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# BUNDABERG NORTH STATE SCHOOL

## PREPARATORY YEAR

## PARENT HANDBOOK



# BUNDABERG NORTH STATE SCHOOL

## EARLY YEARS PHILOSOPHY

**At Bundaberg North State School, we believe that the early years of education form the most critical stage of a child's development. It is in these years that the foundations for life-long learning are established, both at home and at school.**

At Bundaberg North State School, we believe that children:

- Are individuals with unique strengths, who come to school with a range of social and cultural experiences that have shaped their prior knowledge and influence their future development
- Should be immersed in a diverse range of learning experiences that cater for a variety of learning styles and needs
- Reach their full potential when they receive support and encouragement from both parents/carers in the home, and staff at school

**Our philosophy is based on a number of underpinning assumptions:**

### **1. Children are capable and competent and have been learning since birth.**

Early Childhood educators recognise this by:

- Acknowledging what children know and can do, and using that as a starting point for new learning
- Building on children's prior knowledge, and making links to new learning

### **2. Children build deep understandings when they:**

- Are exposed to information through all senses
- Are offered choices in their learning experiences
- Are able to participate in decision making about their learning experiences; North's Prep program will allow them to negotiate and plan some of their learning based on their interests

### **3. Children best demonstrate their learning through:**

- A variety of modes such as movement, painting, drawing, speaking, writing, construction and socio-dramatic play
- Interactions with people, concrete objects, ideas and representations

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

Early Childhood educators recognise this by:

- Providing learning experiences that are relevant to children's life experiences and interests
- Ensuring that learning environments reflect a diversity of cultural and social experiences, as well as sharing ideas, values, beliefs and identities

### **5. Children learn best in environments that are relationship-centred.**

- A relationship-centred curriculum is characterised by positive and supportive interactions among teachers, staff, students, parents/carers, specialist personnel and community, and with the learning itself

### **6. Assessment of young children is an integral part of the learning-teaching process, and is not a separate activity.**

Early Childhood educators recognise this by ensuring that:

- Assessment is purposeful, systematic and ongoing
- Information gathered is used for future planning, and to make judgements about a child's learning and development
- Children have opportunities to participate in their assessment

The role you play in your child's education is very important.

Education should be a combined venture involving children, parents, teachers and the whole community. Open communication between family, school and the community is vital for an effective partnership and program to succeed.

For all matters concerning your child, please do not hesitate to consult your class teacher. We trust your association with our school will be a happy and beneficial one.

# Welcome to Parents and Students

## **ACARA - Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority**

At the commencement of 2013 all Australian State Schools implemented a similar curriculum in Maths, English, Science and History. Geography was also implemented in 2014. This will ensure consistency and standardisation across all schools. Standards have been set for all stages of schooling. Prep standards for English, Maths, Science, History and Geography are shown below.

### **Foundation Year [Prep]**

#### **English Achievement Standard**

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By the end of the Foundation year, students listen to, read and view a range of spoken, written and multimodal texts from familiar contexts. They interpret and provide relevant explanations of characters and main events in imaginative texts, and key ideas and visual features in short informative texts, making connections to personal experience. They demonstrate understanding by retelling orally one or two ideas and events from short texts listened to or viewed. They accurately identify the letters of the English alphabet, and know the sounds represented by most letters. They read short, predictable texts aloud with some fluency and accuracy, drawing support from their developing sound and letter knowledge. They effectively use predicting and questioning strategies to make meaning from texts.

Students write one or more simple sentences to retell events and experiences for a known audience. Their writing is connected appropriately to illustrations and images produced as part of the text. They link two or more ideas or events in written and spoken texts. They use and understand familiar vocabulary, predictable text structures and common visual patterns. The short texts they produce show understanding of concepts about print including letters, words and sentences. They use left to right directionality, return sweep and spaces between words. They handwrite most lower case and some upper case letters, and use some capital letters and full stops. Their writing shows some evidence of the use of sound–letter knowledge. In informal classroom settings students communicate clearly and purposefully and engage in pair, group and class discussions, and participate actively in group tasks.

#### **Mathematics Achievement Standard**

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By the end of the Foundation Year, students make the connections between number names, numerals and quantities up to 10. Students are able to compare and sort shapes and objects. They make connections between events and the days of the week.

#### **Science Achievement Standard**

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By the end of the Foundation year students make observations of familiar objects and materials and explore their properties and behaviour. They suggest how the environment affects them and other living things.

#### **History Achievement Standard**

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By the end of the Foundation year, students identify similarities and differences between families. They recognise how important family events are commemorated.

Students sequence familiar events in order. They pose questions about their past. Students relate a story about their past using a range of texts.

## Geography Achievement Standard

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By the end Foundation Year, students describe the features of familiar places and recognise why some places are special to people. They recognise that places can be represented on maps and a globe and why places are important to people.

Students observe the familiar features of places and represent these features and their location on pictorial maps and models. They share observations in a range of texts and use everyday language to describe direction and location. Students reflect on their learning to suggest ways they can care for a familiar place.

### Specialist Lessons:

All Students will have access to specialist lessons including:

- Physical Education
- Music
- Library: Children will be able to borrow from the school library on a weekly basis; however, they will require a waterproof bag to keep their books safe.

## ROUTINES AND PROCEDURES

### Enrolment Procedures:

Please ensure all documentation has been completed:

- Student Enrolment Form
- Enrolment Agreement
- Consent Form

### Birth Certificate:

It is an Education Queensland requirement that a birth certificate for each child is sighted. **Students will not be able to commence their Prep Year until this occurs.**

### Attendance and Absentees:

Prep is a full-time program that runs five days per week, from 8:55am to 3pm each day. Children are expected to attend full-time to get the most from Prep. Any variation to attendance should be discussed with the principal.

The school should be notified - in writing, by phone or in person- if your child will be absent for any reason (sickness, holidays etc.). For further information, see the school prospectus.

### Health Policy:

If your children are sick to the extent that they will not be able to participate in their daily activities, please keep them at home. Children with infectious childhood diseases (i.e. ringworm, conjunctivitis etc.) **must be excluded from school** for specified times. If your child contracts German Measles (Rubella), please inform the teacher immediately so that steps can be taken to notify any pregnant mothers. If your child feels ill during the day, we will notify you or your contact person.

### Medication/Illness:

Please see the school prospectus.

### Change of Address:

To enable us to contact parents/carers, especially in the case of an emergency or accidents, we need to be up-to-date with current addresses and phone numbers. **Therefore, it is important to inform the school of any change of address or phone number immediately.**

### **Drop-off Procedure:**

Our first bell of the day rings at 8:45 am. Prep classrooms will open their doors at 8:30 am. We recommend that in the morning, if possible, a parent/carer brings their child into the classroom to assist him/her in settling in. Parents/carers are warmly encouraged to spend that special time with their child doing puzzles, reading books or doing a drawing together before school.

### **Pick Up Procedure:**

Prep will finish each day at 3.00 pm. We highly recommend that students be collected from the classroom by a parent or a responsible older sibling (Years 3-7). This may circumvent some anxiety that is felt by students as they settle in to school life. Bus students will be collected by a staff member, and taken to the Year 6/7 undercover shed until the bus arrives. If someone with whom we are unfamiliar is collecting your child, please phone and leave a message at the office.

### **Morning Tea/Lunch:**

Prep students will be supervised in their designated eating area while they eat their food each day. Please ensure that your child can **unwrap** and manage the lunch you pack for them.

We encourage parents to provide healthy food for morning tea/lunch. Some suggestions are:

- bread, wraps, rolls, pocket bread
- fresh fruit, dried fruit
- vegetables (salad, vegetable sticks)
- cheese (sticks, slices, wedges, grated, cubed)
- fruit loaf
- pikelets, muffins, scones
- crackers, crispbread
- dairy foods, yoghurt (please pack a spoon)
- tinned fish (in safe container), chicken, meats

Insulated lunchboxes with an ice brick help to keep lunches cool and fresh.

### **Healthy Snack Break:**

As some children have an early breakfast and our morning tea break is not until 11.00 am, all classes have a healthy snack break between 9.00 am and 10.00 am. Children select a healthy snack from their lunch box (fruit, vegetable sticks, cheese, nuts, dried fruit, popcorn) to eat. Processed foods high in sugar, fat or salt are **not to be eaten at this time**. This enables children to maintain their energy levels until morning tea.

### **Drinks:**

As water is a daily requirement for good health, we recommend that children have only water to drink during the day. Drinks such as cordial and juice can not be taken into the classroom due to the impact spills/leaks may have on class furniture, carpets and other items.

### **Hats:**

Bundaberg North State School is a **Sunsmart School**. Children **must** wear a **Bundaberg North uniform bucket hat** outdoors at all times. **NO HAT, NO PLAY**. Please ensure your child's name is clearly marked on their hat. Your child's embroidered name or a small sew-on/iron-on patch is a great idea.

### **Shoes:**

Children are to wear shoes to and from school. During the outdoor program, there will be specific class activities where the children will take off their shoes and socks. During outdoor time children engage in *many sensory experiences* such as sand play, obstacle courses, scramble net, feely walks, and rope bridges. Children will be required to put shoes and socks back on after the outdoor activities.

**Please clearly name all belongings including: hat, shoes, lunch box, and clothes.**

## PARENT HELP

Once a classroom routine has been established, parents will be welcome into the room to help. Parents can help in a number of ways:

- join in the program supporting your child or helping with small-group activities
- help to supervise on excursions
- prepare materials for painting, craft activities, games etc.
- read to the children
- share favourite hobbies or special talent - i.e. play an instrument, speak different language etc.

Becoming involved with your school is a **rewarding experience** for both you and your child. Participation ensures you increase your knowledge about the school and what your child is learning.

### **Cooking:**

Children will be involved in cooking activities on a regular basis. Your help regarding the donation of ingredients would be greatly appreciated when the need arises.

## CARE OF PREPARATORY PROPERTY

As a courtesy, we would appreciate your co-operation in caring for the Prep equipment.

If you bring younger siblings into the Prep classroom before the commencement of school, could you please ensure games/activities that have been used are put away before you leave the Prep classroom. This will ensure a smooth start to the day for the class, and also encourage younger children to tidy up after activities - a skill they will require when they come to Prep in future years.

### TOYS FROM HOME

To save heartache, please leave valued items at home (e.g. toys, jewellery, etc.). Toys brought from home should be limited to those received on special occasions such as birthdays.

### HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD PREPARE FOR PREP

Familiarising your child with the daily Prep routine is the key to alleviating any anxieties or worries. Commencing Prep is a big event in your child's life, and first-day jitters can happen. However, there are some helpful suggestions parents and carers can follow to help make the first few weeks a happy and positive experience for you and your child.

1. Have a look at the Prep classrooms beforehand, see the playground, and have a look around.
2. Go through the Prep handbook together and discuss with your child what they need to wear, bring, and how the day runs. Let them know about little lunch and big lunch, inside time, and outside time. Talk about the teacher's name and the teacher aide's name.
3. Have a practice run at getting dressed for Prep.
4. Ensure your child feels comfortable in his/her new school shoes.
5. Show your child where his/her name is written on all belongings.
6. Pack a school lunch at home, and let your child practise opening it.
7. Tell your child each day who will be collecting him/her from Prep at the end of the school day.
8. Have your child stay over with family or friends occasionally, to reduce any separation anxieties.
9. Together, read books about *starting school*.
10. A week beforehand, set the alarm clock as if it is a Prep day, and practise going to bed at an appropriate time as though Prep is the next day.
11. Talk about how long and how many days a week your child will be at Prep. Explain in time sequences your child can understand.
12. If possible, arrange play dates with new friends who are in the same Prep group.
13. Allow time in the first week to share and value your child's new experiences. Visit a relative (e.g. grandparents) or a special family friend, and let your child tell them all about Prep. Let them telephone a special person in their life to share their new Prep experiences.
14. If your child is teary on the first day, reassure him/her that you will be back at pick-up time, and above all, let your child see that you are positive and excited about Prep so that your child can sense these positive feelings from you.
15. Always say *goodbye* to your child, and leave when the class commences.
16. Go home, have that cup of coffee/tea, and enjoy your day as well!

**We thank you for choosing Bundaberg North State School for your child's Prep Year, and look forward to partnering you and your child in their educational journey.**

### HOW TO GET YOUR CHILD 'SET FOR PREP'

#### Reading Readiness

- Read, read, and read to your child
- Allow them to 'read' and 'retell' stories to you
- Show your child where the print is, and point to the words as you read
- Show your child that you read left to right and top to bottom
- Discuss these stories
- Read/recite nursery rhymes
- Read signs while on outings or while shopping



- Encourage your child to speak in sentences
- Talk to your child using adult language rather than “baby talk”
- Encourage your child to be creative and make up their own stories

### **Writing Readiness**

- Supply lots of paper, writing, and drawing materials
- Allow plenty of opportunities for your child to write: eg. shopping lists, birthday cards, letters to friends and family members.
- Reinforce the tripod pencil grip
- Encourage your child to do activities to improve his/her fine co-ordinations eg. threading, playdough, tracing, weaving
- Encourage your child to write in lower case eg a, b, c, d, e, f, g

### **Numeracy Readiness**

- Counting activities: being able to say each number name whilst pointing to each object being counted
- Use mathematical language such as on, off, above, between, thick, thin, long, short, more, less, etc
- Shopping opportunities: Can you put 6 apples into the bag for me? Can you find one dollar for me?
- Cook together
- Talk about time - relate to home routine/T.V. shows etc ie It's 8 o'clock, bedtime
- Talk about money

### **What can I do with my child between now and Prep?**

- Count to 10
- Sing the A, B, C song
- Write their name
- Identify some letters of the alphabet
- Take turns when playing a game or doing an activity
- Teach them colours