



PREP

PARENT HANDBOOK

2018

STUDENT:

Growing in faith and knowledge

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WELCOME

Welcome to the GCC Preparatory (Prep) School!

This is a very exciting time of your child's educational experience – a time of growth physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually and spiritually. After a settling in period, Prep children generally find the year to be a lot of fun, exciting and a time that is remembered with fondness.

The staff at GCC are firmly committed to working in partnership with parents to provide the best possible learning experiences for your child. As we teach children about the world around them, we also strive to help your child to learn about himself/herself and we recognise and embrace the uniqueness of each child.

PLEASE KEEP THIS HANDBOOK IN A SAFE PLACE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

We encourage you to enjoy the journey with your child, as you rediscover the joys of early childhood education through different eyes in a different era.

May God bless you all!

Mrs Cheryl Bryers
Head of Primary

INTRODUCTION

Our Prep program treats all children as individuals and encourages them to learn and grow intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually at their own pace. Our goal is to share the love of Jesus with these precious children in our care and expose them to as many facets of education as possible, to fully prepare them for Year 1. In Prep, students bring to school a wide range of experiences, abilities, needs and interests. They have a natural curiosity about their world. Their desire to make sense of the world provides a platform to plan and review their learning through interactions with others, experimentation, scaffolding, explicit teaching, practice and play in the classroom and beyond.

CURRICULUM

In Prep the priority in the Australian National Curriculum is given to literacy and numeracy development because these are the foundations on which further learning is built. Both Literacy and Numeracy capabilities are reinforced and strengthened through learning in all areas of the curriculum. The development of social and emotional skills through physical play and knowledge to help students keep safe, healthy and active, are provided for in the Health and Physical Education curriculum. Purposeful exploration in personal and familiar contexts provides an opportunity for students to harness their curiosity about people, places and how their world works, through inquiry and investigation in Science, Humanities and Social Sciences.

In these early years, the development of sensory, cognitive and affective appreciation of the world is provided through exploratory, analytical and creative practices in The Arts and Technologies curricula and through the opportunity to learn a language using the Languages curricula.

TIMES

8:30am – Prep starts

Doors are opened at 8:25am.

We start precisely at 8:30am to develop firm routines with the children early on.

Please endeavour to have your child at school on time as lateness can stress the child and disturb the rest of the class.

If your child is having trouble separating, please approach one of the teachers or teaching assistants to step in. The children usually join in class activities after parents have left. You are welcome to phone later to make sure your child has settled.

10:50am – Lunch

40 minutes: 10 mins for eating and 30 mins for play

Due to the length of time between school start and lunch, children will be required to bring along a piece of fresh fruit or vegetable which will be eaten sometime between 9am and 9:30am. Please do not send any other form of food as we will not be able to let the children eat it. This includes yoghurt and dried fruit, even though they are fruit based. Please be aware of our NUT FREE policy as some children can have severe reactions, even to peanut butter and chocolate nut spreads. If your child suffers from any food allergies or is prohibited from certain foods, please inform us as soon as possible.

1:30pm – Afternoon Tea

25 minutes: 10 mins for eating and 15 mins for play

2:50pm – Prep Finishes

Please be prompt in picking up your child as this can be a cause of anxiety in young children. Unforeseen circumstances are understandable. Please call us if this is the case.

IMPORTANT DATES

2018 Term Dates

| TERM | From | To |
|------|------------|--------------|
| 1 | 22 January | 29 March |
| 2 | 16 April | 22 June |
| 3 | 16 July | 21 September |
| 4 | 8 October | 6 December |

2018 Pupil Free Days

Monday 15 January to Friday 19 January

Monday 9 July to Friday 13 July

2018 Events to Remember

Please note that these dates are subject to change:

- Mother's Night – Tuesday 8 May
- Father's Night – Tuesday 28 August

2018 Public Holidays

| TERM | Holiday | Date |
|------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Australia Day | 26 January |
| | Good Friday | 30 March |
| 2 | Easter Monday | 2 April |
| | ANZAC Day | 25 April - Wednesday |
| | Labour Day | 7 May |
| | Maleny Show Holiday | 1 June |
| 4 | Queen's Birthday | 1 October |

WHAT TO BRING WHEN COMMENCING PREP

Spare Set of Briefs

Place these in a plastic bag and leave in your child's school bag. Main Administration has spare uniforms in case of accidents. If a uniform is borrowed, please wash and return to as soon as possible.

Shoes

The children need to have **Velcro shoes** as laces can be a problem. Please practise with your child putting on their shoes and socks. We will help at Prep, but the children must try first.

Toys

Please do not allow your child to bring any toys to Prep as they could be easily broken or lost. This also applies to 'Show and Tell' sessions. If your child has a toy that is specifically related to the unit we are looking at, the child may bring it along for the 'Show and Tell' only.

LUNCH/AFTERNOON TEA

Please explain to your child what part of their lunch is for each food break, as young children tend to eat everything at once. An insulated lunchbox is required as no refrigeration is available. Practise unwrapping plastic wrap and opening packets with your child/ren if they are unfamiliar with doing so. However, there will always be staff members on playground duty to help with such things. It is also useful to put a little cut in wrapped items like bars to help the children open them.

The children sit in the outdoor areas of the Prep buildings for most eating times. We have found it useful in the past for parents to number the parts of their children's lunch 1, 2, 3 to help them understand which is for each break, (1-snack, 2-lunch, 3-afternoon tea). We encourage the children to eat their sandwich (or similar healthy option) before eating any other part of their lunch at lunchtime. Staff cannot heat up children's food at lunch time or cut up fruit. Apples and other fruits can be pre-cut at home and then wrapped tightly in cling wrap to prevent browning. (A little squirt of lemon or orange juice will also help in this and adds flavour.)

DROP OFF / PICK UP

If you are late in the morning to Prep for any reason, you must go to the office first and sign your child in late. The same applies if you are collecting your child early. This is a 'Duty of Care' requirement.

Children will be picked up from their classrooms in the afternoon.

PARENT/TEACHER COOPERATION

Parent Roster

We encourage parents to come on roster and spend time with their child/ren at Prep. To enable the children to settle into their new environment, we will not be starting Parent Roster in the first weeks of Term 1. Please write your name on our timetable or speak to your child's teacher when you would like to come and spend some time in Prep. It can be an hour or one session, whatever you are comfortable with. We will also be looking for parents who can come in on a regular basis to work in the Prep for group rotations, sight words and reading. All parent volunteers are to sign in and out at Main Administration when they come to help in the classroom.

Communication

As per the Primary Parent Handbook which can be found via the College Website

Homework

Homework only involves Home reading and sight words for Prep.

Home Readers

Children bring readers home. During our parent information session, we will speak to parents about how to maximise their time when sharing home readers with their child.

Interviews

Formal interviews occur at the end of Terms 1 and 3.

We are happy to meet with you and discuss your child's progress or concerns you may have at other times by making a suitable appointment with any or all teachers. This enables us to refer to our written records and observations when discussing your child's progress.

Open communication is vital for the smooth running of Prep. Please bring your concerns to us when they arise. We strongly encourage you to talk directly with the teachers about any concerns as a first step in resolving difficulties. If you email a teacher, a 24-hour turnaround is required for a response.

Reports

Reports are issued at the end of Terms 2 & 4. If you need to discuss anything arising from reports, please refer to the above. These reports are documents for parents/caregivers. If you wish to discuss them with our child, we encourage you to do so with a growth mindset. Students may not be able to demonstrate a concept 'yet'. We are most interested in distance travelled.

Incursions/Excursions/Special Days

Depending on the current unit during each term, there will be opportunity for the children to go on incursions or excursions that relate to the unit. The cost of these are included in your college fees. We have many special days throughout the year, including Mothers' and Fathers' night, a Grandparents' day and days to coincide with particular units. Parents are welcome to attend these special days. We will give you plenty of notice of up-and-coming events via an email communication.

Illness and Infectious Diseases

Children inevitably catch many things when attending school. If you feel your child is too unwell to attend please notify the school that your child will be absent and for how long (it could be a contagious disease or your child is unable to self-manage the illness). You can do this by phoning the school absentee line on 5436 8670.

Please refer to the 'Infectious Diseases' exclusion table in the Primary Parent Handbook (Primary Parent Handbook / GCC College Life / Medication Procedures / Infectious Diseases – page 16).

YOUR CHILD – GOD’S GIFT TO YOU

You are always teaching your child either directly or indirectly.

They learn by:

- seeing
- hearing
- touching
- tasting
- smelling
- imitating and
- doing, doing, and doing

In the last 4½-5 years, your child has changed a great deal and mastered many skills along the way. You would realize that children develop and learn across developmental areas in an integrated way. When they are socializing, they are often also working on gross motor skills, cognitive skills, emotional skills and language skills. Development occurs at different rates with different children. Another aspect of life is that one stage of development depends on the successful mastery of a previous stage. We do not expect children to run before they can crawl. Similarly, we do not expect a child to write when he/she has not developed the necessary fine motor skills to do so. It is well documented that the early years of your child’s life are very important. God formed your precious one with his/her own special plan and purpose. This, combined with all that has happened in your child’s life, has contributed to their readiness for Prep.

THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF PARENTS

Home represents the first and in many ways the greatest educational influence that the child experiences. It is here that many of the child's attitudes, ideas and skills are developed.

We all want our children to grow into adults who can think, make their own decisions and adjust to change. Parents can do much to meet the needs of their children at this time.

There is an old saying:

“Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day;
Teach him how to fish
And you feed him for a lifetime.”

If you teach your child to write his/her name and count to ten, you have taught useful but fairly isolated skills. Encourage the development of an eager interest in everything that goes on around him/her and you have equipped him/her with an attitude that will serve him/her well throughout his/her future.

“Teaching kids to count is fine, but teaching them what counts is best.”
-- Bob Talber

Parents/Caregivers can encourage the development of these abilities by:

- Allowing time for your child to experiment for themselves
- Providing new and interesting experiences
- Listening, making comments or asking constructive questions. Let's find out, or let's try and see, are often better responses than telling an answer.
- Providing encouragement and support
- Be consistent in your standards and expectations for your child in all areas including discipline.

“For growing up, becoming a person is a mutual and reciprocal process where both the child and those around him grow; you construct his life with him, not just for him.”

(from “Under Fives in Australia”)

Please Note:

If you do teach your child how to write their name, please teach them to use a capital at the beginning of their name and then lower case letters.

Example: John, Mary (not JOHN, MARY).

Please refer to the Queensland Letter Chart on the next page.

- Start 1 - no lift 2 & 3 - lift for each one

a A b B c C d D e E f F g G
h H i I j J k K l L m M n N
o O p P q Q r R s S t T u U
v V w W x X y Y z Z
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

