensure children are fully prepared for every activity.

Breaks

Snack break is at 10am each day. The only food to be eaten at this time is fruit or vegetables which may be fresh or dried.

Students are supervised while eating their lunch. We encourage eating of sandwiches and fruit first and leave any treats for second break.

There is always a staff member on duty to supervise children's play time. Children can borrow balls, frisbees and skipping ropes from the sports shed at both breaks. There is an adventure playground designated for use by the Prep to Year 3 students. We have two covered sandpits. There are plenty of shade places and covered areas for hot and rainy weather.

Newsletter

Biddeston State School's newsletters are produced weekly on Thursday and are given to students as a hard copy if required. We encourage families to access the newsletter online at our website, <http://biddestoss.eq.edu.au/> Parents can also sign up to receive the newsletter by email. A Calendar of Events is issued at the beginning of each term that provides information of activities for that term.

Parent Teacher Afternoons

Parent teacher afternoons are held within the first four weeks of school every year. They are an important time for parents to meet with classroom teachers and be reintroduced to the learning program, timetable and reminded of processes in your child's class. Teachers value the opportunity to speak directly to parents about the year ahead and in so doing take another important step towards a strong teacher-parent partnership, one that benefits each student. All parents are encouraged to attend this important meeting and to take this opportunity to signal clearly to your child that school, gaining the best education possible is the highest priority for future success.

Parent Teacher Communication

Effective communication between families and schools will help to foster and enhance the learning experience of all students. We encourage parents to take the opportunities to speak with teachers to discuss your child, their learning and progress. Teachers are generally available both before and after school for informal conversations regarding your child. If a more detailed discussion is required please arrange a mutually convenient time with the teacher. Please also consider that once the school day has started, teachers will be engaged in focused learning and teaching with the class and it will be difficult to speak to the teacher.

It is also important to discuss and share information with the teacher that may have an impact on your child and influence their behaviours. Events like family visits, moving house, accidents, etc need to be communicated to teachers so that we can work together to support your child.

Reporting to Parents

Informal assessment of students is ongoing and takes place throughout the year in Prep. Teachers will provide parents with information and feedback on how your child is progressing and developing. Teachers will organise to meet with parents to discuss their child's learning progress at the end of Term 1, Term 2 and the end of Term 4. Report cards report student achievement at the end of Terms 2 and 4. An interim update is sent home with students at the end of Terms 1 and 3. In addition, parents are always welcome to discuss any learning concerns with teachers at any time throughout the year.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Classroom Teachers

Your child's classroom teacher identifies strengths and weaknesses of all students in relation to curriculum access and participation in the classroom program. This information is used to plan learning experiences targeted at the specific needs of all students.

Guidance Officer

The role of the Guidance Officer is to work collaboratively with the *class teacher* to administer appropriate assessment and provide counselling services. The Guidance Officer assists in monitoring students' progress and appropriateness of placement and recommends appropriate pathways for students with learning needs or giftedness. Access to the Guidance Officer is by referral with parent permission.

Advisory Staff

Education Queensland provides access to Advisory Teachers in a range of areas. If required to address the needs of your child, the Advisory Teacher works collaboratively with your child's teacher to develop a plan and strategies for implementation as part of the classroom learning experiences.

Giving a Head Start To Early Readers



In today's world, reading involves more than reading books. Books are still very important, although viewing websites, television and movies, reading shopper docketts, street directories or junk mail provides great opportunities for families to encourage their children's reading.

There are always reasons to read – for pleasure, to follow instructions or learn something – and children quickly learn that reading is useful through watching people around them make sense of the world and to acquire what they need.

Reading print is still vitally important, but it is no longer sufficient. We need to be able to read much more than print alone. When viewing an internet site you need to recognise and interpret icons to choose a pathway to follow, perhaps watch a video presentation, listen to a voice-over and compose some text to answer questions or send an email.

When supporting and encouraging beginning reading, the key word is **'TALK'** – talk with your child and talk about what they are reading or viewing.

- **Read** to your child and encourage discussion through questions such as: *What do you think might happen next? If you were ... what would you have done? Has anything like that happened to you? Were you puzzled or surprised?* Give the child plenty of time to answer.
- **Watch** a favourite television program or video together and discuss what you liked or disliked.
- **Play** computer games and talk about what is happening.
- **Read** books and **view** websites together. Talk about menus, index or table of contents and how these help identify specific information.
- **Explain** and **discuss** signs, advertisements and safety notices around us.



Tips for helping a young reader read independently

- **Before reading**, talk about the cover, author and title, make predictions about the content, look for new vocabulary and have fun finding out the meaning of new words.
- **During reading** allow plenty of **WAIT** time for self-correction or re-reading, or reading on when unsure of a word.
- **If** a reader substitutes a word that still makes sense – for example, 'house' instead of 'home' – let the reading continue.
- **If** what the child reads does not sound correct or does not make sense, ask *Did that sound right to you?* or *Did that make sense to you?*
- **If** the child makes a mistake in letter – sound relationships, ask *Does that look right to you?* Have them check their reading.
- **After** reading, discuss the text together. This is far more useful and enjoyable than comments such as 'Good reading' or asking the reader a series of questions.

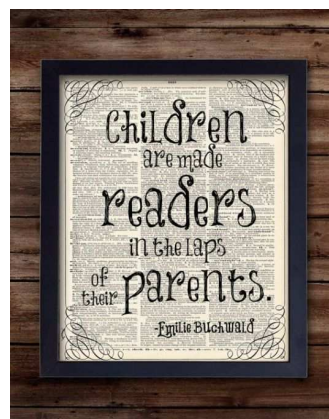
LITERACY – Parents make the world of difference!

Parents are children's first teachers!

Your child first learns how to speak and use words at home. Families answer questions about what things look like, what things are used for and when to use them. All the basic skills that are taught give the child a good start at school and stay with them. Many of the everyday activities that we do at home help our children to learn.

Helping your child to learn can be simple!


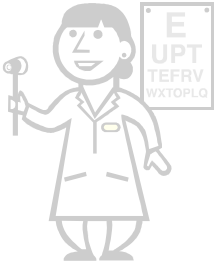
- Read to them.
- Let them read to you.
- Encourage them to tell you the same story in their words.
- Ask them to talk about what they have learned at school.
- Ask them to talk about the things that interest them.
- Talk about events and activities that occur in your area.
- Write a shopping list together.
- Get a book out of a library together.
- Cook and follow a recipe together.
- Draw a picture, write on it and send it to relatives.
- Read comics, magazines and newspapers.
- Make a book with pictures and words.
- Get your child to teach you how to use a computer.



Everyone has knowledge to share. Everyone has a story to tell. Parents are vital in helping children to make sense of their world. **Parents are our children's first and most important teacher!**

Learning together is fun! Sometimes, it seems that the way your child is taught at school is very different from your own school days. You may feel as though you can't help – but you can! What school children need most to help them learn is encouragement from their family – from parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends. **Giving support and encouragement to your child to learn is the most important way you, as a parent, can help them succeed.**

Student Health

<u>Required immunisations and Boosters</u>	<u>A Complete Health Examination</u>
<p>These may include diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps and rubella.</p> 	<p>(It's a good idea!) The examination should include speech, hearing and vision tests. These tests can spot problems that could interfere with learning early on.</p> 

Teach your Child to be Safe

Try to make your child familiar with his or her :

<p>First Name and Last Name</p>	<p>Parents' Names</p>
<p>Address and Telephone Number</p>	

Habits that will help at school

Putting Things Away

Setting a regular pick-up time is a good way to develop responsibility and the ability to organise.

Learning to Listen

Being able to follow directions is a necessity at school.

Doing Simple Chores

Being responsible for regular household tasks teaches reliability.

Getting Along With Others

The ability to work with others plus a sense of helping, caring and sharing are vital for children entering school.

Learning to use Scissors

Children do many cutting and gluing activities at school. Being able to do these activities easily is an advantage when beginning school.

Dressing Self

Encourage independence. Swimming lessons are part of the Prep program and such, children will need to be able to manipulate zips, buttons and tie shoelaces.

Personal Hygiene

It is important for personal hygiene that each student:

- is able to use a handkerchief or tissues
- knows how to wash hands properly, that they should be washed before and after meals and after going to the toilet
- is able to go to the toilet independently



Independence

It is **important** to foster a feeling of independence right from Day One.

We appeal to parents for all beginning pupils to:

- Allow your child to carry his/her school bag
- Walk unaccompanied to the classroom after the first week or two.
- Exceptions of course exist if the parent(s) wish to speak with the teacher.
- Search for lost property, especially if it's an item which **HAS** to be in the classroom.

Parental Involvement

An invitation is extended to all parents to be active and involved in their child's schooling. There will be many opportunities for parents to be involved in a wide variety of classroom activities. Your child's teacher will be extending appeals for help very early in Term Once. Hopefully you will be able to respond positively to these invitations to assist.

Drop Off and Pick Up

For the sake of safety of parents/carers and our students, you are encouraged to use the Linthorpe Road entrance to the school to drop off and pick up their child / children. Drop off time is 8:30am. The school day is complete at 3:00pm.

Students from each classroom are to go to the undercover area upon release from class. A staff member on duty takes a **Departure Roll** to that area. Parents who are collecting their child/ren from the school are to see the staff member who will mark students as departed with you. A roll will be called for remaining students before they are accompanied to the school bus at approximately 3:15pm.

Parents **MUST** notify the classroom teacher and/or the office if their child is leaving the school with a person/s other than the student's Mum or Dad.

School Day

To enable your student to be ready for the day, it is a good idea to be at school at **8:30am**. The school day begins at 8:45am. Please be on time as we begin work then and it teaches children about punctuality. The school day finishes at 3:00pm.

Please be punctual or make sure arrangements have been made and discussed if there is to be a change as young children panic (5 minutes can seem like an hour to a 5 year old). Please try to avoid phoning the office to pass on messages unless it is **urgent**.

Snack Break

Students are given a short break at 10am each day to have a snack. The **ONLY** foods allowed to be consumed at this time are fruit or vegetables – fresh or dried.

Lunch Times

There are two lunch breaks for students, with first break from 11:00am to 11:45am with students, under supervision, required to sit for 15 minutes for eating time, followed by playtime for 30 minutes. Second break starts with 15 minutes eating time, followed by 15 minutes playtime. This is held from 1:15pm to 1:45pm.

Sun Safety

The school's Sun Protection Policy states that all children **must** wear a suitable hat (broad brimmed or cap with attached flap) if they wish to play outside. If the student does not have a suitable hat, they will be required to remain under the main school building. Parents of students who continually arrive at school without a hat will be contacted. Sunscreen is available at the school for all students to use each day. The wearing of sunglasses is encouraged. Break times are arranged so students are not exposed to the summer sun more than is necessary. There has been extensive planting of trees in the grounds to supply shade areas for the students to enjoy.

Naming of Possessions

The ongoing cost of preparing a child for school can be drastically reduced by **NAMING EVERY ITEM** that your child brings to school. (The exception being those items identified on the booklist).

As our school has an active swimming program, hats, uniforms, underwear, togs, towels, shoes and even socks **MUST BE NAMED** as no child ever seems to be able to identify an item of clothing once they are not wearing it. When you multiply 50 children with the number of items belonging to each child, the naming of clothing and possession limits the problem of lost property.

Dress Code

All Prep children are expected to wear the school uniform.

Handy Hints



Have your child practise eating lunch from their lunch box over the holidays and opening packets and poppers.

- Include a spare set of underwear in your child's port.
- Purchase the uniform and shoes before the end of school to beat the rush and also to let them get used to dressing for school independently (but don't let them wear it out before they get to school!!)

Toys

It is a school rule that toys from home are not be brought to school as this can cause problems:-

- the toys can be broken and children get upset
- the children give the toys away without permission from their parents
- the children argue over the toys and their ownership

Birthdays

Parents are welcome to send a cake for the class to share for their child's birthday. From our experience we have found patty cakes to be the most convenient for sharing. Please let us know if your family does not celebrate birthdays (for religious reasons) or you do not wish your child to have cakes, sweets or chocolate because of health issues. They may also bring a gift for show and tell if they wish.



Choosing your Child's Bag

A practical school bag can help your child to organise their school life..... just like the way we choose a practical briefcase or handbag.

Everyday your child will need to fit these items into their school bag.
Please make sure they fit easily.

- Lunch Box
- Hat
- Water bottle

Zips are easier than clasps or drawstrings for young children to manage independently.

Make sure your child can open and close the zips. Encourage him or her to **ALWAYS** zip up their bag when it is not in use so items do not fall out.

Encourage independence.
Let your child be responsible for packing and unpacking their own bag each day. Of course reminders will be needed initially. It is a small job but will help them develop a responsible attitude towards their belongings.

Allow your child to carry their school bag to and from school.

Make sure that they are the ones who actually put their school bag on the port racks. This will ensure that they know where it is at break times.

Here are some other items that your child will need to bring to or from school sometime during the week. It would be extraordinary if all these items had to be at school on the same day.... but there will certainly be days when the load is big. Try to buy a school bag that will accommodate these items.

- library bag
- jumper
- swimming bag (can be attached if it does not fit)