



# Welcome to Mapleton State School

## An Introduction to Prep 2024



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# WELCOME...

A warm welcome to Mapleton State School and the beginning of your child's learning journey with us. We look forward to sharing this exciting year of Prep with you and your child. Throughout the year, the children will have opportunities to spend time in many areas of the school and get to know a wide variety of children and staff.



## OUR VISION

We as the Mapleton State School community, stand united in our vision of creating an inclusive environment in which students are supported to follow 'The Mapleton Way' to become successful, engaged learners.

## OUR GIVENS

- ❖ Effective relationships
- ❖ High expectations
- ❖ Students achieving goals
- ❖ Displaying outstanding practice



## OUR BELIEF STATEMENTS

We believe that **students:**

- ❖ Must have a teacher that they believe cares for them
- ❖ Must believe the work they are requested to do is at their level
- ❖ Must have a goal to work towards and receive feedback to improve
- ❖ Must have friends at school and feel included

We believe that **teachers:**

- ❖ Must believe that every student can achieve
- ❖ Must have positive relationships with students
- ❖ Must know where every student is and their 'next steps' for learning
- ❖ Must provide regular feedback to every student

## STARTING SCHOOL

Starting school is one of the biggest adventures your child will experience in their early years. The movement from the world of their parents and family, into the wider world where they will mix with many new children and adults, is a big step. Beginning school is an important transition in the process of 'growing up'.

The relationship a child has with his/her parents, is of vital importance in this new journey. You are their safe place from which to explore the world, to learn and grow into confident, young people. A home environment that is a calm, safe space to unwind after a busy day of learning will help them to relax and talk about the events of the day.

Of equal importance in this next stage of childhood, are the new relationships a child will make within the school environment. They will need support to develop the social and emotional skills necessary to express their needs and feelings, and assistance to confidently navigate emerging friendships and relationships with teaching staff.

We hope the following pages will assist you in supporting your child to have a smooth and successful transition into the Prep environment. Much of the information is an introduction. See the school website for more information or contact the school if you need further support.

## SCHOOL TERM DATES

We have 4 terms during the year. As the start and end dates vary each year, please check our website [www.mapletonss.eq.edu.au](http://www.mapletonss.eq.edu.au) under 'Calendar and news' for the Related Link to the Department of Education Training website which displays the school holiday and calendar for Queensland state schools.

## DAILY ROUTINE FOR PREP

8.30	Classroom opens – students read and prepare for the day
8.55	First bell
9.00–11.00	First session
11.00-11.25	Morning tea
11.30-1.00	Middle session
1.00-1.35	Lunch
1.40-3.00	Afternoon session

## WHAT TO BRING CHECKLIST

### Children's daily requirements:

- ❖ A bag big enough to fit all your child's belongings, but not so big that they have difficulty carrying it
- ❖ A healthy morning tea and lunch (strictly No lollies)
- ❖ A drink bottle, water only
- ❖ A spare change of clothes in his/her bag (kept in a plastic bag)
- ❖ A broad brimmed hat: NO HAT, NO PLAY

## STUDENT LUNCHES

### Packing your child's lunch:

- ❖ Involve your child in packing his/her lunch.
- ❖ Provide healthy food and drink in realistic quantities for morning tea and lunch
- ❖ Pack the food in containers or wrap that the child can open independently.
- ❖ Provide a water bottle every day and encourage your child to drink from it.
- ❖ Provide a variety of smaller items rather than one or two large items.
- ❖ Keep sweets, chips and other party food for special occasions at home.
- ❖ Encourage your child to bring home uneaten food.
- ❖ Pack a spoon for snacks or yoghurt.
- ❖ No tins (eg. tuna) – these can have sharp edges.

(If your child has a food allergy, make sure everyone knows the exact nature of it and what to do in an emergency.)

## ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is compulsory at school and is important for the formation of friendships, learning and routines. Going to school every day and getting there on time reinforces for children that school is an important part of their childhood. Regular attendance enables children to participate fully in the teaching and learning experiences planned for them, allowing them to develop an increasing sense of success.

Please arrive by 8.45 to provide enough time for children to complete before-school tasks (e.g. practise writing their name). "Settling in time" is important to a young child and enables them to begin the day feeling happy and confident. There will be puzzles, games or books to help them transition into the school day. If you arrive after 9am, please see the office staff for a late slip and bring to the classroom with your child. We ask out of respect for the teachers and other students, that you make every effort to arrive on time, as late arrivals are disruptive to the class.

**Please inform the school by 9.30** if your child is going to be away on that day. The absentee hotline is (07) 5456 3360, or you can message the school through the **SchoolZine app** (see flyer for more info on the app). Schools are required to record why a student is absent, therefore we will contact you for a reason if we have not been notified.

After school pickup is 3.00pm. Prep students are to be collected from the Prep building by a parent/carer or elder sibling. If you will be late to pick up your child, please notify the office so teachers can be informed and your child notified.

## OVERCOMING SEPARATION ANXIETY

Here are some ideas which may be useful if your child is upset at the beginning of school:

- ❖ **Time your departure well:** Leaving when your child is tired or hungry is not advisable (though sometimes unavoidable).
- ❖ **Practise times of separation** from your child. Children often *gradually* learn to adapt to new people, places and situations. Short times with a baby sitter can help in this gradual learning process.
- ❖ **Stay calm yourself:** Smiling as you go helps. Your worry about leaving your child with others is felt by the child, but your calmness and confidence can also be communicated.
- ❖ **Be firm** when the time comes for you to leave. This means things like explaining clearly when you will return (e.g. "Daddy will be back after lunch"); saying goodbye and leaving without hesitation' not "sneaking away", as this only creates uncertainty and/or panic in the child and makes leaving next time harder.
- ❖ **Be consistent about returning when you promised you would:** This will (gradually) increase *both* your child's sense of safety when they are left *and* confidence in you and those caring for them.
- ❖ **Show confidence in the carer(s)** you are leaving your child with. You may want to call half an hour after you have left. Often your child will be happily occupied by then, but be prepared for this settling down to only gradually develop.

Adapted from Jennifer Cochrane, "Separation Anxiety – Why does your child cry when you leave?" *Kids on the Coast*. Issue 25, March/April 2008, pp. 12-13; and from Michael & Marjorie Rutter, *Developing Minds*. (London:Penguin, 1993), pp.110-121.

## EARLY DEPARTURE

If your child is required to leave the school grounds early, please see the office staff to complete the sign out register and collect an early departure slip, which must be handed to the teacher when you collect your student from Prep.

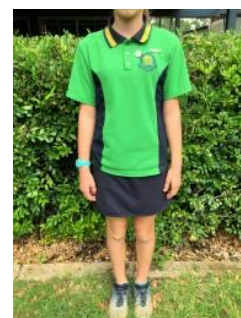
## MAPLETON STATE SCHOOL DRESS CODE

Children attending our school are required to wear the school uniform when:

- Attending or representing our school
- Travelling to and from school
- Engaging on school activities out of school hours.

The uniform consists of:

- school polo shirt with emblem (navy and green)
- navy bottoms as preferred e.g. shorts, long pants, netball skirt, plain skirt, culottes
- dress (in school colours)
- navy hat (8cm brim) or navy legionnaire hat (to meet sun safety standards)
- closed shoes with navy socks (to be worn at all times, unless specific permission to remove them is given by a teacher)
- navy jacket or jumper for colder months
- t-shirt in house colour for interhouse sporting activities



The uniform shop is run by volunteers and is open every Tuesday from 8.30-9am during school terms. It is located in the P&C room in A block (past the Prep building). Polo shirts, hats, jackets, navy skirts, library bags and the Mapleton school back pack are all available for purchase.

**Please label your child's clothing.** During the cooler months, there is often a large collection of unnamed clothing which builds up. Any lost property will be handed back if it is named, however unnamed items will be sent to the school's lost property bins in the Undercover Area.



**Remember: Mark all clothing and belongings with the child's name.**

## POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING at Mapleton State School

*Positive Behaviour for Learning* brings together the whole-school community to create a safe, positive learning environment that enables student learning and wellbeing. We support our students by discussing ways we can follow the school rules and make positive behaviour choices. Teachers and school staff work together to explicitly explain what this looks, sounds and feels like to help our students build their understanding.

Our school rules are known as '**The Mapleton Way**' (The 4C's)

- \* Care for Others
- \* Care for Self
- \* Care for Learning
- \* Care for the Environment

More information about *The Mapleton Way* can be found on our website.

In Prep, we use the **traffic light system** (green, red and orange lights) to help our younger students visually monitor their behaviour. It is a developmentally appropriate method to assist young students to reflect upon their behaviour during each session and the day as a whole. The traffic lights approach has been recommended by behaviour specialists as an effective prompt for students in the early years.



## FRIENDSHIPS AND SOCIAL SKILLS

Through talking, laughing, playing and mixing with people of different cultures, children learn social skills.

Children learn best by watching the people around them. They learn positive communication and about feelings by observing family members and trusted people who are good role models. Being friendly, against being bossy. Having a go, when it seems difficult. Continuing with a task until it is finished. Taking turns in games. Not interrupting but waiting for their turn to talk.

By watching those around them children learn how to be friends, often mimicking how family members speak to one another and how they solve problems and disagreements between each other. Respecting each other's feelings teaches children to respect others, not to barge in on games, but to ask to join in or wait to be invited. Our upbringing colours the way we view the world and deal with situations and children need to understand that others may not agree with the way a game is being played or something being done. Teach them that we can all learn from the many differences and gain tolerance of others. Treat others as you want to be treated.

## BUDDIES

Each year we run our Prep/Year 6 Buddies program. The Preps are assigned a Year 6 buddy who will support them in their transition to Prep and during the school year. This usually involves activities once a week and time in the playground to foster their friendships. It is a valuable way to foster friendships within our school and support the social/emotional and language development of all our students.



## PLAYGROUND INTERACTION

From the beginning of Term 1, Prep students will eat both morning tea and lunch in their designated eating area under the supervision of school staff. Play in the school playground at the scheduled breaks will be supervised. Depending on their social and emotional readiness, Prep students will gradually be integrated into the larger school playground community under supervision.



## TOILETING

When children begin Prep, because they are in a new environment and out of their comfort zone, they can become anxious and embarrassed over going to the toilet when they need to. Discomfort and wet pants can be upsetting. During the first weeks at school, students will be shown where the toilets are at school, and how to wash and dry their hands effectively. Easy to manage elastic topped pants or skorts are ideal for both boys and girls.

Please see the Prep staff if your child is having difficulty with toileting at school. Staff are very understanding about this issue and will endeavour to support your child to establish good toileting habits at school.

A spare change of clothing in students' bags is vital to managing accidents discreetly and promptly.

## HEALTH & ILLNESS

In the event of a child becoming ill or injured at Prep, a parent or guardian will be contacted promptly. It is important to keep the teachers and the office informed of changes to telephone, address, email and emergency contact. In the event that a parent is not available, your child's teacher will take whatever steps are considered necessary to ensure the child's well-being.

It is best for your child to remain at home if they are unwell in the morning. When children are not feeling 100%, it is difficult for them to cope with the demands of an active school day. Please notify the office by 9.00am to inform of your child's absence.

Germs are easily spread within the Prep environment. Please support the promotion of good health, by encouraging your child in the development of good health habits, e.g. blowing noses, covering coughs and washing hands etc.

If your child needs any form of medication administered at school, it should be handed to the teacher or aide. We can only administer **prescribed medication** that is supplied with a doctor's or chemist's instructions. We need an **Administration of Medication for Students** permission form completed and signed by a parent or guardian before we can give a child any form of medicine. These forms can be obtained from the office or available from the school's website. Please see the School Handbook for further details.

Headlice are an inevitable part of schooling. Please check your child's hair weekly for headlice and notify the Prep staff if they have been found on your student. We aim to alert parents when there is an outbreak so that we can contain the spread as much as possible.



## **SCHOOL PARADE**

Our whole of school assembly is held each Monday morning at 9.00am in the School Hall. Prep students will attend this assembly as soon as the group is ready. Parents and carers are most welcome to attend.

## **PARENT-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP**

It is of the utmost importance for your child's smooth transition into Prep and the school environment, that parents and teachers have the best possible communication. At Mapleton, we value our school community and enjoy building good relationships with our families.

### **School to home communication**

In Prep, we endeavour to send home a class note each week, keeping you informed of the important events and notices for the week. This will be sent home in your child's home folder on Mondays and a digital copy emailed as well.

The school newsletter is produced in Week 4 and 8 of each term and will be uploaded to the SchoolZine app. It is an up-to-date source of information for parents and carers about what is happening at Mapleton School and a valuable way in which we can share the successes of our students and school.

We welcome the opportunity to talk with you about your child. Before school begins each day, the classroom is a very busy place and it is not easy for teachers to chat. Therefore, unless it is critical, please make the time to have a conversation after school with one of the teachers.

### **Your role in the partnership**

We highly value the support parents give to our Prep room. Your involvement enriches our program and benefits both you and your Prepper. How you can be involved will be discussed at our Parent Information Meeting early in Term 1. Please consider any skills you have which could be utilised within our class setting.

The following are suggestions for how you can contribute to this partnership:

- Make the time to keep in touch with the Prep staff, to keep informed about class activities and your child's growth and development.
- Check your child's home folder after school each day for notices, homework etc. This will be our main method of communication.
- Please see one of the Prep staff if you have concerns about your child's time at Prep. We believe it is best for concerns to be dealt with quickly and in a professional manner, whilst maintaining confidentiality. We encourage appropriate and respectful communication at all times.
- It is most helpful to staff if you can tell the class teacher about significant events in your child's life, especially if the changes are likely to be distressing for your child.
- Connect your child's school learning to family activities and excursion.
- Display your child's work from school and encourage them to talk about it with family members.
- Please discourage children from bringing home toys to school. These can cause conflict with other children and can be a source of distress if they become lost or broken.

## HOME LIFE

Ways in which you can support your child's transition to school:

- Clear boundaries and expectations for behaviour
- Regular family meal times with healthy, wholesome home cooked food.
- A consistent bedtime, with a predictable routine (no screens), to allow children's brains to wind down and have sufficient, restful sleep – this is essential for learning and memory. An extra nap on weekends may be beneficial in the early weeks of school.
- More time given to creative activities such as art, craft and games, and outdoor activities
- Less time for passive activities and those which involve screens.
- Age-appropriate games and entertainment.
- Building a resilient nature, allowing children to make mistakes and learn to solve problems.
- Supporting oral language development, by having conversations with your child and talking about daily events and activities.
- Predictable daily and weekly routines – this supports a child to feel safe and to have a sense of control of what is going on in their life.
- Expect that children may be tired in the first weeks at school, even if they have been used to care situations. Provide a cuddle, a drink and some quiet time when they first arrive home.



## THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

At Mapleton, we implement the Australian Curriculum covering the learning areas of English, Mathematics, Science, HASS (History and Social Sciences), Health, Technologies, The Arts and Languages. The Australian Curriculum is flexible so that teachers can plan the learning for all their students, also taking into account their local school community.

The Australian Curriculum is designed to develop:

- successful learners
- confident and creative individuals
- active and informed young people who are ready to take their place in society.



## THE PREP CURRICULUM

In their first year of school, students learn through teaching interactions with others, experimentation, practice and play in the classroom and school community. Priority is given to literacy and numeracy development, as these are the foundations upon which further learning is built. Opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy are found in all subjects but particularly in English and Mathematics. Learning in a classroom and belonging to a school community are key to the first year at school.

## ENGLISH

In the first year of school, students view, listen to and enjoy texts that entertain and inform, such as picture books or rhymes. They begin to learn to read and create texts.

**Typically, students will:**

- communicate with others in familiar situations
- read stories with one or more sentences, pictures and familiar vocabulary
- recognise rhyming words, syllables and sounds
- recognise letters and the most common sounds the letters make
- listen to, read and view picture books, stories, poetry, information books, films and performances
- write some words
- recognise some words and develop skills in 'sounding out' words
- create their own texts such as giving information orally or in writing; presenting a narrative, which may include pictures.

## MATHEMATICS

In the first year of school, students develop a sense of number, order, sequence, pattern and position in relation to familiar settings.

**Typically, students will:**

- connect numbers, their names and quantities up to 20
- count numbers in sequences up to 20, continue patterns and compare lengths of objects
- use materials to model problems, sort objects and discuss answers
- group and sort shapes and objects
- connect events with days of the week
- develop an understanding of location words, such as *above*, *outside*, *left*.



For more information on what your child will be learning in the the other key Learning Areas, see the Mapleton State School website [www.mapletonss.eq.edu.au](http://www.mapletonss.eq.edu.au)

## HANDWRITING IN PREP

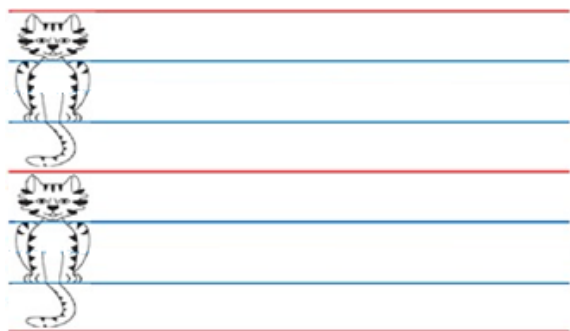
We teach the Queensland Cursive script from Prep. Children are encouraged to be able to write on the line by the end of the year. They are not required to write in red and blue lines until Year One. We teach the lowercase letters first, and then the uppercase letters afterwards. See the letter and number formation below:

*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*

*1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10*

In Year One, students commence writing on Qld Year One lines. To help children remember where letters go on the lines, we use the idea of a cat sitting on the lines and talk about letters being body letters, or head and body, or body and tail letters. See the lines below for further clarification:

Queensland Handwriting Year One Lines



# TALKING ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL



## Information about speech and language for parents of children entering Prep

Speech Language Pathology Services, Education Queensland

Collated and formatted by Sanchia Hopper, SLP, Education Queensland, Sunshine Coast Region.

## DEVELOPING LANGUAGE SKILLS

- ❖ CREATE opportunities for your child to hear language being used correctly. e.g., *'He kicked the ball. He kicked the ball very high.'*
- ❖ CREATE opportunities for your child to use and practice language. eg., *'She's wearing a hat. What else is she wearing?'*
- ❖ PROVIDE a wide range of experiences. e.g., outings to parks, making cake
- ❖ DISCOURAGE older brothers and sisters from talking **for** your child
- ❖ SIMPLIFY your language when your child doesn't understand. e.g., use short sentences, rephrase what you have said. Match your sentence length, structure and vocabulary to your child's level of understanding.



- P: *'Go to your room and get your brush so I can do your hair and your bag for Prep and put your shoes and socks on'*
- C: *'What?'*
- P: *'You need your brush so I can do your hair. Go and get your brush.'*
- C: *'Here it is.'*
- P: *'Good. Now you need your bag, shoes and socks. Three things to remember: your bag, shoes and socks. Tell me what you need.'*



- ❖ MODEL and EMPHASISE words e.g., *'a red cup. What a big, red cup.'*
- ❖ EXPAND the language used by your child. e.g., *'That dog mine.'* → *'Yes, that little dog is yours.'*
- ❖ USE self talk. e.g., *'I think I'll need a bigger saucepan.'*
- ❖ GIVE positive feedback. e.g., *'Good try, you almost got it.'*
- ❖ READ and TALK about interesting books.
- ❖ SAY nursery rhymes and sing together.
- ❖ LABEL things, feeling and actions. TALK about the function of objects, and the similarities and differences between objects.
- ❖ ACT as if you don't understand what your child has said. e.g., C: *'Him did it.'*
- ❖ P: *'What do you mean?'* C: *'Him did it.'* P: *'Oh, you mean he did it.'*
- ❖ USE facial expressions and gestures to help express meaning.
- ❖ GIVE your child time to answer you or respond to your directions



- ❖ MAKE use of toys, empty containers and broken objects. These things will all stimulate your child's language.
- ❖ RAISE your child's awareness of correct and incorrect language forms.
- ❖ ASK open ended questions. e.g., *'What's happening? How did he...? What have you been doing?'* (questions to which you can't answer 'yes' or 'no').
- ❖ GIVE choices if your child is unsure of himself. e.g., *'Do you mean a clock or a watch?'*
- ❖ TALK about language itself. e.g., *'Caterpillar – that's a long word for such a little animal.'* or P: *'Which one is the box of Cornflakes?'* C: *'This one.'* P: *'Yes, you knew that because you saw the picture. Mummy knows because she saw the word. See here it is.'*
- ❖ TALK about story book pictures. Don't expect or demand silence while reading to your child.
- ❖ ASK leading questions. The adult asks the child 'scaffolding' questions when looking at books to help the child sequence ideas. e.g., *'What will happen next?'*
- ❖ TEACH the child how to think by explaining the subtle ideas and inferences of the child's experiences. Support and extend what the child may be thinking. Model other ideas, clarify, expand, explain what, why and how.
- ❖ TELL or read lots of well formed stories such as fairytales (e.g., Goldilocks and the Three Bears). These stories are well structured – i.e., there is a beginning, middle and end, with an introduction, problem, solution and resolution.





## Speech & Language Development of the FIVE year old



### **SPEECH DEVELOPMENT**

- ❖ By the end of the child's fifth year they should be confidently using the following sounds: p, b, m, w, h, t, d, n, k, g, ng (ring), y, f, v, sh
- ❖ Your five year old may experience difficulties producing: l, ch, j, s, z, zh (measure).
- ❖ It is important to positively reinforce your child's attempts to make speech sounds. Praise their good productions and help when they make a mistake.

### **LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT**

- ❖ Uses sentences averaging six words in length
- ❖ Tells others stories about their experiences and can retell a familiar story
- ❖ Asks for meanings and makes serious enquiries about abstract words
- ❖ Defines objects by their use (you eat with a fork) and can tell what objects are made of (a table is made from wood)
- ❖ 'Reads' by way of pictures
- ❖ Uses all pronouns correctly: he, she, his, her, them, they, himself etc
- ❖ Able to give the main idea or theme of a story
- ❖ Understands and uses prepositions: behind, below, near, beside, over, above
- ❖ Knows common opposites: big/little, hard/soft etc
- ❖ Understands the concepts of same and different
- ❖ Uses future, present and past tense
- ❖ Stays with an activity for 12-13 minutes
- ❖ Uses a variety of sentence types, some of which may be complex e.g., 'I can go inside after I take my boots off.'
- ❖ Asks questions for information

### **Develop your Five Year Old's Speech and Language by...**

- ❖ encouraging your child to use language to express his/her feelings, ideas, dreams, wishes and fears.
- ❖ commenting on what you did or how you think your child feels; this will stimulate more language than a direct question
- ❖ allowing your child to create new, free designs with crayons, and pencils or paper. Encourage your child to express what they are doing and what they have made when completed.
- ❖ continuing to read longer stories to your child and talking about the story with them

- ❖ talking with him/her as you would an adult in most instances
- ❖ remembering that he/she will understand more than he/she will be able to say
- ❖ listening when your child talks to you.

## **LANGUAGE IN THE KITCHEN**

- ❖ Food time can be fun time. So take time out to cook and have fun with your child. From an early age children can participate in and enjoy cooking activities. As your child gets older you can give him/her more responsibilities.

### **IN THE KITCHEN TALK ABOUT...**

- ❖ ACTIONS: Get into the habit of saying out loud what you or your child are doing in the kitchen e.g., *'I'm cutting the vegetables for the soup', 'I'm grating the cheese for the pizza', 'I'm washing the dishes to make them clean'* etc
- ❖ FUNCTIONS: Talk about what things are used for in the kitchen e.g., knife for cutting, spoon for stirring, bowl for mixing etc
- ❖ DESCRIPTIONS: Talk about things in the kitchen and what they look, smell, taste, feel and sound like. Use words like: big, little, long, round, bumpy, spiky, soft, hard, sweet, sour, hot, cold, sticky, salty, etc.
- ❖ WHERE: Talk about where things are in the kitchen. Use 'position' words. Include above, over, beneath, beside e.g. *'The cake is in the oven' 'The cup is on the table' 'The cloth is under the sink' 'The plate goes between the knife and fork'* etc.
- ❖ SEQUENCE: Talk about the steps you take in cooking activities. For example; when making a sandwich:

*'First we get the bread and the toppings out.*

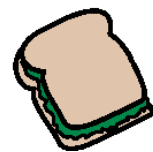
*Then we put the butter on.*

*Next we choose what we want on the sandwich.*

*Then we spread the jam/vegemite.*

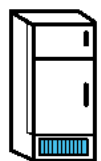
*Then we cut the sandwich in half.*

*Then we eat it'.*



Your child can also anticipate what comes next in an activity e.g., *'what do we need to do now the ingredients are in the bowl?' 'What will I need to stir it?'*

- ❖ CATEGORISE: Talk about the food in your kitchen; help your child to think about the 'groups' that different foods belong to, e.g., *'Find all of the fruits' 'Tell me some hot things you like to eat' 'Put all the sweet things in the fridge'*





- ❖ FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS: Give your child instructions that vary in length and complexity. E.g., 'Get spoon' → 'Get the spoon out of the drawer' → 'Get the big spoon out of the drawer and give it to Daddy' → 'Get the big spoon and the blue cup out of the drawer and give it to Daddy' → 'Before you go upstairs for a shower, get the big spoon and the blue cup out of the drawer and give it to Daddy'



- ❖ CHANGES: Talk about the changes we see in food when we cook it.
  - E.g., 'The spaghetti was hard before we cooked it. Then we put it into the hot water and it became soft'
  - 'The egg was runny before we cooked it, now it's hard'
  - 'The cake got bigger when we cooked it in the oven'



- ❖ DIFFERENCES: Talk about similarities and differences between objects in the kitchen e.g., 'knife-fork. You use them to eat with. They both have handles. A knife is sharp and long and used to cut things. A fork has prongs to poke food and pick it up'.




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## LANGUAGE IN THE BATHROOM

- ❖ Daily activities in the bathroom are a great time to practice language activities with your child. You can use this time to teach your child words and concepts on a regular basis.



### IN THE BATHROOM, TALK ABOUT...

- ❖ PLAY: Allow your child time to play during bath time. Encourage them to talk during this play time and tell you what they are doing. Help your child to expand his/her language by providing good language models and extending their utterances by a word or two. "Duck swim" "Yes, the duck is swimming. Duck is swimming in the bath."
- ❖ USE: Use household objects to play in the bath. Talk about what the object is normally used for, where the child might find it in the house, and what they can do with it in the bath. Use things such as colanders, funnels, empty margarine containers / yoghurt tubs, empty detergent bottles, sponges etc.
- ❖ BODY PARTS: Bath time is a great time to learn the names of our body parts. Start off with the well known parts e.g., head, face, arms, legs etc. Then label things like knees, elbows, ankles, knuckles etc. Ask your child to wash the different parts of their body and dry them when they are finished.



- ❖ CONCEPTS: Talk about opposite concepts that are demonstrated when we have a bath.
- ❖ 'Dry-Wet' – talk about how before we get in the bath we are dry. Then when you get in the water you are wet. How do you feel after you use your towel?
- ❖ 'Hot-Cold' – talk about the different taps in the bathroom. The cold tap typically has a blue dot and the hot tap has a red. Explain why you shouldn't touch the hot tap. Show the child that you have to use both hot and cold water to make the bath just right.
- ❖ 'Float-Sink' – use household objects or toys, put them in the bath and see what they do. Talk about how heavy objects sink and light objects float.
- ❖ Other concepts may include: 'Dirty-Clean', 'Full-Empty'

- SEQUENCING: Talk about the steps you take in routines that occur in the bathroom e.g., brushing your teeth. See if your child can tell you what they do in each step as they do it: *'I squeeze the toothpaste onto my brush...'* Alternatively talk your child through the sequence as they complete the task.




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## LANGUAGE IN THE LAUNDRY

- ❖ Washing is a chore at home that we can't ignore. But with a little extra energy a daily job can become a language learning environment for your child.



### IN THE LAUNDRY TALK ABOUT...

- ❖ SORTING: Ask your child to help you sort the washing before you put it in the machine. *'Put all of Daddy's work clothes together'* *'Put all of the socks and underwear together'* *'Put all of the towels and sheets together'*
- ❖ COUNTING: Count the number of socks / shirts / towels as you hang them on the line.
- ❖ DESCRIPTIONS: Talk about whose clothes they are and what they look like. E.g., *'These are Daddy's long black pants'* *'This is my new red stripy dress'* *'The little blue shirts are my uniform'*
- ❖ COMPARISONS: Talk about how clothes are different. Compare them e.g., *'A jumper has long sleeves, a shirt has short sleeves, a singlet doesn't have any sleeves'*, *'Mummy's dresses are big and my dresses are small'*
- ❖ MEASUREMENT: Ask your child to help you measure the amount of washing powder you need. Discuss concepts such as 'half' 'full'. *'Today the machine has lots of things in it. We will need a full cup of detergent. Fill it all the way to the top. A full cup.'*



- ❖ FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS: Involve your child in hanging out the clothes. Give them directions of increasing complexity eg. *'Give Mummy the socks', 'Pass me the red socks', 'Pass me the yellow towel and three pegs'*
- ❖ Encourage fine motor development by letting your child use the pegs to hang the washing out. Pinching the pegs together is good for their developing finger skills.
- ❖ DECISIONS: talk with your child about the concepts of 'wet' and 'dry'. Let them feel the washing when it is wet as you hang it out. Explain that it is time to take it off when it feels dry. Ask your child to feel the washing and decide if it is ready to be taken off.
- ❖ SORTING: together sort the dry clothes into those that do and do not need ironing. Then sort the piles to be put away. *'Put all of Mummy's clothes together', 'Put all of Daddy's clothes in a pile beside Mummy's'*

***Remember by making these activities fun and involving your child, not only will you be teaching them but it will also give a helping hand.***

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## AM I READY FOR PREP?

This Prep checklist considers: fine and gross motor skills, social skills academic skills, physical skills, knowing about personal health and safety and knowing their personal information.

### Fine motor skills

- Can put a 10-piece puzzle together.
- Can hold scissors correctly.
- Can hold a pencil/crayon properly.

### Gross motor skills

- Runs, jumps, skips, can walk backwards.
- Can walk up and down stairs.

### Social skills

- Uses words instead of being physical when angry.
- Speaks clearly so an adult can understand them.
- Plays with other children.
- Follows simple direction.
- Expresses feeling and needs.
- Goes to the bathroom by themselves.
- Waits their turn and shares.
- Talks in sentences.
- Asks questions about things around them.
- Enjoys having books read to them.
- Can tell a story about a past event.
- Says please and thank you.
- Can spend extended periods away from parents.

### Academic skills

- Recognises basic shapes.
- Can sort items by colour, size and shape.
- Can identify six parts of their body.
- Understands concept words such as up, down and in and out.
- Counts from 1 to 10.
- Recognises five colours.
- Tries to write their name.
- Can recognise their written name.

### Health and safety

- Eats healthy food.
- Follows simple safety rules.
- Uses good habits, eg spoons, forks, covers mouth and nose when sneezes.
- Washes hands after going to the toilet.
- Has a set routine for going to bed and brushing teeth.

### Physical skills

- Can put on and take off jumpers, shoes and sock independently.
- Uses the toilet independently.
- Can open and close lunch boxes and drink bottles.
- Can identify their own belongings.
- Can care for and put away play things.

### Personal information

- Knows their full name, age, address, telephone number, and mum and dad's first names.



## **A Final Note...**

- ❖ Try not to expect too much from your children. We all want our children to do well, but sometimes expectations get in the way of progress.
- ❖ Keep in mind that children need time just to be children – some time that is not programmed when they can just relax, play and enjoy whatever they want to do.
- ❖ The key thing for your child in the first year of school is having a sense of wellbeing and involvement. You will know if this is happening because your child will be:
  - Having fun
  - Making friends
  - Wanting to go to school
  - Enjoying new experiences
- ❖ Allow your child to feel the joy of success. Let them carry their own bags and unpack their belongings in the classroom.
- ❖ Allow your child to develop resilience. Don't protect them from failure. Support them in learning how to deal with failure as an everyday part of life.
- ❖ Friendships amongst children are fluid. Don't interfere and try to solve their issues.

***We are delighted to welcome you to our Mapleton School family.***

***We look forward to working with your family and hope that there will be many happy years of association together.***

