



Prep Parent Handbook

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WELCOME TO WONDALL

Welcome to Wondall Heights State School. We strive for excellence in education. We have a team of highly professional and caring staff who are committed to the provision of a safe, nurturing school environment that supports students to reach their potential and develop into active and productive members of society.

We look forward to providing your child a rewarding year in Prep where they will grow and develop their skills and knowledge through many exciting and challenging learning experiences including:

- listening, responding to and giving directions
- learning how to cooperate with others
- becoming independent thinkers and problem solvers
- understanding and using language to communicate ideas, feelings and needs
- developing literacy, numeracy and scientific skills through a range of meaningful learning contexts.

SCHOOL MOTTO

Our school motto is: *Strive to Excel*. By setting high expectations we encourage our students to try their best and *strive to excel* in everything they do.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Wondall Heights State School caters for students from Prep to Year 6. Our school is set on extensive grounds including 3 sports ovals, tennis and basketball courts, netball courts and a 25m swimming pool. We have a purpose built early years play area featuring a large all-weather sandpit, 3 play structures and plenty of free space. Our Performing Arts Centre complements our engaging Arts program. Digital classroom delivery is evident in every classroom with the latest interactive whiteboards and ultra-short throw data projectors installed to support student learning.

We have a comprehensive whole school curriculum program covering Prep to Year 6 that is directly linked to the Australian Curriculum. Curriculum delivery is supported by close tracking of individual student learning, a range of specialist and intervention programs and extension activities. Wondall Heights has an inclusive policy where students with disabilities are supported within their class group where possible. Support is provided to students with disabilities through the Special Education Program.

Wondall staff members are committed to high quality teaching and learning and value the strong home-school partnerships that exist. We work together to set high expectations to ensure that every day, in every classroom, every student is learning and achieving.

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

Prep parents can **either** drop their child to their classroom from 8:40am or if dropping them off earlier, access Wondall Outside School Hours Care. At 8:40am, children are walked to their classroom, where their teacher is waiting. Parents are requested not to wait outside the classrooms around the school if arriving before 8:40am, but to bring their children to the hall where they will be supervised by a staff member.

At 3:00pm, students in Prep must be collected from the classroom by their parent/carer or a responsible adult known to the teacher. If at any time you arrange for someone else to collect your child, please inform their teacher of the arrangement.

Off street parking is available below the tennis courts. Other car parks are gated and reserved for staff.

Whether arriving by car, bicycle or on foot, you need to use a pedestrian entrance. In the interest of safety, students must not take a short cut through staff car parks.

Please endeavour to arrive to school on time, as learning starts from the moment our students walk into their classrooms! If your child does arrive later to school (after 9:00am), please go to the office where a late slip will be issued. This ensures that our roll-marking is accurate, so that your child is marked as being at school for the day.

A little bit late to school might not seem important, however...			
<i>When your child misses just...</i>	<i>That equals...</i>	<i>Which is....</i>	<i>So, from Prep to Year 12 that equals...</i>
10 minutes per day	50 minutes per week	Nearly 1½ weeks each year	Nearly ½ a year of learning missed.
20 minutes per day	1 hour 40 minutes per week	Over 2½ weeks each year	Nearly 1 year of learning missed.
Half an hour per day	Half a day per week	Four weeks each year	Almost 1½ years of learning missed.
One hour per day	One day per week	Eight weeks each year	Over 2½ years of learning missed.

ATTENDANCE

Every day counts in Prep because:

- regular attendance lets our children make the most of their important first year of school,
- Prep lays the foundation for literacy and numeracy,
- every day of learning will improve children's reading, writing and maths,
- daily attendance builds a positive approach to learning, and
- being at school every day strengthens your child's independence and confidence.

If your child is unwell, please call the school absence line on 3906 6460. We believe that every school day counts. Prep is a compulsory year of schooling and any prolonged or frequently unexplained absences will be investigated.

If your child needs to be absent from school for an extended period, please inform the school in advance so we can help your child to prepare for the absence.

Every day counts!			
A day here or there might not seem like much, however...			
<i>When your child misses just...</i>	<i>That equals...</i>	<i>Which is....</i>	<i>So, from Prep to Year 12 that equals...</i>
1 day each fortnight	20 days per year	4 weeks every year	Nearly 1½ years of learning missed.
1 day a week	40 days per year	8 weeks every year	More than 2½ years of learning missed.
2 days a week	80 days per year	16 weeks every year	Over 5 years of learning missed.
3 days a week	120 days per year	24 weeks every year	Almost 8 years of learning missed.

BUILDING RESILIENCE IN YOUR CHILD

One area of your child’s development that is a focus for staff at Wondall is to strengthen our students’ resilience. We know that resilient children share four basic skill sets - independence, problem-solving, optimism and social connection. You can help us build resilience in your child by remembering these skill sets:

- Independence – If they can do it themselves, let them.
(Even something as simple as carrying their own school bag.)
- Problem Solving – It doesn’t always have to be Mum or Dad riding in on their white horse to solve every problem the child has, especially if it’s a problem of his/her own making.
(Let them work out the solution, with some guidance from you if necessary.)
- Optimism – Encourage your child to see the positives even when times are tough. Tomorrow the sun will still come up.
(Tough times don’t last but tough people do.)
- Social Connection – Encourage your child to develop friendships and to be involved in the broader community. Join a sporting, cultural or community group to build skills, make friends, help others and have fun!
(It is important in life to participate, contribute and connect.)

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

As a parent, you play a vital role in your child's education. By getting involved in the school you can help your child make a smooth and happy start to their education.

You can do this by:

- introducing yourself to your child's teacher,
- sharing relevant information with your child's teacher,
- keeping the teacher informed of any changes that may affect your child,
- talking positively with your child about their day,
- attending parent information sessions,
- reading the school newsletter,
- attending P & C meetings (currently held on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm, and
- volunteering to attend school excursions or participate in classroom activities

You can also help your child progress at school by taking these steps at home.

- Take an interest in your child's schooling and value the importance of attending. Ask your child over dinner: 'What new things did you do at school today?' This will show your child that school is important to you, and you are keen to know about the great learning that is happening.
- Read aloud to your child. Reading aloud helps develop the imagination, because it allows listeners to form a picture in their minds. It also helps develop an awareness of the patterns of language.
- Provide a variety of experiences to stimulate your child's imagination — for example, visit the zoo, park or airport.
- Play card games and board games with your child. This helps to develop mathematical, problem-solving, language and social skills such as turn-taking and not always winning.
- Spend time together as a family — activities such as shopping, going to the park or working in the garden build children's awareness and knowledge of the world around them as well as develop language skills.
- Find opportunities to write with your child. This includes making lists for grocery shopping or things to take on trips and writing letters. These opportunities build children's awareness of vocabulary and the importance of reading and writing.
- Sing familiar songs and nursery rhymes together with your child.
- Show respect for your child's natural curiosity. Be patient and try to find the time to answer the many questions they ask or make ways to find answers together.
- Help your child become responsible and independent by encouraging him or her to pass on school notices and newsletters or to pack his or her school bag each day.

COMMUNICATION

A weekly newsletter containing messages from our school community is emailed to each family and available on our website. Please make sure you subscribe to our newsletter (via the Quick Link on our webpage) to ensure it is emailed to you. We also post messages and calendar events on our school website and you can follow us on Twitter and Facebook for regular updates.

Prep can be a very busy place with many things happening each day. Your child's teacher will set up a process for regular communication. Once settled and ready, Prep students will begin to bring home a homework folder containing a home reader and sight words that they will need to practise daily.

Please inform the teacher of any important events occurring in your family's life as these can often be of major concern or excitement to a child, and it may affect their behaviour or sense of well-being.

Prep teachers will speak with parents throughout the year and especially during parent-teacher interviews about student progress. At the end of each semester (in June and December) parents will be provided with a report card. Report cards are emailed home.

Please ensure that at all times you provide the school with your most recent contact details. It is very important to notify the office of any changes in addresses, email addresses or phone numbers – including home, father's and mother's work and mobile numbers and emergency or alternate contact details. This will help the school to make contact quickly should an emergency arise.

EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

As students and families have unique needs, we offer the services of the following support staff:

- Guidance Officer
- Speech Language Pathologist
- STLAN (Support Teacher – Literacy & Numeracy)
- Advisory Visiting Teachers – Hearing Impairment, Vision Impairment, Physical Impairment, and English as an Additional Language/ Dialect.

Students may be referred to these services by teachers, administrators or by parent request during the year. Please be supportive if your child's teacher approaches you as we are aiming to ensure that your child is learning and achieving success.

Wondall Heights Special Education Program is provided for students who have been verified with a disability. Specialist staff support students in their roll class and provide a variety of programs to enhance their school experience.

FIRST DAY AT PREP:

Make your child's first day at school more enjoyable and relaxed by being prepared. The best thing you can do for your child is to make their first school day as stress-free and relaxed as possible.

On the day:

- leave plenty of time to get ready
- make a nutritious breakfast — this is essential for sustained energy and concentration
- talk through the daily routine — start, lunch and finish times
- ensure your child is aware of your end-of-day pick-up routine
- talk through a few simple self-help ideas — for example, asking teachers for help or directions
- be positive and encouraging about your child's attendance at school
- assist your child's teacher in setting up routines by leaving the classroom as soon as the bell goes so that learning can commence on time

GETTING YOUR CHILD SET FOR PREP:

Here are some simple steps you can take to help make your child's first time at school more enjoyable and relaxed.

Encourage your child to be independent by helping them get used to:

- putting on and doing up his or her shoes,
- eating and drinking without help (opening lunchboxes, wrapping and unwrapping school lunches and drinking from drink bottles),
- caring for and putting away play things,
- using a handkerchief or tissue,
- going to the toilet independently,
- using playground equipment safely,
- carrying his or her own bag, and
- identifying his or her own belongings

Work with your child to develop his or her communication skills. Help your child to:

- make his or her own needs known,
- use appropriate greetings, and
- respond verbally when spoken to.

Familiarise your child with the school environment and routine by:

- driving or walking by the school a few times so that the school becomes a familiar place,
- introducing your child to other children in the neighbourhood who will be attending the same school, and
- encouraging your child to understand that teachers and other school staff are at school to help.

PREP CURRICULUM

At Wondall, the teaching and learning in our Prep classrooms is strongly founded in active learning through **play, investigations** and **real-life situations**. Our students are engaged in hands-on activities, working collaboratively to investigate, create, ponder and learn. We set up our Prep classrooms with home corners, blocks, materials for investigating and creating and digital devices, helping your child to transition smoothly into our school setting.

Our Prep Program is based upon the Australian Curriculum in English, Mathematics, Science, HASS (History and Social Sciences), Health, Physical Education, The Arts and Technologies. The Australian Curriculum sets out the core knowledge, understandings, skills and general capabilities that are important for all students. It identifies what all young people should learn as they progress through schooling, and is the foundation for high quality teaching to meet the needs of all students.

At Wondall, our Prep students will work within the following Learning Areas:

English: Students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills for listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating. They will develop beginner reading skills - learning sight words, developing phonemic knowledge and becoming confident with a variety of reading strategies.

Students will create a range of imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, communicating and sharing their writing with peers, teachers, known adults and students from other classes.

Maths: Students will develop an understanding of numbers, number names, numerals and quantities. They will work to fluently count numbers in sequences, continue patterns and compare the lengths of objects. They will use problem-solving strategies to model authentic problems, sort objects, use familiar counting sequences to solve unfamiliar problems and discuss the reasonableness of their answers. They will use reason to make comparisons, create patterns and explain processes.

Science: Students will observe and describe the behaviours and properties of everyday objects, materials and living things. They will explore change in the world around them, including changes that impact upon them such as the weather, and changes they can affect such as making things move or change shape. They will seek answers to questions they pose, make observations and use their senses to gather different types of information

History and Social Sciences: Students will investigate their personal worlds, including their personal and family histories and the places they and their families live in and belong to. The emphasis is on the student's own history and their own place. They explore why places are special to them and others.

The Arts: Students will participate in Music, Dance, Drama, Media Arts and Visual Arts programs. They will create, design, represent, communicate and share their imagined and conceptual ideas, emotions, observations and experiences.

Health and Physical Education: Students will develop knowledge, understanding and skills to lead healthy, safe, happy and active lives. They will identify their own strengths and simple actions they can take to keep themselves and their classmates healthy, happy and safe. They will learn about movement as they participate in physical activity in a range of different settings.

Technologies: Students will develop foundational skills in computational thinking and an awareness of personal experiences using digital systems. They will plan, create and evaluate designed solutions for authentic situations, such as designing a boat that will float and carry a load.

Please also note the following:

HANDWRITING –

Students learn to write using the Queensland Beginners Alphabet Script. Young children must learn to write in lower case first. Give your child an advantage by providing the correct model when writing his/her name. For example, use a capital letter only for the first letter of their name and not capitals for all the letters - e.g. Kate not KATE. It is easier if your child learns the correct form of the letters rather than something that has to be relearned once they are at school. Below is a copy of the Queensland Beginners Alphabet Script:

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn
Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

SPECIALIST LESSONS:

Prep students have weekly Music, Dance and Physical Education lessons. Students in Years 1 to 6 have these weekly lessons also and students in Years 4 to 6 learn Languages (Japanese).

LIBRARY BORROWING:

Students in Prep visit our school library weekly with their class teacher. Students in Prep may borrow one book for a one-week period and must have a library bag. This library bag is used to protect any books borrowed.

All books must be returned on time and in good condition. If a book becomes overdue, all borrowing rights are suspended until the book is returned. Parents will be asked to pay the replacement cost of any lost or damaged books.

SWIMMING:

Prep students attend swimming lessons in Term 4. These lessons are held in the school pool with our Physical Education teacher.

PREP HOURS

Prep hours are from 8:50am – 3:00pm each day. On special occasions there may be altered hours to suit an excursion or event. Prior notice will be given to all parents if this is to occur.

Please be punctual when bringing and collecting your child. When a student arrives to school late they can miss important explanations and learning experiences. Remember to visit the office for a late slip if your child is late to school.

At the end of the day, students can become worried very quickly if their friends have left Prep and they are still waiting to be collected.

UNIFORM

We take pride in our appearance at Wondall Heights State School. Students wear their uniform every day with pride.

We are a Sun Smart school and require Prep students to wear a Wondall Heights wide brimmed, gold hat when outside. Caps are not permitted. We have a No Hat – No Play rule.

Students are expected to wear their sky blue striped shirt with shorts / culottes or school dress every day. Students must wear closed in black shoes that are suitable for outdoor play. It is best if the shoes are velcro or slip-on so that your child can independently remove and replace them.

The sports uniform should be worn for Physical Education lessons and all other school sporting events. Students are encouraged to wear their house colour on sports carnival days.

Jewellery, except for a watch and sleepers or stud earrings, is not permitted.

VISITORS TO OUR SCHOOL

All volunteers and visitors must report to the school office to register and sign in. A pass will then be issued and it is a requirement that the visitor wears the pass around their neck as this clearly identifies them as an authorised visitor. When the volunteer or visitor leaves the school they must return to the office, sign out and return the pass. This system helps us to ensure a safe environment for students, staff and visitors and also assists us in the event of an evacuation.

WHAT TO BRING TO PREP

- A bag big enough to carry all belongings including their homework folder.
- A library bag to use each week.
- A wide-brimmed hat needed daily.
- A full set of spare clothes to be kept at school for the term.
- Morning tea and lunch in a named lunch box (see note below re: students with allergies).
- A water bottle.

PLEASE CLEARLY NAME ALL ITEMS WITH A WATERPROOF PEN

Parents are asked to monitor carefully the items children are allowed to bring to school. Expensive items, toys and large amounts of money are to be kept at home. Students must accept responsibility for what they bring to school – it is not the school's responsibility to care for items from home.

WHAT NOT TO BRING: ANAPHYLAXIS AND ALLERGIES

At Wondall we have a number of students who may experience severe anaphylactic reactions if exposed to a variety of allergens, including peanuts, cashews, pistachios, other tree nuts, dairy products and eggs. Please consider these students and their needs when you are packing lunches to send to school. We particularly ask parents to consider nuts and nut products, including peanut paste, nut-based muesli bars and Nutella-style products. We thank you for helping to keep our students safe at school.