Clinton State School – Prep Booklet

Prep Handbook
Clinton State School

Prep Handbook

Welcome to Prep 3
Prep at Clinton 5
Specialist School Activities for Preps 7
Everyday Counts at Clinton 7
Communication 7
Student Support Services 8
The First Day of Prep 9
Preparing Your Child for Prep 9
WELCOME TO PREP

Clinton 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.

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 and Science (Australian Curriculum) and the three Early Learning Areas (Early Years Curriculum Guidelines):

- Social and personal learning
- 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 2014 – 1 July 2008 – 30 June 2009
- For 2015 – 1 July 2009 – 30 June 2010

**Academic Staff**

In each Prep Class there will be a qualified Early Years Teacher developing and delivering the learning experiences for your child. In addition, a Teacher Aide will support the learning and needs of the children during key learning times each day.

**Prep Enrolment Process**

1. Parents may place their child on the Prep 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.
3. A Prep Parent Information Session will be held during Term 4. If you have provided your details to the office you will receive an invitation by mail.
4. Two orientation sessions will occur in Term 4. These sessions are open to all new Prep students. Students will meet their Prep teacher and enjoy some fun and engaging activities.

**The Prep Handbook**

Please note that whole school information about Clinton State School, its curriculum, teaching, learning, policies and processes are detailed in the Student Enrolment Handbook. **The Prep Handbook** contains specific information for parents who are coming to our school with their child for the first time. If there are any questions after reading both of these handbooks, please do not hesitate to contact the staff at Clinton on 4978 9333, visit us at the administration office or ask your child’s teacher.
PREP AT CLINTON

What Your Child Will Need for Prep

Classroom Items
Each year parents are provided with a Prep Booklist detailing all the items students require for Prep. It is important to note that items for Prep are pooled and used by the entire class group. Throughout the year there may be times when certain items have depleted and Prep teachers may write to request the purchase of additional items.

Lunch
Each day children require a healthy morning snack, lunch, a piece of fruit and a water bottle. Please carefully consider the foods included in your child’s lunch box as we encourage children to eat healthy choices first and leave ‘treats’ for later. Ensure your child knows what food has been packed and when to eat it. Supplying lunch in labeled, easy to open packages and containers will help to encourage your child’s independence.

Suitable healthy food choices include:
- SNACK BREAK – Cut fruit or vegetables including apple, grapes, strawberry, carrots, beans
- LUNCH – Sandwiches, rolls, wraps, poppers

Unsuitable food choices include:
- Chips, lollies, cakes
- Yoghurts and dairy products
- Processed snack foods like roll ups
- Soft drinks
- Foods in containers children cannot open

As some of the children at school have an identified allergy, please do not pack nuts or nut based products. We also explicitly teach children not to share, swap, give away or take other students’ lunches to alleviate any issues related to allergies. We appreciate your support in this matter.

Clothing
All parents are requested to leave a spare set of labeled clothes, including underpants, in your child’s bag. Second hand uniforms are available at the Kids Cafe if you require a set for this purpose.

School Bag
Your child’s school bag should be large enough to safely and easily carry their lunch box, water bottle, hat, change of clothes and reading bag. Please ensure that you practice packing the bag with your child and that they can open and close it so that all their items remain securely inside.

Personal Property
Please ensure that all your child’s personal items including clothing, hat, lunch box, drink bottle and backpack are all clearly labeled. If an item is not appropriately labeled and students do not identify the items as theirs, the lost property will be placed in the lost property in the under covered area. Please feel free to check this at any time if you are trying to locate a piece of lost property.

Although children may be excited by new or special toys and treasures they have at home, at school they can often become lost or broken. Due to this the school strongly recommends that all these items remain at home to save both heartache and time for all involved.
What Your Child Wears at Prep

Prep students wear the same uniform as all the students of Clinton State School. The uniform is detailed in the dress code information pamphlet. To comply with our Sun Safety policy it is compulsory for all children to wear a clearly labeled, broad brimmed hat for both scheduled lessons and play times. If your child does not have their hat they will be asked to remain under the covered areas. Prep children are required to wear covered shoes, which may have velcro straps to enable students independence when dressing for school.

Arrival at Clinton
All students are expected to arrive between 8.30am and 8.40am. Before school, students are to sit quietly, in the nearest covered area and wait for the classroom doors to be opened by the teacher. Once opened students are to be escorted into the room by their parent or older sibling, organise their lunch box, water bottle and school bag. When the bell rings at 8.45am students are to gather on the carpet ready for instruction to begin. It is important that your child arrives on time as important learning experiences are embedded in every activity in the day, including carpet time. As the year progresses, when parents and children feel comfortable and confident, teachers will encourage children to organise their equipment themselves or walk to and from the school gate independently.

Lunch Times
There are two lunch breaks for students at Clinton. At first break, students eat first, followed by supervised play time. During play time students are able to access the Adventure Play Equipment, Prep Oval or Under Covered Area. The library is also open for students to go for reading or borrowing. When the bell rings all students collect their lunch boxes and proceed to their designated covered area for collection to return to class.

At second break, play and eating time is combined. At the beginning of Prep teachers will designate the first five minutes for sitting and eating their afternoon tea. As the year progresses students will be able to independently access their afternoon tea during this time.

For the safety of students, the administration staff may announce a ‘Wet Weather’ break or ‘On Concrete’ break and Teachers or Teacher Aides may ask students to leave certain equipment or areas. A ‘Wet Weather’ break means that students will remain inside the classroom supervised by a Teacher and/or Teacher Aide.

End of the Day
School concludes at 2.45pm each day. At the start of the year parents are expected to collect their child from inside the Prep classroom. Please ensure you inform the classroom teacher of your child’s mode of transportation including; collection by older siblings, After School Hours Care staff, day care buses or any other arrangements. At the end of the day parents are to support children to pack their bags and collect any items or school notices from their pigeonholes. As with arrival time, it is important that your child remains at school until 2.45pm each day. As the year progresses, when parents and children feel comfortable and confident, teachers will encourage children to pack their own bags at the end of the day and meet parents at a prearranged pick up point either in the school ground or at a gate.
SPECIALIST SCHOOL ACTIVITIES FOR PREPS

Specialist Programs
Prep students will participate in Music and Physical Education Specialist Programs. Supported by their Teacher Aide, students are engaged in one 30 minute specialist lesson each week for both Music and Physical Education.

Resource Centre
The Library is open for students at first and second break times. During scheduled instruction time Prep students will go to the library for borrowing once per week. Students use a library bag to protect the books whilst they are in the students’ care.

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, Under 8’s and ECCA Day or other in 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 and parents and families do not miss an opportunity to see a milestone in your child’s first year at Clinton.

Parades
Parades are held every Monday at 2:15 in the multi-purpose hall. Parents are always welcome to attend.

EVERY DAY COUNTS AT CLINTON
Regular student attendance in Prep ensures maximum opportunity to engage in the learning experiences essential for a successful start to each student’s learning journey.

Detailed information about the processes for student attendance, late arrivals and early or emergent departures is available in the Student Enrolment Handbook.

COMMUNICATION

Newsletter
Clinton State School’s newsletters are produced weekly on Tuesday and all Eldest in the Family Students receive a hard copy. We strongly encourage families to access the newsletter via email. If you would like to receive the newsletter electronically please see the office to complete the appropriate form.
**Parent Teacher Communication**

Effective communication between families and schools will help to foster and enhance the learning experience of all students. Clinton State School encourages 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.

Volunteers and visits are welcome once students have settled in. Each child is different but generally from Term 2 please organise an individual discussion with the teacher to share how and when you may be able to assist in the classroom.

**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 and Term 3. In addition, parents are always welcome to discuss any learning concerns with teachers at any time throughout the year.

Each year Academic Report Cards are provided to parents. In Prep, all students will receive their Academic Report Card at the end of Semester 2. This provides an opportunity for parents and teachers to meet at a formal interview to discuss the progress of your child throughout the year.

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

At Clinton, our *Student Needs Committee* works in collaboration with families, teachers and other agencies to identify and address the range of learning, developmental, social, emotional and behavioural needs of our students.

**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 at Clinton is to work collaboratively with the *Student Needs Committee* 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.

**Supported Play**

At the beginning of Prep some students require a higher level of support during unstructured play times. Teachers, in collaboration with parents, can recommend that a Prep student is provided support during their play time. The aim of the program will be to explicitly teach and develop the skills that are required for children to independently and successfully engage with their peers in the playground.
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.

THE FIRST DAY OF PREP

The first day of Prep will focus on establishing the routines that your child will learn and follow throughout the year. Below is a schedule of what parents can expect to experience on the first day of Prep for your child.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>School Day</th>
<th>Parent Experiences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.30am</td>
<td>Arrive at school</td>
<td>Help your child to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Locate their name badge and attach it to their school shirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Unpack all their items into the labeled boxes in the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Place their water bottle in designated space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Identify labeled port rack and place bag on port rack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Find a space at a desk or on the floor to do a quiet activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.40am</td>
<td>Classroom Doors Open</td>
<td>The teacher will move around the room to meet and greet parents and children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parents make a quick and cheerful goodbye to your child as soon as they are settled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.45am</td>
<td>First Bell</td>
<td>The bell will ring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher will invite students to gather at the carpet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher will ask parents to leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parents make a quick and cheerful goodbye to your child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher and teacher aide will settle the children with a story or song to start the day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>If your child is upset, direct them to the teacher or teacher aide who will help settle them as you depart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.30pm</td>
<td>Pick Up</td>
<td>Ensure you arrive earlier than usual to meet your child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.45pm</td>
<td>Final Bell</td>
<td>Please go inside the classroom to collect your child</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR PREP

Whilst we acknowledge that individual children are at several different developmental stages there are some simple things families can do to support your child’s transition from home to Prep.

Encourage your child to be independent by helping and teaching them:
- their full name
- to recognise their name in print
- the name of the street where they live
- their phone number
- to pack, open, close and carry their school bag
- to identify their personal property
- how to eat their packed food, recognising what to eat at first and second break, opening packets and containers
to use a handkerchief or tissues
how to wash hands properly, that they should be washed before and after meals and after
going to the toilet
to go to the toilet independently
to put on and take off clothing such as jumpers, socks, shoes and rain wear
to put on school shoes
to care for items and to put things away
where to wait for you at the end of the day

Work with your child to develop his or her communication skills. Help and encourage your child to:
• make their own needs known
• use appropriate greetings
• respond verbally when spoken to
• practice listening skills and follow directions
• help, care and share with others

Children’s oral language skills can be developed by:
• talking in sentences
• looking at picture books
• remembering little rhymes
• reading with parents
• listening to parents reading stories regularly

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 dockets, 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 our 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.*

**What can parents do at school?**
By becoming involved, parents can understand schools better and find new ways for our children to learn.
• Talk to the teacher about helping your child learn.
• Talk to other parents about how they are helping their children.
• Help with the Reading Programs at school.
• Attend parents’ meetings at the school.