

Dear Parents,

We are looking forward to a successful year.

The Preparatory Year is designed to strengthen links between the Preparatory Year and Year 1 and will streamline the move through the early years with a new curriculum. Preparatory Year is a full time, non-compulsory programme which replaces preschool. As a result of the introduction of the Preparatory Year, Queensland children will be starting compulsory schooling at about the same age as children in other states of Australia.

Australia is moving toward a national framework for schooling, with the aim of raising education standards and achieving nationally consistent curriculum, assessment and reporting.

The Curriculum

The Early Years Curriculum Guidelines are designed to better prepare children for school. The Preparatory curriculum is based on active learning, which includes inquiry, investigation and play. **The Australian Curriculum** sets achievement standards for English, Maths, Science, History, Health and Physical Education. **What will they learn in Preparatory Year?**

- ❖ To be thinkers and problem solvers
- ❖ To use their imagination
- ❖ To play with others and get along
- ❖ To listen and communicate well with others
- ❖ To use numbers and maths ideas to make sense of things they see and hear.
- ❖ To use their bodies to write, build, climb, hop and to look after themselves more.
- ❖ To respect themselves and others
- ❖ To find out about the world
- ❖ To read and write

What will they do?

- ❖ Grow spiritually
- ❖ Talk
- ❖ Listen
- ❖ Sing and dance
- ❖ Paint
- ❖ Balance
- ❖ Write and draw
- ❖ Learn about colours and shapes
- ❖ Make choices

What do I need to do now?

- ❖ Find out when your child can attend Preparatory Year
- ❖ Go to any Preparatory Year talks being held near you
- ❖ Do things together with your child such as reading, talking, playing, gardening, fishing and helping each other around the home.

For further information about enrolling your child in Preparatory Year for 2012 or beyond please contact the Principal or [Catholic Education Services](#), or visit the Education Queensland website <http://education.qld.gov.au/etrf/preparatory.html>

Who is eligible for Prep?

Birth date	Eligible for Prep Year in:	Eligible for Year 1 in:
Child born 1 st July 2007 to 30 th June 2008	2013	2014
Child born 1 st July 2008 to 30 th June 2009	2014	2015
Child born 1 st July 2009 to 30 th June 2010	2015	2016
Child born 1 st July 2010 to 30 th June 2011	2016	2017
Child born 1 st July 2011 to 30 th June 2012	2017	2018

Developing the whole child : St. Teresa's is committed to the growth of the whole child by offering a developmentally appropriate programme which addresses children's needs - spiritual, intellectual, physical, cultural, social and emotional.

Faith, spiritual and values development : In keeping with the ethos and values of Catholic education, faith, spiritual and virtues development will be integrated into the Preparatory Year curriculum.

Religious Education: Religious Education in a Catholic school has its own specific purposes within a sound general education. In particular, it focuses attention on the religious and moral development of all students within the framework of the Catholic tradition. It is one means of empowering students in their quest for God.

The RE programme presents a simple understanding of the love of God for each child and this is incorporated throughout our daily programme. We strive to provide a Christian (Jesus Christ centred) environment where love is fostered through: sharing, listening, caring, giving, helping others, praying and respecting others.

The children will be involved in **school and class liturgies throughout the year**, to which you will be invited.

A safe and caring environment

St. Teresa's School aims to provide special care and attention, fostering each child's unique beauty and gifts. Child protection matters are taken seriously, and practices and protocols are in place to ensure our school is a safe place that not only complies with regulations but moves beyond mere compliance to prevention. Our Preparatory Year classroom will endeavour to nurture right relationships. **Through social emotional learning, children are supported in the development of the life skills of protective behaviours, confidence, getting along, persistence, organization and emotional resilience.**

In close partnership

St. Teresa's sees education as a partnership between school and families. Parents are welcomed as members of the school community and opportunities are provided to share in the school experience. Close communication between school and home is a priority. We publish a class newsletter each term to tell news and share photos.

Assembly

Assembly is held once a week, every Wednesday morning at 8.40am. This is a time for the whole school to celebrate achievements or special awards for great behaviour, hear important messages and revise school rules and notices.

Support-a-Talker

The Support-a-Talker program provides oral language experiences in forms of games, conversations, books and listening activities to enhance each child's language learning. (Areas targeted include: giving and following instructions, turn taking, eye contact, greetings, storytelling, naming, associations, description, and grammar and sentence formulation.)

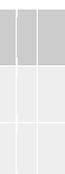
BOOKS BOOKS BOOKS

Books are an important part of your child's life. Fostering and promoting your child's love of reading simply by reading to your child at home cannot be overstated.

Mem Fox, a literacy expert, who has published 30 books for children and taught for more than 25 years, believes that there is an important bond that develops between parents and child as they enjoy the joys and adventures of books.

Mem believes that reading to your child, sparks their imagination, increases their vocabulary and ignites a lifelong joy of reading and learning.

Reading and Writing will be an important component of Prep.



WRITING

Remember how excited you were when your child began to talk. You celebrated your child's cooing and baby talk, listening, accepting and praising your child's early attempts at speaking; and spoke to your child so that he or she could hear the correct pronunciation of words. You can support your child's written language development in much the same way. Such things as shopping lists, letters and reminder notes are a great way to start. Remember to praise your child's early attempts at writing.

NO MORE TEARS HANDWRITING

Help Me Hold the Crayon

There are easy ways to help your child. Here's how:

1. Choose the right writing tools.
2. Show your child how to hold them.
3. Be a good example.

How do I choose the right writing tools?

- As soon as your child is past age 3 or the puts-things-in-his-mouth swallowing stage, give him or her little broken pieces of chalk or crayon and lots of big sheets of paper for loose scribbling/drawing.
- Little pieces of finger food also encourage finger skills.

Why little pieces?

Little pieces develop fingertip control and strength. They encourage the precise pinch that's used for crayons and pencils. Notice how well your child uses his/her fingers with little pieces. There's research to show that starting with small pieces encourages the correct grasp.

What about regular crayons and pencils?

They're fine, but you must show your child how to hold and use them. Save the pencils for later. Pencils are sharp pointed sticks and really aren't appropriate for beginners. Fat pencils and crayons are too heavy for little hands.

When should I start?

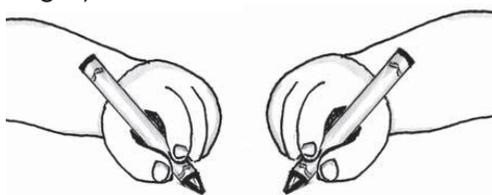
Right now. You can start showing your child how to use crayons as soon as your child wants to colour.

How do I show my child?

1. Teach your child to name the first 3 fingers – the thumb, the pointer, and the tall man.
2. Move them - Give a thumbs up and wiggle the thumb. Have your child point with the pointer finger and then put the tall man beside the pointer finger.
3. Make a big open O pinch – this positions the thumb and pointer correctly.

What is the correct grip?

Here's a picture. Notice that there is a choice. Some children like to pinch with the thumb and pointer. That's the tripod (3—pinch with thumb and pointer, pencil rests on tall man). Others like the quadropod (4—pinch with thumb and pointer/tall man together, pencil rests on ring finger).



Left Tripod

Right Tripod



Left Quadropod

Right Quadropod

What else can I do?

1. Pick up and Drop it! This is a fun way to practise placing the fingers correctly. Help your child pick up the pencil and get all the fingers placed. Then drop it! See if your child can put all the fingers back in the right place again. Repeat two or three times.
2. Aim and Scribble. Make tiny stars or spots on paper. Teach your child how to aim the crayon and land on a star to make it shine. Help the crayon hand rest on the paper, with the elbow down and the hand touching the paper. Help the helper hand hold the paper. Now just wiggle the fingers to scribble.
3. Show your child how to hold and move the crayon to make different strokes, back and forth, up and down, round and round.

Help Me Write My Name

"That's my name. My name starts with _____." Maybe your child is trying to write or even make letters you can recognize. If so, then it's time to start demonstrating how to write a few letters.

Here's how:

1. Be a good example.
2. Write with a Capital letter then lowercase.
3. Start every letter at the top.
4. Teach letters step-by-step.
5. Write on paper strips with a smiley face in the top left corner.

How can I be a good example?

Hold the crayon correctly. Your child will be watching how you form letters and hold the crayon or pencil. Be a good model. You may need to make a special effort to hold the crayon correctly.

Why should I use all capitals?

Capitals are the first letters that children can visually recognize and remember. They are the first letters children can physically write. If a child can write his or her name correctly in capitals, you may introduce lowercase letters.

Does it matter where my student starts?

Yes, it does. English has one basic rule for both reading and writing: read and write from top to bottom, left to right. When you write with a child, always start at the top.

What do I say when I teach the letters?

Always say, "I start at the top." Then describe the part you're making.

Say "big" or "little" for size. Say "line" or "curve" for shape, like this:

D = "I start at the top. I make a big line. Now I make a big curve."

What do I use and how do I do this?

Use two strips of paper, one for you and one for the child. Place your strip directly above the child's strip and demonstrate the first letter in the child's name. Say each step as you make the letter. Be sure the child can see the strokes as you write. (Avoid blocking the child's view with your hand.)

Then tell the child to make the letter on his/her paper. Say the steps as the child writes, encouraging the child to say the steps aloud with you. Continue letter by letter.

NOTE:

To Make Paper strips – Use a standard sheet. Fold it in half the long way, and then in half again. Cut on folds to make 4 strips.

Extra help – If the child has difficulty imitating your letter, you may use a gray crayon to pre-write each letter on the child's paper. Do this letter by letter and let the child crayon trace over your letter. Make your gray letters progressively lighter and discontinue pre-writing as child gains ability.

This is The Beginner's Alphabet.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n
o p q r s t u v w x y z

Here are the Capital Letters.

They remain the same for both print and cursive.

A B C D E F G H I J K
L M N O P Q R S T
U V W X Y Z

- They are sloped.
- They all start at the top.
- They never join.

Synthetic Phonics

Almost everything your child does and learns to do is based on being able to read. To make progress in every subject, to read instructions, to read for information, even to complete forms such as their tax return in later life, they need to be able to read. During Prep your child is being taught to read by a method called Synthetic Phonics. With this method they learn the pure sound of each letter and how to synthesise (blend) them to make words. Students are also taught a small bank of tricky words (known as camera words) to begin to read and write sentences. Alongside this programme, please continue to read to your child and provide the excitement that published books bring

Get Reading Right Phonics hero on line: Every Child is a Synthetic Phonics Superhero!

The class will buy a subscription to this game and each student will get an username and password. If they have the internet at home students can use their username and password to play the game online. See me in class or drop a note if you want to have your child's username and password.

In part 1, children join Zak, on a mission to rescue his superhero friends from Dr. Lazy Bones. By completing games, covering the six essential reading and spelling skills, they unlock a hero. The online games are varied, fun and give over 45 hours of practice

The Six Skills on Each Level Reinforce: Recognising the sound letter Correspondences ,Reading using these sounds,Spelling using these sounds,Reading camera words,Spelling camera words, Reading whole sentences

Buddies

Children will be exposed to the experience of buddies during the school year. For specific times and activities or events 3 or 4 students from other classes will visit the class to help with organized activities (such as reading, puzzle work, computer and games)

Show and Tell

As a means of encouraging all children to participate in "Show and Tell" we ask that you try and find something with your child that they can share with the rest of the class. Some ideas - photos, nature items or a favourite book. Ideally your child should be able to discuss the item they have brought in and may have to answer some questions from the other class members. We ensure that all children have the opportunity to share their news as they will have a specific day for their show and tell. At times, children's ideas may be used for special investigations and learning centers within the class. We usually have only two or three students each day for optimum listening.

Treasures from home

We ask parents to have their children keep toys at home so that they do not get lost, broken or confused with those in the classroom.

However there are exceptions:

- ❖ Your child may wish to share a special occasion such as a birthday, visit from grandma
- ❖ If it is a "security toy" which may help to make the transition from home to prep a little easier.
- ❖ An interesting item which may initiate an excitement or discussion with the class (science or nature item) is always encouraged!!!!

Library

The children will be able to borrow books from the library on a weekly basis. We ask children to have a library bag. Library Day is Monday.

Computers

There are two computers in the classroom. Children have timetabled access each day and specific time on the same day as their show and tell.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special celebrations, so children may bring a batch of patty cakes or a cake to share.

Food

Here at St. Teresa's we encourage a healthy food policy to assist children to develop sound nutritional habits. These habits, if fostered during early years, will hopefully help the child in later years to make sound choices about what to eat. Suitable morning tea and lunches may include – fruit, vegetables, cheese, dried fruit, sandwiches, fruit juice. The tuck-shop committee has provided a fridge for each classroom, and lunches will be refrigerated.

*** Note – Please let us know if there are any food allergies.**

Fruit Break, Lunch and Afternoon Tea- *At the set of tables outside the classroom.*

Children will take a morning fruit break at 10am. Lunch begins with play outside then followed by lunch at 10.55am-11.10 An afternoon tea session is from 1pm-1.15pm

FRUIT BREAK – The Preps have a **fruit break** at 10am each day as the Big Lunch eating time is at 10.55am. and the afternoon break is a 1pm. Could you please send a **piece of fruit** in your child's lunch box for this time **each day including tuckshop days.**

Tuckshop

Tuckshop day is Tuesday. A basket is available for children to place their paper bag, containing name, order and money. More details of price lists etc will be given to you on the first day of term. Details are also on our website.

Medication

Please let us know if your child requires specific medication. The medication should be labeled with the child's name and the correct dosage and the time that it is to be given to the child.

Afternoon activities

After lunch play children will listen to stories and do quiet activities. During the year at this time children will experience some calming, meditation, yoga, tai chi, mindfulness and relaxation techniques.

Perceptual Motor Skills/ Brain /Body Gym

Three times a week children will participate in a perceptual motor skills program. This will enhance movement patterns to brain and encourage fitness. Three stations are set up and children rotate through the stations in small groups. Other days will include obstacle courses, ball handling skills, playground equipment discovery and games. Doing arm and leg movements that cross over one side of the body to the other (cross-lateral movements) can have a dramatic effect on learning.

Water

We strongly encourage the drinking of water as a brain energizer. The brain needs to be properly hydrated in order to be alert.

DAYS OF THE WEEK- Special Activities

Monday –	Perceptual Motor Skills, Library
Tuesday –	Tuck-shop, Music, Perceptual Motor Skills Brain and Body Gym
Wednesday –	Assembly, Sacred Singing, Ball skills, Art/Craft
Thursday –	Science
Friday –	Cooking, Sport/ Games

Art / craft

Any pre-used containers, boxes or handy bits for craft, collage, construction and art would be greatly appreciated.

Helpers

Anyone interested or wanting to help in the classroom with art/craft or small group games, cooking etc please indicate if you'd like to help and your preferred day and time.

Photo Album

Our class has a special photo album. This includes photographs of the various activities and experiences of the year. It is also great communication tool to use with your child as a means of expressing what happens at school to the family members at home. The children will have the opportunity to take the Photo Album home during the year. Please take the time to share it with your child. So that every child can share the album with their family please return it to class the next time you are there.

Cooking

As part of our programme, we do cooking each Friday or when it comes up as part of a negotiated plan or children's ideas in investigations.

Portfolios

To organize evidence of learning and progress of children's learning and development, we gather items of children's work, photos of activities, and place these in A3 sized plastic view folders. These are sent home mid year with a report card and at the end of the year they can be kept as a memento of your child's year in Prep. Students will also receive a DVD slideshow and a CD rom of photos taken throughout the year.

Lost Property

It is inevitable that, from time to time, children's belongings will be mislaid or lost. All found items are placed in the lost property basket which is in the prep classroom. Please assist in the returning of found articles by having **all belongings clearly named**.



PLEASE CLEARLY NAME

ALL ITEMS (including uniform)



Early Learning

The Early Years Curriculum Guidelines provide a framework to guide teachers as they make curriculum decisions and scaffold children's learning.

The early learning areas teachers help to establish continuities between children's diverse prior learning experiences and future learning are:

Figure 1: Key organisers

These key organisers, referred to throughout the *Early Years Curriculum Guidelines*, provide a framework to guide teachers as they make curriculum decisions and scaffold children's learning.

Five *early learning areas*

- Social & personal learning
- Health & physical learning
- Language learning & communication
- Early mathematical understandings
- Active learning processes

Five *contexts for learning*

- Play
- Real-life situations
- Investigations
- Routines and transitions
- Focused learning and teaching

Four *interactive processes for curriculum decision making*

- Planning
- Interacting
- Monitoring & assessing
- Reflecting

Five *key components*

- Understanding children
- Building partnerships
- Flexible learning environments
- Contexts for learning
- What children learn

Four *phases that describe children's learning and development*

- Becoming aware
- Exploring
- Making connections
- Applying

DAILY ROUTINE

The daily routine is designed to provide the consistency and predictability that children and adults need while providing enough flexibility that children feel neither rushed nor bored as they carry out their activities. The parts of the day include time for welcome and prayer, small group activities, movement and sports skills, fruit break, large group (Whole class activities), Outside play, Big Lunch, Planning for play, carrying out plans for play, clean up time, recall and reflection time after play, quiet time, book reading time and investigation activities.

The [daily routine](#) is a consistent framework for the day that provides a balanced variety of experiences and learning opportunities. Children engage in both individual and social play, participate in small- and large-group activities, assist with cleanup, socialize during meals, develop self-care skills, and exercise their small and large muscles. The most important segment of the daily routine is the plan-do-review sequence, in which children make choices about what they will do, carry out their ideas, and reflect upon their activities with adults and other children.

TIME	ACTIVITY- Term 1
8.25am-8.40	Quiet play (puzzles or books) Children put away their gear and do puzzles and read books with parents before our day begins.
8.40	Bell rings
8.40am	Whole Class Time- (Language) (approx 30 mins) Prayer, Rollcall, Gathering, Songs, Morning Discussion, Support a talker Show/Tell, Exercise, discussion of Day's activities.
9.10 am	Small Group- Language activities/ Reading/Writing
9.40	Whole Class- Story, song,
9.50	Toileting, Washing hands
10.00	Fruit Break
10.15am	Prep - Outdoor Time (approx 45 minutes) (Sandplay, waterplay, painting, obstacle course, dramatic play, skill development- throwing, catching, running/ kicking) /Outdoor game/ Brain/ body Gym,
10.30am	Whole school breaks for playground / outside play
10.55 am	Lunch- with Whole school on tables
11.15am	Whole class- Maths concepts and counting
11.30am	Small groups for Maths concepts
11.50	Indoor Time - Negotiated plans for investigations, collage, blocks, home corner, drawing, reading, constructions, puzzles and other specific activities, dinosaurs, maths learning centres....
12.40	Clean up and recall of play as a whole class
12.55	Toileting, washing hands for afternoon tea
1.00pm	Afternoon Tea
1.15pm	Quiet time Relaxation Music /Tai Chi (approx. 15 minutes)
1.30pm	Religious Education/ Science/ YCDI/ Reading / Drawing/ History/Geography /Art/Craft
2.15	Music & Movement- or story / Outdoor play /Buddies singing songs, learning finger rhymes, dance, drama
2.40	Prep - Pack up Time
2.55	Bus/ Pick up

This timetable has some small changes each term.

The Prep year begins Tuesday January 28 2015.

WHAT TO BRING

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

PLEASE MUM AND DAD, I WILL NEED THE FOLLOWING THINGS WHEN I GO TO PREP EACH DAY!

- *A piece of fruit, vegetable or cheese*
- *Healthy Lunch (may include a drink) – these will be refrigerated.*
- *A port or bag to keep all my belongings in.*
- *A library bag with a drawstring top*

I WILL ALSO REQUIRE THE FOLLOWING – WHICH I WILL LEAVE IN THE PREP ROOM ALL YEAR...

- *A school bucket hat*
- *A spare set of clothes (including undies in a bag with name clearly marked on the outside of plastic bag)*
- *2 A4 Year 1 Exercise books*
- *6 HB pencils*
- *1 pair of scissors*
- *1 set of crayons (small for hands) 6, 8, 12*
- *4 glue sticks*
- *1 pencil case*
- *A large roll of sticky tape*
- *A plastic A4 wallet (for take home reading and notes, etc)*

PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS

To be purchased from the school and payment made
on the first day or within the first week:

<i>1 Folder for Portfolio</i>	<i>14.00</i>
<i>1 Writing Time Early Years Dictionary</i>	<i>7.00</i>
<i>1 Australian Signpost Maths Foundation</i>	<i>17.20</i>
<i>1 Scrapbook (half page writing lines)</i>	<i>5.00</i>
<i>1 Foundation Writing Time (handwriting book)</i>	<i><u>13.00</u></i>
	<i><u>\$56.20</u></i>

We are very excited about your child's arrival on the first day of school. We want to make sure this transition to school goes very smoothly for your child. The start of school is an emotional time, full of anticipation of new friends, hopes, for playful learning and fears about your child's adjustment. Leaving parents at the beginning of the day can be difficult for any child, no matter how loved and secure your child feels.

Each child expresses these feelings about leaving parents in a slightly different way.

Some may protest right away, crying loudly at school or complaining at home.

Some may complain of aches, pains or illnesses. Others may have difficulty weeks after school has begun, when the initial excitement has worn off. Some may show anger toward new adults or children in their life.

ON THE FIRST FEW DAYS OF PREP... (adapted from "Knowing Children")

PLAN TO STAY A WHILE: Allow time so your child can show you things that interest him/her.

SAY GOODBYE FIRMLY: Don't prolong the farewell. Say "I'm going now. I'll be back after rest time." Give the child a kiss and then leave. Farewell staff; then they can give your child some extra support if necessary.

GREET YOUR CHILD WARMLY AFTER PREP:

Be on time. A few minutes is a long time for a child who is waiting for you.

Say "I hope you had a happy day." rather than "What have you done today?" which implies that the child must please you.

It is not easy for a 4 or 5 year old to tell all that has happened; so she/he may reply: "Nothing". This disappoints you, and leaves the child dissatisfied.

DO NOT BE SURPRISED IF YOUR CHILD IS EXHAUSTED: Because children are participating in so many things, they will often arrive home exhausted. Have a quiet time, a snack, and a few minutes to unwind together.

