



2018 Preparatory Information

The Preparatory Year at the Whitsunday Anglican School is acknowledged as the first formal year of the WAS journey, with Kindergarten as the first step in the journey. As such the Preparatory Year is seen as an integral part of a whole School philosophy, and a cyclical learning and teaching approach.

Parents are the first and foremost prime educators in any child's life. It is for this reason that we believe in open communication between home and school; communication at WAS is seen as a triangle of interdependence encompassing parents-staff-child.

The beginning of school can be a little bewildering for all children but even more so for the younger ones with new adults and children to meet, friendships to establish, new rules and expectations to understand, new places to see, new challenges to have-a-go at.

At Whitsunday Anglican School we support the traditional 3 'R's of 'riting, reading, 'rithmetic with a 4th 'R' of RELATIONSHIPS.

It is important for parents, friends and staff to express and support positive attitudes. Take time to talk to your child about the new school situation, listen to problems with an open mind, and help your child discover ways to overcome personal problems themselves. We have a Pastoral Framework of 5 Foundations – cooperation, organisation, persistence, confidence, resilience – that we believe will enhance the social & emotional wellbeing of the students.

In the Preparatory Year the students will experience a wide variety of activities. In support of them we believe students learn best when School is a place of active and stimulating learning and the students:

- ✓ feel important
- ✓ care about themselves and others
- ✓ feel safe
- ✓ feel confident
- ✓ are successful but are able to understand less successful moments
- ✓ feel challenged
- ✓ have an opportunity to practice their learning.

The Preparatory Curriculum is supportive of *The Early Years Curriculum* and the Australian Curriculum with a focus on early literacy and numeracy, and socialisation (social emotional learning). We acknowledge that the students learn in different ways and we look to support each student.

The five Early Learning Areas below underpin the contexts for learning in the Preparatory Year.

- ✓ Social and Personal learning
- ✓ Health and Physical learning
- ✓ Language Learning and Communication
- ✓ Early Mathematical Understanding
- ✓ Active Learning process



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by FAITH

LEADING
with SERVICE



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Whitsunday ANGLICAN SCHOOL, MACKAY

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The *Early Years Curriculum* is integrated with the academic expectations of the Australian Curriculum.

The Whitsunday Anglican School's Preparatory Year is a curriculum-based, structured learning program with a range and balance of play elements designed to assist our students through to the School's Junior, Middle and ultimately Senior Schools.

The program concentrates on literacy and numeracy, Sciences, Technologies and Humanities, with students gaining exposure to visiting specialists in Art, Music, Language Other Than English (LOTE) and Physical Education. Christian Education plays a major role in the Preparatory program.

Please feel free to contact the Preparatory teachers to discuss your child's journey through the Preparatory Year.

Readiness for the Preparatory Year:

Children are born ready and eager to learn. From the time they are born, children want to make sense of the world around them and to find out about it. They develop more in their first five years of life than at any other time. Different areas of the brain develop, organise and become functional at different stages during childhood. Positive relationships and experiences in early childhood are the building blocks that support health, learning, emotional development and wellbeing.

Throughout the early years of life, your child has learned how to form and maintain positive relationships, establish routines, develop thinking skills in order to solve problems, learn self-control and gain self-confidence. You have helped your child to understand the world around them and to develop their language.

Your child's first impressions of school can be influenced by parents, siblings, and grandparents. Talking about school and answering a child's questions honestly is very important. You know your child best. It may be that you observe signs of anxiety in your child about starting school. It is important to talk to them about how they are feeling, to listen and to acknowledge their concerns. This will help build their confidence and lessen the stress they may experience.

It is natural for your child to feel anxious about separating from you. Try not to let your anxieties be your child's.

The First Year of School: A Parents' Guide...ideas for how you may help.

(taken from *'Your child's first year at school: a book for parents'*)

Starting the year.....

- ✓ Be positive about school including your reflections of your own schooling
- ✓ Discuss the place of rules in society & school
- ✓ Allow opportunities for your child to demonstrate independence at home
- ✓ Have them follow through on instructions
- ✓ Practise some 'school' skills at home

~ clothing – ease in putting on, taking off

~ shoes – tying laces

~ lunch – unwrapping foods, have a 'lunch-box' lunch before school starts



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- ~ manipulating their school bag
- ~ toileting

- ✓ Plan the routine from home
- ✓ Discuss the 'drop-off' & 'pick-up' routine
- ✓ Label everything!
- ✓ Extra clothing in bag

Starting the day.....

- ✓ Sleep is important
- ✓ Start each day with a routine – be prepared
- ✓ Ensure your child has a good breakfast
- ✓ Talk about the day ahead
- ✓ Discuss the pick-up routine
- ✓ Have a Plan B if you are running late
- ✓ Ensure the School has up-to-date contact names & numbers

Avoid the last-minute rush.....

- ✓ It is extremely important for your child to arrive at school on time
- ✓ When children arrive late to class, they often feel rushed and anxious

The end of the day.....

- ✓ Ask about the school day – ask questions that require elaboration
- ✓ Expect your child to be tired throughout the first weeks
- ✓ Provide a cuddle and a snack, and may be some quiet time.

Supporting literacy skills.....

- ✓ Sing songs and play with rhymes
- ✓ Hold extended conversations with your child
- ✓ Listen to their questions and encourage them to investigate and wonder
- ✓ Draw your child's attention to environmental print – signs, symbols, words
- ✓ Share lots of books – discuss plot, characters, things that happen, why
- ✓ Discuss what they see on TV & movies – encourage comment
- ✓ Model reading & writing for real life purposes
- ✓ Gently encourage correct pencil grip

Supporting numeracy skills.....

- ✓ Discuss size, shape, number of things, counting
- ✓ Draw your child's attention to environmental print – signs, symbols, numerals
- ✓ Discuss how numbers help us to locate information, travel to the correct destination, and know how many and how much
- ✓ Use numeracy for many practical purposes – travelling, at home, out & about

Supporting social skills.....

- ✓ Have lots of conversations with your child – discuss ideas and opinions within family
- ✓ Talk about the best ways to act in different scenarios at school, at home and in the community
- ✓ Provide solutions to solving arguments – discuss together
- ✓ Give them a range of differing social situations to mix in
- ✓ Allow opportunities to try new things and make mistakes



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- ✓ Notice and comment positively when they take turns, share and show kindness
- ✓ Tell them things they are good at and why you are proud of them
- ✓ Support them in learning new things – taking risks with support
- ✓ Give them increasing responsibilities for things they can do independently

Research has demonstrated a strong link between a successful transition into the Preparatory Year from Kindergarten and a positive outcome for many children. Through conscious but subliminal encouragement, parents are able to assist their child to build:

- Independence
- Resilience
- Emotional, social and learning skills

These attributes will all play a crucial role in helping ease the transition.

Skill Building for starting school..... (*KidsMatter for Parents & Carers*)

- ✓ Friendship skills
 - Teach your child ways to introduce themselves to new children
 - Give them strategies to join in play and be friendly and cooperative
 - Talk about what being a friend means
 - Discuss sharing, taking turns, using kind words
- ✓ Play dates
 - Arrange for your child to play with other children
 - Allow them to establish friendships and practice their social skills
 - Preferably these would be with children they may start Prep with
- ✓ Sense of responsibility
 - Encourage your child to be accountable for small tasks i.e. setting dinner table
 - Discuss looking after own belongings
 - Give them opportunities to pack up after an activity
- ✓ Following instructions
 - Start by giving your child one instruction to follow i.e. please get your school bag
 - Build up to two-step instructions i.e. put your dish in the sink and get your bag, please
 - Children at this stage of development may have difficulty remembering more than two or three instructions at a time

Suggested books and stories that may help with the familiarisation process of beginning school:

- ***Charlie and Lola: I am too absolutely small for school*** – Lauren Child
- ***Look, there's a hippopotamus in the playground eating cake*** – Hazel Edwards
- ***Just Jack*** – Jane Turner
- ***First Day*** – Margaret Wild



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