



# **PREP HANDBOOK 2019**

## **The Preparatory Year**





# Our Lady of Dolours Catholic Primary School

*Living Loving and Learning in Christ*

## The Preparatory Year

*Welcome to Prep for 2019. It won't be long before the children come along to start off on the great adventure of school life. To make the transition to Prep a little easier, we have prepared some information for you regarding the Prep Curriculum and what you can expect your child to experience.*

*We look forward to being a part of this next stage of your child's life.*



## What is our Special Religious Character?

*The Catholic School is defined by a lived commitment to the life teachings of Christ and the Church. We are called as a Catholic Christian Learning Community to embed the four components of; Prayer and Worship, Evangelisation and Formation, Religious Identity and Culture, Social Action and Justice into school life. Out of these radiates the integration of faith, life and learning.*

*The spirit of the Creator has been part of this land for thousands of years and is home to the indigenous Turrbal people. We acknowledge them as the traditional owners of the land and pay our respects to the elders both past, present and future as the first educators and builders of community.*

*Since 1932 the Archdiocese of Brisbane has provided pastoral leadership to the faithful of Our Lady of Dolours Mitchelton. We stand on the shoulders of both the clergy and laity that built the community and acknowledge the contribution of those who continue with its formation.*

*Our charism is grounded in the formative work of the parish, the spirituality of St Benedict and the Sisters of The Good Samaritan of The Order of St Benedict who founded the school in 1951. These find expression in the house names of NUGENT, BENEDICT and SAMARITAN.*

*The early school motto; 'In all things may God be glorified gives expression to the ancient Benedictine philosophy to live by paying attention to the fullness of life. This finds resonance in the current school motto, Living Loving and Learning in Christ which draws upon the Good Samaritan charism; of recognising the powerless and marginalised and responding with COMPASSION, JUSTICE and WISDOM.*

### Our Vision

*Our Lady of Dolours Catholic Primary School is Catholic educational community that is teaching, learning, thinking and acting with the Compassion, Justice and Wisdom of Christ so all can fully live, love and learn in communion with our ever changing world.*

### Our Learning Goal

*Learning and teaching in Catholic schools empowers all learners in our community to understand, shape and enrich our changing world, by living the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our students will embrace this goal and promote living, loving and learning in Christ by being learners who are:*

- *Confident*
- *Persistent*
- *Organised*
- *Able to get along with others*
- *Resilient*





## 2019 Term Dates

Term 1	Wednesday 30th January – Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> April
Term 2	Tuesday 23rd April – Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> June
Term 3	Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> July – Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> September
Term 4	Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> October – Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> December

## What is Prep

Prep is a five day a week early years educational program that was introduced by the Queensland Government to ensure a smooth transition into Year 1. Prep is about establishing strong foundations for success in life long learning and empowering our children to make transitions throughout their schooling and into the world of work.

- Prep is a full-time program that runs five days a week. Students are expected to attend full time.
- Attendance aligns with the school's Attendance Policy.
- Hours for Prep are the same as regular school hours for Year 1-6.
- Students should turn five by June 30 the year they enrol in Prep.
- Assessment and reporting is in line with the Australian Curriculum Foundation Achievement Standards.

## How Does Learning Occur in a Prep Classroom?

At Our Lady of Dolours we value and engage children's ideas and experiences to enrich our Early Years program. Our focus will be **child-centred** and **will support all children physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually and spiritually.**

### 8 Principles for the Early Phase of Learning

- Children are capable and competent and have been learning since birth
- Children build deep understanding when they learn through all senses and are offered choice in their learning experiences
- Children learn best through interactions, active exploration, experimentation and by representing their learning through a variety of modes
- Children's positive dispositions to learning, and to themselves as learners, are essential for success in school and beyond
- Children learn best in environments where there are supportive relationships among all partners in the learning community
- Early childhood programs are most effective when they recognise, value and build upon the cultural and social experiences of children
- Building continuity of learning as children move to and through school provides foundations for their future success
- Assessment of young children is an integral part of the learning and teaching process



The introduction of the Preparatory Year in 2007 has meant that it has become important for parents and teachers to have shared understandings of the curriculum and develop mutually supportive partnerships that promote learning. This booklet has been written to address the educational practices that are implemented in our Prep classroom.



## How Does Learning Occur in a Prep Classroom?

Prep students will be actively involved in a student centred curriculum. They will participate in a combination of indoor and outdoor learning environments where they will build on and develop a range of skills through the General Capabilities of the Australian Curriculum. These General Capabilities include:

- Personal and Social Capability
- Literacy and Numeracy
- Information and Communication Technology
- Creative and Critical thinking
- Ethical understanding and intercultural understanding



## Curriculum Design and Implementation at Our Lady of Dolours

### Australian Curriculum

Students in Prep are taught through the Australian Curriculum in the following learning areas:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Humanities and Social Sciences
- The Arts (Visual Arts, Drama, Dance, Music and Media Arts)
- Health and Physical Education
- Digital and Design Technologies

Children are taught through the five contexts for learning:

- Play
- Investigations
- Routines and transitions
- Real life situations
- Focussed learning and teaching



The Australian Curriculum outlines the knowledge, understandings and skills that are important for all Australian students. It encompasses the learning entitlement of students as a foundation for their future learning, growth and active participation in the Australian community. It makes clear what all young Australians should learn as they progress through schooling. It is the foundation for high quality teaching to meet the needs of all Australian students.

Prep teachers provide children with learning experiences that cater for their individual learning styles and giving them multiple opportunities for success. When planning a Prep program, we consider the different rates of development of children and their unique individual characteristics. Programing and planning is designed around practice for Prep aged children.

Children attending Prep bring with them a wealth of knowledge, values, experiences and attitudes that have been developed and influenced by their family experiences and their social and cultural contexts. An Early Years' program centres on the concept of children being actively involved in the direction of their own learning experiences. Prep teachers scaffold and provide opportunities for students in a variety of contexts.

## Religious Education

Our Lady of Dolours aspires to educate and form students who are challenged to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ and who are literate in the Catholic and broader Christian tradition so they might participate critically and authentically in faith contexts and wider society.

In 2013 a new Religious Education Curriculum was introduced across all Brisbane Catholic Education Schools. Our Lady of Dolours has adopted this new curriculum and it is structured into two main strands

- Religious Education Curriculum
- Religious Life of the School

The teaching of Religion will remain consistent with all other learning areas in the Prep Year. Religious Education Curriculum is organised into four interrelated strands: Sacred Texts, Beliefs, Church and Christian Life. Each strand has its own distinctive body of knowledge and skills. Students in Prep learn about Jesus' life as Jew, his family and friends and his teachings and actions. They learn about God's loving relationship with people and all creation, and the many ways in which communities of believers nurture their loving relationship with God, others and all of creation.

The Religious Life of the School is also organised into four strands; Religious Identity and Culture, Social Action and Justice, Evangelisation and Faith Formation and Prayer and Worship. Prep students will be exposed to a range and balance of these strands through their participation in whole school and class liturgies and masses, Social Action initiatives and through the Religious Education Curriculum in the Prep classroom.

## Specialist Subjects

Prep students will participate in Health and PE (30 minutes), Visual Art (1 hour for half of the year), Music (30 minutes), LOTE (Japanese for 30 minutes), Technology (1 hour) and Dance lessons (45 minutes for one term).

## Monitoring and Assessing Children's Learning

Monitoring and assessing children's learning is an integral part of the learning and teaching process and is an ongoing part of curriculum decision making. It is not always a separate activity. It is important that children have the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in the full range of learning contexts. The information gathered is used to:

- plan for future learning
- build a picture of a child's learning and development
- give direction to conversations with the child, parents or carers, specialist teachers, the child's next teacher and other professional colleagues
- comment on children's learning in relation to the curriculum
- record point in time judgements using observations to inform assessment

Teachers organise evidence of learning in individual folios. The folio becomes a dynamic record of examples of a child's learning and development in the Preparatory Year.



Our student report, prepared twice per year, documents successes made about a child's learning in each learning area. The report uses a five point scale to describe learning progress:

- Well above the expected standard
- Above the expected standard
- At the expected standard
- Below the expected standard
- Well below the expected standard

Student portfolios of work samples will be collated throughout each term and these may be viewed at the end of each semester.

## What does a Prep Day look like?



8:15am Classroom opens for students to unpack their belongings

8:30am: Gather in the courtyard for morning assembly

8:40-10:50am: Morning session

10:50-11:30am: Play followed by supervised eating time

11:30-1:30: Middle session

1:30-2:00: Play followed by supervised eating time

2:00-3:00pm: Last session

To assist in helping your child build a routine, we ask that they be punctual in arriving at school each day. If your child is late, it is a requirement that they be signed in by an adult at student reception. Failing to sign in at reception will result in an unexplained absence being recorded.

## Routines and Transitions

The component of *Routines and Transitions* forms part of the daily organisation in our environment. For example, in the morning, students meet with the teacher to mark the roll, reflect on yesterday's learning and plan for the day's activities.

## Learning Experiences

The day consists of activities that stretch the brain and attend to all the learning areas. These include games, discussions, small group work, and individual learning experiences. Focused Learning and Teaching occurs across all of the learning contexts. It may take place as a whole class experience, in a small group, or one to one. It involves the teacher and the student co-constructing understandings about all aspects of the curriculum. Fine and Gross motor experiences combines both teacher directed and child directed activities. Children develop both gross and fine motor activities, coordination skills, upper and lower body strength and social skill interaction.

## Specialist lessons

Your child will participate in specialist curriculum activities including dance, physical education, visual arts and music, and will also visit the iCentre (library) as part of the overall learning program

## Prep Parents can help by:

- Supporting the Prep class when asked by the Prep teacher



- Reading letters and notices
- Collecting junk and recycled materials
- Supporting and encouraging your child to be independent
- Discussing any problems and worries
- Taking part in school celebrations and social functions



## Pick Up and Drop Off Routine

### Morning Drop Off

The Prep Classrooms will be open at 8:15am. To begin with, Preps stay in the room in the morning before school starts. We will have books and puzzles out for them to play, talk and socialise. Parents are welcome to stay and help your child settle into an activity. Alternatively you may wish to drop and go. Later in the year, as they become more comfortable within the school environment, Preps may go and play in the courtyard after they have unpacked their bags.

It is very important that your child arrives on time for school by 8:30am to allow your child and the rest of the group to settle into the morning routine without disruption. If you arrive late please come to the office and sign your child in. You will receive a late card, which is handed to the teacher.

### Afternoon Pick up

Please collect your child from the classroom. Siblings may collect children but they will need a note from parents giving them permission to do so. No student will be permitted to go to either street pick up unattended for the first semester at school. If you are running late please call the office and they will let the teacher know and they can reassure your child. Once the second half of the year arrives, students can wait for their parents at either the pick-up zone or external to the classroom.



### Leaving Early

While Prep is a full-time program and the children attend for a full school day there may be times when you need to pick your child up early. To do this you must sign your child out at the office before coming to collect them. The office staff will give you a card, which must be given to your child's teacher.

## Library

Prep students will have the opportunity to borrow books from the Library during a rostered weekly visit. Each student is required to bring their library bag with them to school to protect their borrowed books. School policy is **No Bag – No Borrowing** for all students

## Homework

Specifics of your child's homework will be outlined at the Parent Information Evening early in the new school year.

## Home Reading

Our Lady of Dolours, nightly home reading is promoted and encouraged. Each night parents can

- Read to their child while he/she listens
- Read with their child (alternating who reads)
- Listen to their child read to them

Once home readers are formally introduced, students will be required to read for a minimum amount of time each night (eg 10 minutes).

## Healthy Children

### Prep Lunches

Please pack lunch and morning snack separately. Include nutritious food items that your child can manage independently. If providing items such as yoghurt, please provide a spoon. Do not pack any items that require heating. Snack can be sent along in cooler containers to be left in your child's classroom. Lunches are stored in the fridge; a small plastic lunch box is preferable due to limited storage space in the fridge.

### Water Bottles

Please provide your child with a drink bottle full of water each day. Although there is nearby access to water bubblers, it is highly recommended your child bring their own water bottle which they can access during the day. Please do not fill these with cordial or juice as water is the healthiest option. Fruit Juice poppers are permitted as part of your child's lunch but cans and glass are an unsafe substitute.

### Nut Allergy Aware

The school does not have a nut free policy but requests all families to consider refraining from incorporating nut products in lunch boxes where possible. This helps us avoid risk of anaphylactic shock with some of our students. Parents are urged to adopt this voluntary ban on peanut butter and nuts when providing lunches from home

### Toileting

It is the school's expectation that Prep students are toilet trained. It is understood that on rare occasions, some students may have accidents. In these circumstances, students are required to change themselves independently. If this cannot be achieved, parents will be contacted to collect their child from school to ensure that Occupational Health & Safety Regulations are met. Please note that Child Protection laws do not permit staff to assist with their personal toileting needs.

Every Prep student is required to have a spare pair of underwear, an old shirt and shorts in their bag in case of an accident. Please name these items and store in a plastic bag.

## Medical Protocols

### Administration of Medication

If your child requires medication to be administered during the course of the school day, please see the office to complete the relevant authority form. It is a legal requirement that all medication supplied be labelled by a chemist; outlining the student's name, dosage requirements and administration instructions.

### Accident of sudden illness

For injuries of a minor nature, first aid will be administered by teachers in the Prep classroom. Should a serious illness or accident occur, every effort will be made to contact parents immediately. It may be necessary to seek instantaneous medical service. It is therefore essential that school records are kept accurate and parents are expected to keep the school informed of emergency contact numbers and all other pertinent medical information. Please notify the office and teachers of any changes to these details

## Tips for a Terrific Transition

Starting school should be an enjoyable and positive experience, when children have the opportunity to make new friends and learn new things. Beginning school is a big step but there are some things that you can do to help.

## Developing Independence

Help your child become used to:

- Putting on and taking off clothes and shoes (*Velcro is useful if shoelaces are a problem*)
- Opening a lunch box and unwrapping food (*Plastic wrap can be tricky!*)
- Eating and drinking without help
- Caring for and putting away play things
- Using a handkerchief or tissue
- Going to the toilet by themselves
- Packing, unpacking and carrying their own bag



Prepare your child for separation:

- If your child is not used to being away from the family, try to organise for them to spend time at a friends' or relatives' houses without you before school starts.
- Take your child to visit the school a number of times before the first day. Show them where the toilets and bubblers are, and how to use them. If this isn't possible, perhaps drive past the school to show them where they will be attending.

## Developing Social Competence

Help your child to develop the necessary communication skills. Try to ensure that your child can:

- Ask for help when needed
- Use appropriate greetings
- Respond when spoken to
- Follow simple instructions (*Ask your child to help you around the house. Give one direction to begin with. Gradually build to two, then three.*)

Help your child to develop the necessary social skills. Try to ensure that your child can:

- Share and take turns
- Play cooperatively with others
- Wait quietly for brief periods (*Playing card or board games require all these skills. Beware of influencing the outcomes of the game though. Being able to cope with not winning is also an important skill.*)

## Developing Physical Skills

Provide opportunities for your child to use the large muscles of their body. This assists with the stamina and co-ordination required throughout the school day. Help your child to develop the necessary skills for:

- Running
- Jumping
- Hopping
- Climbing
- Negotiating obstacles (*Set up an obstacle course!*)

Help your child to develop the small muscles of the fingers and hand. Try to ensure that your child has lots of opportunities to:





- Draw and write
- Paint with fingers and brushes
- Play with dough (*Make biscuits or bread. Great fun and you get to eat it as well!!*)
- Cut with scissors, tear and scrunch paper
- Build with blocks and other construction toys
- Pick up and place small objects (*Decorate your biscuits or sprinkle sesame seeds on your bread.*)

## Developing School Routines

Use pretend play to practice some of the classroom routines such as:

- Putting your hand up to speak
- Asking to go to the toilet
- Sitting quietly and listening to others for a short time
- Lining up
- Looking after and organising belongings (*Pencils, sharpener, scissors, etc in pencil case. Lunch box in bag.*)
- (*Children usually love to play "Schools". Take turns with your child to be the teacher.*)

## What to Wear

Prep students will wear:

- School blue polo shirt
- Blue shorts for boys and or culottes for girls
- Distinctive RED school hat
- Footwear – black velcro joggers
- Mid length blue socks
- O.L.D. Jumper in cooler months

Dresses are not considered to be appropriate wear for girls in Prep as they restrict play and physical activity.

### Naming Property

Please name all items sent to school, particularly lunch containers, school bags, shoes, socks, hats and other clothing. Encourage your students to be responsible for their belongings and to check for these before leaving school each day.

## What to Eat

"Healthy food makes for a happy, healthy child" We aim to encourage healthy eating habits and also encourage all children to drink plenty of water each day.

### Suggestions for:

Morning Snack: fruit, cheese/crackers, chopped vegetable sticks, dried fruit.

Lunch: sandwiches with healthy fillings, finger salad and possibly fruit, yoghurt in a named lunch box.

Afternoon tea: fruit, cheese/crackers, chopped vegetable sticks, dried fruit.

As all lunch boxes are required to fit into the fridge, small lunch boxes are recommended. Whilst packaged food can be fun as an occasional treat, we do not encourage them to be placed in the children's lunch box as an everyday food.

## What to Pack

- Bag (School Bag)
- Water Bottle
- Snack
- Library Bag
- School Hat (Red Hat)
- Communication folder
- Spare uniform including underwear
- Lunch (1st Break) and afternoon tea (2nd Break) in one lunchbox ( please look at the what to eat section)



## How Can I get involved?

The Early Years of schooling here at Our Lady of Dolours will be a time for students to be active participants in the classroom and in society. Learning to co-operate, abiding by rules, being part of a group, communicating effectively, taking turns, sharing, finishing a set task, developing patience, coping with failure and success. We hope that you share this view with us and will promote a positive attitude.

### Communication between Home and School

Teachers will be available each morning and afternoon to answer quick queries from parents. At any time during the year, parents are welcome to approach teachers in regard to issues concerning their child's education. Some topics may require a private meeting or perhaps some preparation time. Issues requiring lengthy discussion are best handled by making an appointment outside of school hours.

Student portfolios are sent home at the end of each semester and a parent teacher interview is held in Term 1 and a student led conversation is held at the end of Term 3. A summative report is sent home in the final week of Term 2 and 4.

All newsletters, information or personal notes will be placed in the blue communication folder. It is sent home each night so important information can be sent to and from school. Newsletters are made available on the school website and an email is sent to your nominated email address informing you that the newsletter is available. This usually happens each Thursday.

### Inclusion of Parents in the classroom and school community

Other ways parents/carers and other family members can show their interest in their child's education include:

- Supporting the school's P&F committee;
- Reading all notices sent home and displayed at school;
- Supervising children on excursions;
- Collecting and donating materials useful for Early Years activities;
- Offering to share hobbies, interests or skills with the class;
- Taking an interest in your child's work and encouraging his/her efforts;
- Discussing any problems or concerns with the teacher;
- Volunteering to help at lunch days.

## Chatting Children Literacy Program

Oral language is a skill that is a powerful foundation for reading and writing. The Chatting Children Program helps to



build foundational skills for future literacy development. The program explores the building block of literacy including oral language, motivation and positive orientation to books, alphabet knowledge, print concepts (how to hold a book, reading from left to right), narrative structure and phonological awareness (word, syllable and rhyme awareness). All of these skills build children's readiness for reading and writing success.

The Chatting Children Program is a take home language program that aims to promote all areas of language development in a fun and engaging way. The Chatting Children packs consist of a story book, activity book and a DVD. It is designed to be used by families with their children in the home environment.

The program is implemented with our Pre Prep students during the last six months of the year and continues throughout the first six months of the Prep year. For more information on the program, parents can view the slide show on the school website at <http://www.ourladyofdolours.qld.edu.au/curriculum/Pages/default.aspx>

## Miscellaneous

### Outside Hours School Care

This service is available for all families and is open at 7am – 8:30am and again in the afternoon between 3pm-6pm. Parents or Carer need to register with the service before students can attend.

### Excursions and Incursions

Special activities that compliment learning activities are organised for the students throughout the year. Families will be notified about these activities via a class letter and will be invoiced on the school fees.

### Religious Life of the School

Students are provided with many opportunities to reflect, pray, meditate and join in with liturgy. These occur in both formal and informal settings, Students of all faith denominations are encouraged to participate and become fully involved in all religious aspects of school life.

*Welcome to Our Lady of Dolours School.*

*Thank you for taking the time to familiarise yourself with this Prep Booklet*

