



# St Joseph's Tobruk Memorial School

## 2024 Prep Parent Handbook



### CONTACT DETAILS

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# WELCOME TO ST JOSEPH'S PREP 2024



This handbook contains specific information for Prep families and students.

## GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

### Listening and Speaking

During the holidays, discuss what listening and speaking will look like at school, which is very different from being at home.

- During carpet listening times, we put up our hand and wait to give an answer.
- At school, we stand quietly and wait in lines when walking around the school.
- We listen while others are speaking and follow directions straight away.

### Reading and Viewing

Regularly read to your Prep and let them see you spending time reading, too. This will instill the value, joy and wonder of reading.

### Hygiene and Toileting

It is very important that Preps are able to confidently use the toilet independently and remember to wash their hands after:

- using the toilet
- sneezing
- touching their face
- and before and after eating.

We have toilets located near the classrooms which the children can use at any time. Children are encouraged to use the toilets several times throughout the day.

### Responsibility

Being responsible for regular household tasks gives children a sense of ownership and pride. Give your Prep many opportunities to do this during the holidays.

### Cooperative Learning

The ability to cooperate with others builds bonds. A sense of helping, caring and sharing is vital for children entering school. Play dates with other children helps build cooperative relationships.

### Student Communication

Being able to communicate needs independently and effectively are essential for children. Allowing children time to talk and ask for things, rather than adults speaking for them, is very important. If your child has seen a speech pathologist in the past or is currently receiving speech therapy, please notify their classroom teacher.

## BEFORE THE FIRST DAY

Before Prep starts it is a great idea to consider the following strategies for a smooth transition:

- ☺ Discuss coming to school often in a positive and enthusiastic manner. Highlight the fun and interesting aspects, such as making lots of friends and learning new things.
- ☺ If you have any specialist documentation from your GP, paediatrician, speech pathologist, or any other external agencies that we need to be aware of, it is important to please notify your classroom teacher and our school support staff. Please email Kate Palin at [kate.palin@bne.catholic.edu.au](mailto:kate.palin@bne.catholic.edu.au) with any important documentation.
- ☺ Try on their uniform, including shoes, and if you have any visitors, use this as an opportunity for your child to show them and talk about school.
- ☺ Practise opening and closing lunchboxes, drink bottles, food packets and school bag.
- ☺ Make sure your child knows where each item is stored in their bag.
- ☺ Allow your child opportunities to pack their school bag independently – you can make it a fun race!
- ☺ If your child has never been away from you before, try leaving them with a friend or family member for a few hours so you both adjust to being apart.
- ☺ Discuss problem solving skills to help social interaction with other students.
- ☺ Tell your child that you will be back to collect them from school at 2:55. Practise when this is at home: after lunch, keep checking the clock with them for when it's 2:55.

See our Countdown to Prep Calendar

[Prep Countdown](#)



## ON THE FIRST DAY

On their first day it is VERY important that you are on time. In the first week of school, the classrooms will be open from 8:25am for quiet activities and parents are welcome to stay until the music plays at 8:35am. This routine will change as the children become more familiar with school life.

Leave cheerfully – letting go may be hard but don't let your doubts or nervousness dampen your child's enthusiasm.

Please don't remain in sight. This only prolongs uncertainty for your child and may start an unhelpful habit.

Pick up time will be 2:55 from the classroom.

## WHEN SAYING GOODBYE

Initial separation can sometimes be difficult for parents and children. At St. Joseph's, we encourage a set of steps we have found from experience to be most effective. If children are ever unsettled, we find that it is only ever for a short period.



- One Hug
- One Kiss
- One Wave

## ALIGNING WITH THE WHOLE SCHOOL

From Week 3 of Term 1 the Prep students will align with the rest of the school's before and after school pickup and drop off policy. The students who are not attending before and after school care will be supervised from 8:10am at the Mango Trees where they can join in play on the playground from 8:20-8:35am. The classroom teachers will collect the students and walk them to the class at 8:40am.

If you choose to use the Tobruk Street drop off, there will be a teacher on duty at the gate to point the students in the direction of the Mango Trees, but they will need to walk there themselves.

After school, the students will be walked by a teacher to the Mango Trees. After School Care or Tobruk Street Pickup Zone at 2:55am. After school supervision begins at 2:55am and continue until 3:20pm.

## PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

During the first term of school, you can expect your child to be telling you many things about their new school environment. Some experiences may seem negative, and children are often tired.

- Some children begin school very positive and then become tearful in the mornings.
- Some children, when they first start school, find it stressful and don't want to go.
- Some children may start complaining of tummy aches due to worry.
- Some children vocalise that they don't want to attend school / don't like school.

It is important to listen to your child and their concerns and help them to overcome their worries in a positive way.

### Keys to Successful Communication with School

- Always check your child's green satchel and ensure it comes to school daily to keep up to date with the children's activities, items of interest, class and school happenings.
- Always check with the teacher first regarding any stories / concerns / messages.
- Communicate with your teacher any significant changes in routine – events that may impact your child's behaviour, events in family, illness, new babies, visitors, etc.
- Read the whole school newsletter, which is issued fortnightly electronically.
- Check the Seesaw app which connects you to class events – a QR code will be provided in the first week of school for your child's personal account.
- Check emails sent by teachers.
- Use the BCE Connect App to access school information, permission slips, alert absences, see announcements etc.

### Communicating With Your Class Teacher

If you have any concerns or questions, we would appreciate that these could be brought to our attention. A small problem can often be misconstrued and multiplied when discussed amongst well-meaning friends. Please give an early opportunity to address your concerns. The best ways to check in with your teacher are:

\*Email

\*A message in the satchel

\*A phone call to the school

## LUNCH BREAKS

The Prep children have three eating breaks a day. Water is available at all times of the day. Lunchboxes are kept in the school bags. Please make sure all meat and dairy foods are kept cool by placing frozen water or 'cool bricks' in the lunchbox!

### *Munch and Crunch – approximately 9:50am – 10:00am*

This is a small eating break that occurs in the first learning session. The following items are popular suggestions for this break.

- Fresh fruit – apple, grapes, banana, tomato, strawberries
- Vegetables – carrot, celery sticks, cucumber
- Dairy – yoghurt, cheese.
- It is important that all children come to school with something for Munch and Crunch.

### *Lunch and Play 10:40am – 11:20am*

Suggestions:

- Sandwich – roll / wrap / pasta / rice / salad / noodles
- Fruit – fresh and cut up
- Yoghurt / cheese
- A water bottle each day. There are also water bubblers on school grounds that children have access to.

### *Snack and Play 1:20pm – 1:55pm*

- Vegetables / Crackers / Muesli Bar

## St Joseph's Canteen

Tuckshop is available from Tuesday to Friday. Orders can be placed via Flexischools which can also be accessed on the Tuckshop Tile on the BCE Connect App.

## Supervision

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STRATEGIES**



During lunch and snack breaks, the Prep children will be supervised by St Joseph's teaching staff. Breaks are consistent across the whole school; however, it will vary for Prep at the beginning of the year as the students adapt to the school routine.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### School Uniform

Details regarding the St Joseph's School Uniform can be found at [Uniforms \(stjosephsbeenleigh.qld.edu.au\)](http://stjosephsbeenleigh.qld.edu.au)



### School Bag

If you have not purchased the recommended school bag for your child, bags should be large enough to carry safely and easily their lunch box, water bottle, hat, change of clothes, green satchel, and library bag. We strongly recommend the St Joseph's green school bag that is available from the Uniform Shop. Please ensure that you practise packing the bag with your child so that they can open and close it, making sure all their items remain securely inside. Your child is required to place their bag on a hook or bag rack each morning.

### Naming School Items

Clearly name all items – hats, jumpers, school bags, water bottles, lunchboxes, and library bags. We recommend that you do this with a capital letter for the beginning of their name and then lower-case print. We encourage the children to identify their own belongings, so it is easy for them to do this, please include both their Christian name and surname e.g., Jack Smith. Regularly check that the name is clearly visible, as writing fades over time. The school uniform shop offers embroidery to clearly label items.

### Toys and Prep

Please do not allow your child to bring in toys from home. These can get lost, broken or given away and can create unnecessary disputes amongst the children.

### Sun Safety Policy

We are conscious of sun safety at our school and the children are to wear a hat whenever playing or participating in learning outside. Please ensure your child has their own St Joseph's school hat to wear each day as they will be unable to play on the playground without it. Have your child in the habit of wearing a hat outside.

## Birthdays and Other Celebrations

Everyone, when they are little, gets excited about their birthday. We are happy for your child to celebrate their birthday with their classmates.

## Student Assessment and Reporting

At St Joseph's teachers identify and gather a wide range of evidence to make informed judgements about student learning, progress, and achievement. Student assessment data forms an integral element of the teaching and learning cycle and informs the next teaching steps for each individual student. Progress interviews will be conducted at the end of Term 1 to discuss how your child has settled into Prep and observations of their progress. Online reports are available for parents at the end of Term 2 and Term 4.

## Lost Property

Lost property is a major problem which can be avoided if names are sewn or written on ALL belongings and checked regularly. It is essential that all possessions be named clearly so that lost property has the best chance of being returned. If any items are lost, please check first with the Prep Teacher and then in lost property, which is located outside the Sr Jenny Centre.

## Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L)

Your child is a member of St Joseph's School and has an expectation to follow our whole school and classroom behaviour expectations.



Inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with at the discretion of the supervising teacher and/or administration staff. Violence of any form is not tolerated at St Joseph's and parents will be notified about their child's behaviour.



## Routines

Independence and responsibility are attributes which will be fostered during the Prep Year. These will be encouraged in all children from the beginning of the year. Your support in this area will assist your child greatly.

## Quiet Time

We do not have a nap time; however, we do allocate time for the children to relax, particularly at the beginning of the year. During this time, the children look at books.

## Siblings / Friends

It is important that the children play with their own peers to establish independence and strong friendship bonds. If your child has a sibling at St Joseph's, please discourage them from seeking them out during play and taking them away from their peers.

## Custody Matters

In cases of complex family matters, unless the school has a written court-authorized order to the contrary, both parents are assumed to have equal access and responsibility for their children.

## Absence

The Prep day is the equivalent to a full school day, five days a week. We encourage you to send your child to school each day. If your child is unwell, however, the best place for them is at home. If your child is sick in the morning, please use discretion when deciding whether to send them to school. A child who is unwell will not benefit from being at school and may spread the illness to others. Whenever your child is absent from school, please inform us by phoning, emailing the school office or by using the BCE Connect App.

## Illness at School

In the event of a student being involved in an accident or incident where they are hurt, they are referred by a teacher to the First Aid Room in the office area, where a First Aid Officer will take care of them. If your child becomes unwell or is injured whilst at school, staff will contact you first. If they are unsuccessful in contacting you, they will notify an additional contact person that you have nominated on the Confirmation of Enrolment Form. For this reason, it is essential that your contact details are always correct. If you need to change any personal details, such as phone numbers or address, please make sure you do this at the school office as soon as possible.

## School Events

As the year progresses there will be several whole school events or year level activities for Prep students to participate in, for example the Athletics Carnival, Book Week Parade and Grandparents' Day. As each event approaches, information will be provided to parents via the fortnightly online school newsletter and the Seesaw app. It is vital that parents read these notices to ensure children are fully prepared for every activity and that parents and families do not miss an opportunity to see a milestone in their child's first year at St Joseph's.

## Homework

In Prep, the children are encouraged to read nightly with an adult. Further information about learning at home is communicated throughout the year.

## EARLY YEARS CURRICULUM

Our Prep teaching is based on the Australian Curriculum and Brisbane Catholic Education Religious Curriculum. At St Joseph's we are aware that the children in our care come with a range of prior experiences and from many different contexts. The Prep Year aims to provide continuity between prior experiences and new learnings.

Our classrooms are very busy and fun places with lots of our learning taking place in small and large groups. In St Joseph's Prep, we love to learn through inquiry and our learning may take place inside or outside our classroom. We use a variety of tools when we learn, such as the Smartboard, individual and group work, one-on-one learning with the teacher or school officer, whole class learning, expert visitors and loads of hands-on activities.

## Religious Education

Religious Education is an integral part of daily activities at St Joseph's. Catholic values and are modelled, encouraged, and form the basis of all actions and relationships within our school community. Our expectations within our school are based on respect. The whole school participates in many significant religious celebrations including – Feast of St Joseph, Feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, Feast of St Patrick, Lent, Holy Week, Advent, and Christmas. A special time is set aside each day for Religious Education in the classroom. This is developed through prayer, reflection, discussion, Scripture, and songs. At various times throughout the year, the children will have the opportunity to lead school assemblies and Early Years' liturgies.

## *Specialist Lessons*

*Information on our school's specialist lessons can be found via the link and QR Code below.*

[\*Specialist Lessons\*](#)



[\*Find us on Facebook\*](#)



[\*Find us on Instagram\*](#)



*We go with Courage, Faith, and Love!*



**St Joseph's**  
Tobruk Memorial School