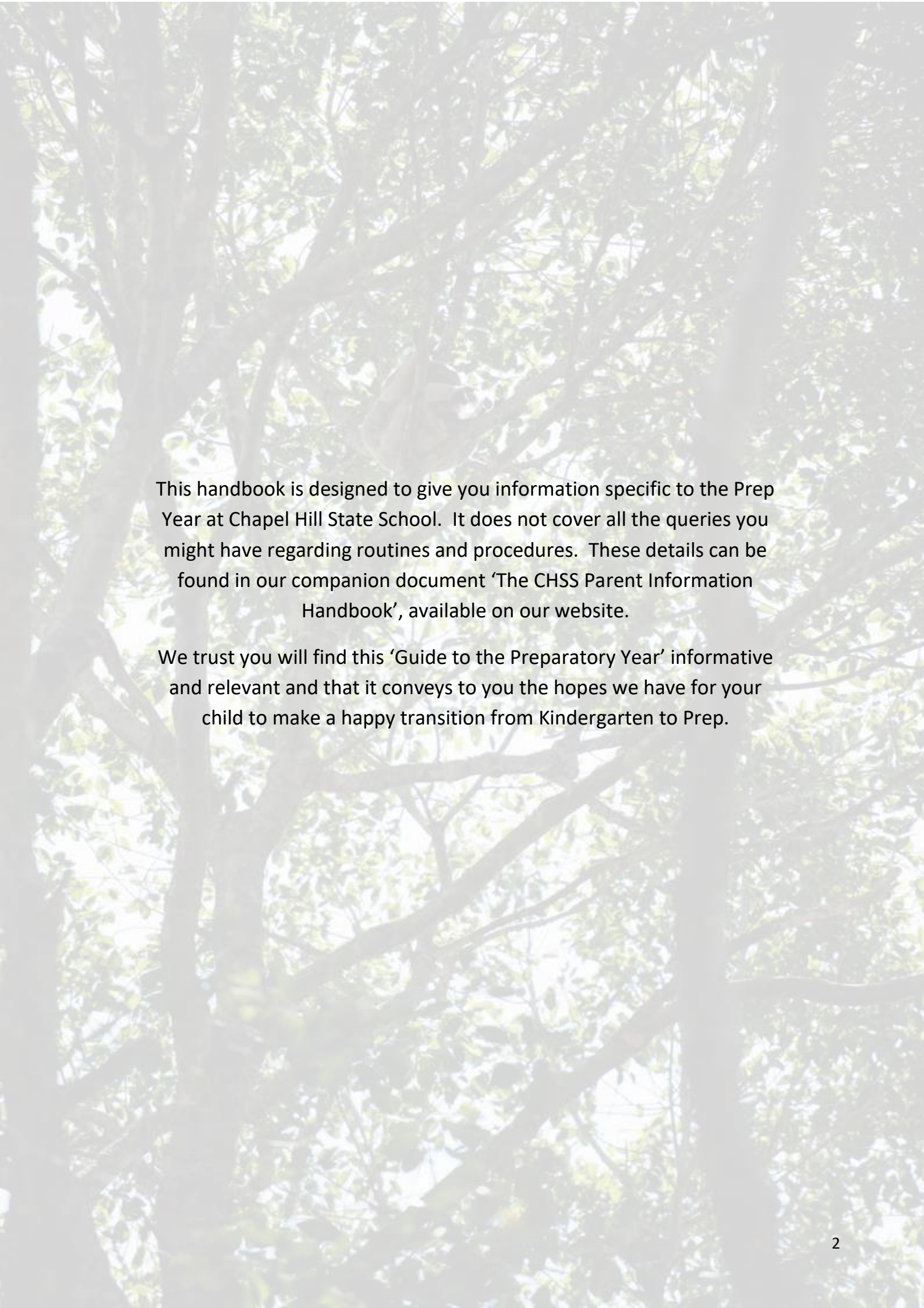


2024 Welcome to Chapel Hill State School

A Parent's Guide to the Preparatory Year



Striving for Excellence



This handbook is designed to give you information specific to the Prep Year at Chapel Hill State School. It does not cover all the queries you might have regarding routines and procedures. These details can be found in our companion document 'The CHSS Parent Information Handbook', available on our website.

We trust you will find this 'Guide to the Preparatory Year' informative and relevant and that it conveys to you the hopes we have for your child to make a happy transition from Kindergarten to Prep.

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Companion document: ‘Chapel Hill State School – Parent Information Booklet’

Principal's Welcome

Dear Parent/s and Caregivers

Starting school is a major milestone for you and your child and the start of a new phase of life for you both. If this is your first child to commence Prep with us, this booklet will introduce you to the key aspects of the Preparatory Year and provide information and handy tips to help make your child's move from kindergarten and other early childhood services to primary school as smooth and enjoyable as possible.

We recognise and value the contribution you and your family make to your child's education and this guide explains how you can stay informed and become involved.

Your child and family are very important new members of our school community and we trust that this will be the beginning of a long and productive partnership – welcome to our school!

Stewart Jones
Principal

2024 Term Dates

Term 1:

Monday 22 January – Thursday 28 March (10 weeks)

Term 2:

Monday 15 April -Friday 21 June (10 weeks)

Term 3:

Monday 08 July - Friday 13 September (10 weeks)

Term 4:

Tuesday 30 September - Friday 13 December (11 weeks)

Contact Details

Address: Ironbark Road, Chapel Hill, 4069
Telephone: 07 3871 4888
Email: the.principal@chapelhillss.eq.edu.au
Web Address: www.chapelhillss.eq.edu.au/

Transition-to-Prep 2024 Events

Information Session & Guided Tours for Parents:

Tuesday 18 July 2023 9:15am-10:30am

This session provides interested parents of pre-school aged children with information about our approach to teaching and learning in the early years and insights into a typical day in Prep.

Parents can also view our 'Information Snapshots' on our website: <https://chapelhillss.eq.edu.au/enrolments/prep>

Kindergarten Connections:

Term 3 & 4, 2023

Chapel Hill Prep teachers will consult with your child's kindergarten teachers – allowing them to more easily plan for continuity of learning and development.

Storytime and Play Sessions:

Wednesday Term 3 & 4

09 & 23 August, 06 September, 04 & 18 October 2023
2.15pm-2.45pm

For enrolled students: Come along to our fun Story-Time sessions with some of our Prep Teachers for stories and rhymes while also familiarising your child with our teachers and our campus.

Smart Start Orientation Sessions: Wednesday 01, 08, 15, 22 November 2023 (9.15am-10.30am)

For enrolled students: A series of four orientation sessions held each Wednesday in November. The sessions will involve experiencing Investigation Time where children will explore, create, question & collaborate with support from the teacher.

Parent-Child-Teacher Meeting:

Prior to starting school in 2024

This optional visit to your child's Prep Classroom just prior to the first day of school allows for some one-on-one time with the teacher and familiarization with the room layout.

First Day of School:

Monday 22 January 2024

Students start their exciting journey of learning and independence.

Parent-Teacher Session:

Week 2 of Term 1, 2024 (TBC)

This session covers the daily routines and practical issues that arise in the first weeks of school.

There are many things you can do to help your child look forward to starting school:

- Ask your child what they think about school.
- Encourage questions about going to school.
- Encourage your child to do things on their own, such as dressing, washing their hands, going to the toilet, unwrapping their food, and opening their drink bottle.
- Talk to friends and other families about what school is like.



Ready-Set-Go! Promote the following skills to support your child's school readiness:

Social skills to support your child to:

- positively approach other children and make friends;
- participate in play;
- express emotions and deal with conflict appropriately;
- show interest in others and form friendships;
- express their needs and wants appropriately;
- separate from parents or primary carers;
- take turns in games and activities;
- share toys and equipment;
- follow some directions and understand some rules;
- participate in groups; and
- cope with transitions between routines and experiences.



Cognitive skills to support your child to:

- show natural curiosity and interest in learning new things;
- have confidence in learning; and
- be interested in solving problems.

Language skills to support your child to:

- use language to ask questions and communicate their thoughts and ideas;
- listen to others; and
- enjoy books and being read to.

Independence and life skills to support your child to:

- cope with a small amount of supervision in a variety of situations;
- toilet and dress themselves independently;
- unpack their lunch box and use a drink bottle; and
- deal with a structured environment.

Physical skills to support your child to:

- use pencils, crayons, Textas and scissors; and
- balance, run, jump, and use equipment such as balls and climbing apparatus.

First day of school

School commences on Monday 22 January, 2024

Children who have been enrolled before the holidays should be brought to school by **8.45am**, dressed in their uniforms. This gives them time to be organized, to meet their teachers and familiarize themselves with their new surrounds. After leaving your child in the care of the teachers and confirming arrangements to collect your son or daughter at 3.00 pm, it is time to depart.

It is important that parents collect their child on time, as young children can become quite distressed if they think they've been forgotten. Please contact the school office if you know you will be late.



Please note:

Your child starts school with a keen desire to learn and having enjoyed a variety of experiences, will approach this new stage with much curiosity.

The first few weeks of Prep can be physically and emotionally tiring. It can also be a very hot time of year. Your child may need to go to bed early and have a regular routine before and after school to support their first year of school.

Don't be surprised if there are difficulties even after you have done all you can to prepare your child for school. Although some children may become upset at saying goodbye, recovery is swift and the period of adjustment to school is brief.

Your child may also expect too much from school and be disappointed when he/she has not learnt to read after two or three days, or become very tired and want to stay home. If you have any difficulties please talk to your child's class teacher. He/She is skilled at guiding children through this period of adjustment into full-time schooling.

First Day – What to Bring

- Brain snack, Lunch, Afternoon tea
- A backpack large enough to fit snacks and lunch, hat, folders etc. School messages will be sent home in an A4 folder (provided).
- A spare set of clothes in a plastic bag. *Please review items as the season change.* These items stay in your child's bag unless needed.
- Water bottle up to 750mL

Please clearly mark all items with your child's name using

Queensland Beginners Alphabet font

- Stationery Pack (if not pre-ordered). Prep-ordered stationery packs will be delivered directly to the classroom



Prep Drop-Off & Pick-Up Options

Before school pick-up options

*Option 2 Effective from Term 1 Week 2:

1. Before 8:00am drop off. Parents can opt to drop off via Helping Hands (Outside of School Hours Care provider). The Helping Hands team will transport students directly to their classroom at 8:45am. Parents will need to pre-book and this service has a fee – Helping Hands contact number: 0488 237 011.
2. * 8:00am drop off. Parents can opt to drop off their Prep child in the Lower Covered Area (this area is supervised by a staff member (in a yellow vest). They will be supervised until 8:40am and then escorted to their Prep classes. Students are not permitted to be playing in any areas before school unless supervised by staff (e.g. Helping Hands staff).
3. After 8:45am drop off. Parents can opt to take their children directly to the class from 8:45 am. Parents are asked not to gather around the classroom door (or path /verandah). We are looking at a drop-and-go scenario in order to ensure a smooth and direct transition into the school day.

(Note that there is very short-term onsite parking in the Turning Circle for the Helping Hands (i.e. option 1) and no onsite parking for options 2 or 3)

After school pick up options:

1. At 3:00pm. Parents are welcome to pick up their child away from the classroom door (or path / verandah). Students will be released to their parents – they will not be allowed to leave on their own.
2. Helping hands Pick-up: At 3pm students will be handed over to the Helping Hands staff. Parents will need to make a booking with Helping Hands to access this service.
3. If a parent/carer is running late and unlikely to make the pick-up time, they should contact the office (38714888) to organise alternative arrangements.

(Note that there is very short-term onsite parking in the Turning Circle for Option 2 after 3:30pm and no onsite parking for options 1 or 3)

Late arrivals: All students arriving after 8:45am must collect a 'Late Slip' from the Office before going to their classroom.

Early departures: To collect your child prior to the end of the day, you must advise staff of your intention and sign your child out at the school office. This system operates from Prep to Year 6.

The Prep Program

The Early Years Team at Chapel Hill State School are committed and passionate about the implementation of **Walker Learning**, an Australian-designed teaching and learning pedagogy that authentically personalizes learning and is developmentally and culturally appropriate.

Walker Learning is informed by child development theory and brain research and has been developed in Australia for over 20 years. It is a pedagogy that supports the need for children to be active participants in their learning alongside formal instruction of not only literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge, but also a range of vital social, emotional and life skills.

The Australian Curriculum provides us with knowledge and guidance to differentiate and meet the individual needs of the children and an overview of the curriculum and assessment plan for Prep can be found on our website. Each class engages in hands on, inquiry learning to develop the foundations of future schooling success. Most days begin with a session of investigative play, followed by focused learning and teaching episodes, inside and outside activities, as individuals, in small groups and with the whole class.

Children will explore, investigate, problem solve and predict as they engage in their learning. They will make many friends and learn to be tolerant and get along. Your child will try many new things and take risks in their learning. They will learn to be confident, resilient, persistent and organized. With guidance from their teacher, they will set their own learning goals and celebrate their achievements.

This journey is one we will take together as we work as a team to help your child flourish!



The Prep classroom is an exciting and stimulating place, designed to welcome and foster your child's curiosity. Teachers aim to create a safe and happy environment in which children are valued, praised and inspired to wonder about the world. From the very first day, each child has the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of activities.

Incursions and Excursions

From time to time, the class teacher and the teaching assistant will organize to take our Prep children on an incursion (within school grounds) or excursions, usually to explore the local environment and community. Prior to any excursion taking place you will be fully notified of the date, time, purpose and activities that will be undertaken during this trip.



Every Day Counts – Why regular attendance is important

Once enrolled in primary school your child is expected to attend school every day of each term. It is important that children develop regular attendance habits at an early age. Children who are regularly absent from school are at risk of missing out on learning the basic foundational skills, and may experience difficulties forming friendships. Also, Prep Teachers are required to teach and assess the Prep curriculum and if children do not attend everyday they miss explicit teaching of skills and assessment tasks that monitor children's progress.

If your child is unable to attend school on any day please contact the school office **before 8.45 a.m.** by phoning our [Absence Line on 38714860](tel:38714860) or [SMS 0427945725](tel:0427945725). Upon return to school you need to send a note explaining the absence along with the dates of the absenteeism with your signature.

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Packing Lunches

Children need to have **healthy lunches and snacks** that do not depend on refrigeration. They need to be able to unwrap, eat and rewrap all food items independently. Brain Snack is a small healthy snack such as prepared fresh fruit, cheese and biscuits, carrot sticks etc. Please send along a spoon or fork with your child if required. **Please Note:** We do not re-heat food as the teacher cannot leave the students unsupervised. Refrigeration space for children's lunches is limited.

Special Information regarding peanut allergy

We have students attending Chapel Hill State School who have serious allergies to peanuts and peanut products. As a School, we have made special arrangements to assist these students. We would just like to remind parents that we would appreciate your cooperation in helping to provide a safe and supportive environment for them.

Where possible **please avoid sending peanut butter, peanut products and nuts in school lunches and snacks.** It is suitable to send products with the warning "may contain traces of nuts". Please take the time to reinforce good hygiene practices with your children. This includes reminders about not sharing lunches and washing hands before and after eating. We thank you in advance for your support in this area.

Toys at School

We ask that children do not bring their own toys to school as this can lead to jealousy or breakage. The staff will not assume responsibility for loss or breakage.



Staying informed

Prep Reporting & Interviews

Formal report cards are issued at the end of Semester One and Semester Two in the Prep Year. Parents are also kept informed of their child's progress through scheduled Parent-Teacher Interviews at the end of Terms 1 & 3. It is important that parents attend these interviews, and it is desirable, if possible, for both adults who care for the child to attend. At this time, teachers will share the assessment information they have gathered on your child and will discuss home-school strategies to help your child achieve his/her learning goals. Parents may also make appointments at any time to discuss concerns they have regarding their child's development.

Communication

Communication between parents and teachers is crucial to a successful program in the early years of schooling. Teachers are available by appointment only before or after school in person (except for Monday afternoon when they are required to attend a staff meeting) or may be contacted through the office by phoning 3871 4888.

If you have a problem or question, please go to the Prep Teacher in the first instance. It is best to make an appointment time before or after class as staff must give their full attention to the children when class is in progress.

Teachers establish **communication** with parents early in the school year to provide class specific information and to respond to parent queries via **email** and other apps such as **Class Dojo** and **SeeSaw**. As teachers do not access emails during teaching hours, a response within two working days can be expected. If the matter requires more urgent attention, parents should the school office.

School Newsletters and updates are forwarded electronically every week and are also posted onto the school website. CHSS also has a Facebook page which provides regular updates and reminders to the community about key events.

Junior School Assembly (P-2) is conducted every 2nd Monday in the School Hall from 12:50pm to 1:20pm. Parents are most welcome to attend. Prep children attend Assembly after a brief period of settling in to their class routines. This is usually around Term One, Week 6.

Prep Stationery List

During Term 4, parents are able to access the Prep Book list and order directly from our preferred supplier via their website. Materials will be delivered directly to your child's classroom prior to the commencement of the new school year.

Student Resource Scheme

The CHSS Student Resource Scheme offers parents significant reduction in the cost of providing additional learning resources, including Reading Eggs. Complete costings will be available in Term 4.

Specialist Lessons

Prep students will access specialist teacher delivered lessons in Music, Library and Physical Education. Prep students do not have access to Religious Instruction or Swimming.



Being involved

Parents, caregivers and relatives play a vital and valued role in the education of each child. We encourage you to be involved in the following ways:

- Visit the classroom and join in with our experiences.
- Read newsletters and noticeboards.
- Support excursions and special events.
- Read to your child daily.
- Support us by talking with your child about their day.
- Support our rules and consequences.
- Inform us of any concerns, ideas or suggestions that you have.

Parental roles and responsibilities:

- Read all the information in order to be familiar with our policies, routines and practices.
- Clearly label ALL your child's belongings.
- Discuss any concerns or questions with your child's teacher.
- Notify the staff of any changes related to address, phone numbers, emergency contact phone numbers and student absences.

Parents in the classroom:

- Confidentiality in the classroom is vital. It is not appropriate to discuss happenings with anyone other than the teacher.
- Encourage your child in their activities.
- Support your child's growing independence and self-reliance.

Finally...

General information on routines and procedures relevant to all year levels P-6 can be found in the **Chapel Hill State School Parent Information Handbook** available on our website. We encourage you to read through this as a companion to this booklet.

We look forward to building productive partnerships as we learn and grow together. We are here to provide quality Prep education for your child. Please do not hesitate to discuss any questions or concerns you may have. We are looking forward to our association with you and your child this year in Prep at Chapel Hill State School.



