

Tolga State School

PREP

INFORMATION BOOKLET

2023



WELCOME

We welcome all enrolling Prep students and their families. We look forward to sharing many happy times with you as we work together to provide the best possible learning opportunities for your child.

Enrolment requirements

For students who are enrolling for Prep in 2023, their Date of Birth must fall within the period 01/07/2017 to 30/06/2018. Birth certificates must be presented upon enrolment.

Charter of Expectations for Schools

1. Tolga State School has a culture of care and of high expectations, inside and outside the classroom.
 - All students matter, every day.
 - All students can achieve high academic results.
 - Practices within the school enhance the learning climate and tone.
 - Feedback for learning is valued and practised at all levels.
 - There are high standards of student behaviour (positive school-wide behaviour, orderly student movement, high student engagement and motivation within the classroom).
 - There is an emphasis on the uniform and dress code.
 - There is an emphasis on achieving consistently high student attendance.
2. Curriculum delivery is underpinned by highly effective explicit teaching.
3. There is a high level of community engagement and support.
4. There are strong relationships between parents and their children's teachers.
5. School leaders actively coach and support teachers in their skill development.
6. Staff share collective accountability for all student outcomes.

Charter of Expectations for Teaching

School-wide Pedagogy

Each teacher:

1. builds effective relationships with each student
2. accepts accountability for each student's learning
3. uses data to inform teaching and monitor student learning
4. plans and teaches each lesson using the agreed explicit teaching model
5. uses differentiation strategies to cater to the needs of every student succeeding
6. uses revision strategies to move student knowledge from short term to long term memory

Learning Environment

Each teacher:

1. sets a positive classroom learning tone
2. establishes an atmosphere of high expectations
3. focuses on high standards of student presentation and handwriting
4. regularly corrects student work and provides feedback to each student
5. has a high standard of classroom display that is relevant and educationally stimulating

Student Engagement

Each teacher:

1. ensures that each student feels valued and respected by them
2. ensures that each student is given work and other learning experiences at their ability level
3. supports each student to have friends at school
4. engages each student in their progress towards their annual learning goals

Operating Hours

The Prep day is the equivalent of a full school day. At Prep, the school day begins at 8.50 am.

The *Australian Foundation Year Curriculum Guidelines* are designed for a five days per week program. Therefore, parents and carers are encouraged to have students attend for the five days to gain full benefit from the program.

The Australian Foundation Year Curriculum

Prep year is a new learning environment with exciting things to do, see, touch and experience. Your child will find friends to share with and teachers who respect them as capable and competent learners. Learning involves developing a relationship of trust. We aim to create a relaxed, secure and supportive environment where children are encouraged to investigate and explore to their full potential.

We utilise **The Australian Foundation Year Curriculum Guidelines** that incorporate the following:

- English, Language, Literature and Literacy
- Mathematics – Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, Statistics and Probability
- Science
- Humanities and Social Sciences
- The Arts
- Technologies
- Health and Physical Education

As well as this we continue to incorporate the holistic view of Prep, which is:

- Supporting play as a context for learning
- Understanding each child as an individual
- Developing supportive partnerships
- Providing flexible learning environments
- Assisting children in exploring the world around them and the ways in which they learn

We provide a learning environment where the children learn through:

- Their contact with others
- Other children
- Our school staff
- Parents and other community members
- Through investigation in the world around them

We offer a rich curriculum in which children are taught to think, solve problems, and share ideas. Our days include explicit teaching of the Australian Curriculum as well as play, investigations, physical, musical and social development, and work/play which promotes hands-on learning where children paint, build with blocks, model with clay and playdough, count beads, play dress-ups, and tell/write stories. Children learn best through:

- Active participation
- Real life and real materials
- Guidance in developing individual and group decision making skills

Australian Curriculum - Prep Program at Tolga State School

**The Department of Education, Training and Employment, Far North Queensland Region
Expectations for the exiting Prep are:**

Each Prep student;

- will know all their letters and sounds
- recognise numbers to 20
- sound out words to read
- be able to read and recognise sight words

The following factors contribute to your child's successful learning;

His or her:

- Social and emotional competence with a focus on social and personal learning
- Health and physical well-being, particularly in making healthy choices, gross motor and fine motor development
- Active learning processes with a focus on thinking, investigating, imagining and responding
- Positive dispositions to learning
- Language learning and communication focusing on oral language and early literacy
- Early mathematical understandings with emphasis on early numeracy

Morning Routines

It is important to remember to encourage your child to be independent in our morning routines. When children come into the classroom, they are expected to be responsible for their own belongings. Please encourage your child to follow the routine outlined by the teacher and teacher aide. You will foster this responsibility by establishing a consistent routine for timely arrival and departure. Our shared aim is to assist your child to be ready to independently handle the start of the school day. This routine may include:

- Putting his/her bag away
- Placing his/her water bottle and lunch box in the appropriate area

Travel to and from the classroom

Please notify us, personally, by phone or in writing, when anyone other than yourself will be collecting your child from school. School finishes at 2:55pm. If you know that you are going to be late, please notify the school office on 4089 5111 and your child will be escorted to the parent pickup area.

For the safety of your child, there is a Pedestrian Crossing located on the Kennedy Highway. Please ensure that you use the crossing and parking zones as signed.

Please remember:

- Children must be collected from the classroom
- Children who are not collected by 3:05pm will be escorted to under 'Block A [bus supervision area] which is supervised by staff on bus duty
- Please use the parking zones appropriately which is located on Catherine St for Prep Parents
- Children who travel by bus are escorted to the bus area by a teacher aide at 2.50pm and are placed in their correct bus line. If there is a change to your child's normal bus routine, please notify the office that morning so changes can be made in the bus role before the afternoon. This helps to prevent confusion for both the adults on duty in the bus area and the children.

Treasures from Home

Toys and trinkets from home very often become lost or broken at school, so it saves a lot of heartache if these are left at home. Staff cannot assume responsibility for any loss or breakage.

Birthdays and other celebrations

Everyone loves a birthday, and special celebrations, as these are wonderful ways to build understanding about each other. We have found that patty cakes are the most ideal and fair way for children to share their special event with friends. However, there may be intolerances and allergies in some classes, so please check with your class teacher beforehand.

Communication

Newsletter/Messages:

Please read the School Newsletter and School's Facebook page to keep in touch with upcoming activities and items of interest.

Sharing Information

Events in family life, such as illness, new babies and visitors can be a prime source of excitement or concern for young children. This can affect their behaviour at home and/or at school. It is important to keep the school informed of any changes/issues that may affect your child.

Please feel free to discuss any problems or queries with your teacher that you may have about your child's progress. We look forward to working with your child and yourself in building a supportive partnership!

The school has support personnel, including our Guidance Officer, for assistance with significant student or family matters.

Parents in the Prep Class

As parents and guardians, you play a vital role in the education of your children and therefore, we welcome your active involvement in our classroom.

You can help by:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Reading daily to your child▪ Volunteering to go on excursions▪ Volunteering either occasionally or on a regular basis in the classroom▪ Offering to share hobbies, interests, ideas and any special expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ If you need to discuss any problems or concerns with the teacher, please make an appointment as this enables the teacher to give you their full attention.▪ Collecting collage, art and craft materials such as boxes, lids and containers
--	---

Break Periods

The Prep children have three break times.

The first break is called fruit break which is from 9.50-10.00am. It is a quick break where the children go to the toilet and then come back and eat a piece of fruit or vegetable and have a drink of water. This enables them to concentrate better in our morning session.

The second eating time is from 11:00am-11:10am. The children will eat their lunch at the tables in the classroom to ensure they develop healthy eating habits and are supervised by the classroom teacher aide. Following this, the Preps play in the Prep playground until 11:45.

For the third break, from 1:20pm-1:45pm, the Prep children will eat the remainder of their lunch in the whole school eating area from 1:20pm-1:30pm. This break is supervised by teachers. Following this, they will play in the Prep playground.

Names and Labels

As young children often do not recognise their own belongings, we cannot emphasise enough the need to label absolutely everything - bags, shoes, towels, lunch boxes, hats, library bags, clothing.

What to wear

Prep students will wear the Tolga State School uniform and sports uniform which can be purchased from the school tuckshop on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday between 8.30am and 1.30pm.

Sometimes, a child may have an accident. Please leave a bag containing a spare set of clothes (clearly named) in your child's port.

Closed footwear must be worn at all times to conform to Workplace, Health and Safety Guidelines. Children are not permitted to remove their shoes unless instructed to do so.

Velcro shoes are preferred.

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.

Time	School Day	Parent Experiences
8.25am		Arrive at school
From 8.30am	Classroom Doors Open	Help your child to <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Locate their name badge and attach it to their school shirt• Unpack all their items into the labelled boxes in the classroom• Place their lunch box in the fridge• Place their water bottle in designated space• Identify labelled port rack and place bag on port rack• Find a space at a desk or on the floor to do a quiet activity The teacher will move around the room to meet and greet parents and children. Parents make a quick and cheerful goodbye to your child as soon as they are settled.
8.50am	First Bell	The bell will ring. Teacher will invite students to gather on the carpet. Teacher will ask parents to leave. Parents make a quick and cheerful goodbye to your child. Teacher and teacher aide will settle the children with a story or song to start the day. If your child is upset, direct them to the teacher or teacher aide who will help settle them as you depart.
2.50pm	Pick Up	Ensure you arrive earlier than usual to meet your child.
2.55pm	Final Bell	Please go inside the classroom to collect your child.

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
- 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 and opening a packet and/or containers
- to use tissues
- how to wash hands properly, that they should be washed before and after meals and after visiting 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 (**no laces please**)
- to care for items and to put things away

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 and literacy skills can be developed by:

- talking in sentences
- looking at picture books
- remembering little rhymes
- reading with parents
- listening to parents reading stories regularly
- recognising letters and sounds of the alphabet
- recognising words in the environment (eg. Big W, McDonalds etc.)

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, recipes, 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 parent meetings at school

We hope you will have an enjoyable and rewarding year. We look forward to seeing your child blossom intellectually, socially, creatively and physically. We also look forward to working closely with you to ensure the best start possible in your child's education.