IPSWICH NORTH STATE SCHOOL

PREPARATORY YEAR 2013

PARENT INFORMATION BOOKLET
**WELCOME**
We would like to extend a warm welcome to all 2013 Prep parents and students. We hope that your Prep year will be a happy and beneficial one. We are glad of the opportunity to work with you and believe that education is a combined venture of the child, the parents and the whole community.

**STAFF**
Principal: Mrs Sasha Robinson
Blue Prep Teacher: Mrs Linda Forsyth
Blue Teacher Aide: Mrs Dawn McMullin
Green Prep Teacher: Mrs Sanitha Mahabeer
Green Teacher Aide: Ms Debra Tait

**PREP BELL TIMES**
- 8:40 am  Move to class bell
- 8:50 am  Session 1 commences
- 10:50 am Lunch
- 11:00 am First Play Break
- 11:35 am Session 2 commences
- 1:00 pm  Lunch
- 1:10 pm  Second Play Break
- 1:35 pm  Session 3 commences
- 2:50 pm  School concludes

**ADDRESS**
Ipswich North State School
Down Street
North Ipswich  Qld  4305

**PHONE**
School Office: 3813 5888

**SCHOOL CALENDAR**
Term 1: January 29 – March 28   (Student Free Days: January 24-25)
Term 2: April 15 – June 21
Term 3: July 8 – September 20
Term 4: October 8– December 13   (Student Free Day: October 21)

**EARLY CHILDHOOD PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**
We believe every child is unique in terms of life experience, developmental readiness, and cultural heritage. Partnership between family and school is, therefore, essential to the optimal growth and development of young children.

Our aim is to provide a safe, nurturing, stimulating environment that accommodates and embraces differences. Our goal is to promote the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of each child.
We believe in the integration of learning and play, as children learn best by doing. We strive for a balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities, providing the foundation of a developmentally appropriate early childhood program. Given opportunities to explore the world around them, young children become active, involved learners. School becomes a place where they can be successful and children discover that learning is fun.

We believe, with this foundation, children become curious, well rounded learners, able to make independent choices and act responsibly.

SAFETY
- Children must be brought and collected from the Prep room each day by a parent or designated responsible adult.
- If at any time you arrange for someone else to collect your child, please inform the teacher or school office.
- Please inform the teacher or office in advance if you wish to take your child before the session ends. Children leaving school early must be signed out at the Administration Office.

PUNCTUALITY in collecting your child is very important as the child worries if he/she is left. The teacher (and your child) would appreciate it if you would notify the school if you are delayed.

ATTENDANCE
If you are going on holidays or your child is ill, please contact the School and leave a message on our night service. Regular attendance at school is essential so that the child can maximize the programs available. Please ensure that your child is on time to school. Being late can stress young children and can disrupt the program that has already begun. Remember that ‘Every Day Counts’.

UNIFORM
Prep children wear the same uniform as students in the rest of the school as per our Student Dress Code. As we are a sun safe school children are expected to wear a broad brimmed hat for outdoor play. The Ipswich North State School green bucket hats are available through the office. Covered shoes such as joggers or black school shoes with Velcro or laces must be worn to abide by Work Place Health and Safety Regulations. No thongs or heels.

CHILDREN’S REQUIREMENTS
- A bag large enough for child’s belongings
- Fruit Break e.g.: a piece of fresh fruit or vegetable (no tins or bars please)
- Lunch e.g.: sandwiches/wraps, salad, leftovers, yoghurt etc

We encourage and model healthy eating as part of the Prep curriculum in line with the Education Queensland Healthy Eating Policy and therefore lollies and highly sugared or salted snacks are not permitted except on designated red days planned by the school. (Please monitor your child’s lunchboxes carefully and adjust food requirements accordingly)
- Hat – school bucket hat
- Ipswich North State School Book Bag is provided for borrowing books from the library and home readers/homework
- A named sports water bottle which can be topped up throughout the day

A resource list is also provided that outlines other items required for the Prep year. We ask that these items be supplied by the end of week 1 of the school year.

ALL CHILDREN’S BELONGINGS MUST BE CLEARLY NAMED EXCEPT STATIONERY ITEMS (eg. Glue etc) AS THESE ARE SHARED. THIS ASSISTS THE CHILDREN AND THE STAFF TO MANAGE AND SAFEGUARD ALL ITEMS. SCRAPBOOKS ONLY NEED TO BE NAMED AS THEY ARE COVERED DURING THE FIRST WEEK AT SCHOOL SO THAT CHILDREN CAN EASILY FIND THEM.

PARENT TEACHER COMMUNICATION
Please feel free to arrange a meeting at a mutually convenient time to discuss your child’s development and progress. Often teachers are busy in the morning therefore afternoons are usually more convenient. If there is something you are unsure of with our program which affects your child, please ask and we will happily explain it to you.

HEALTH POLICY
Children with infectious childhood diseases must be excluded from School for specified times. Consult your teacher/Doctor or the Education Queensland or Queensland Health website if you need assistance. In cases of minor ailments, parents are asked to use their own judgment about whether a child is fit to attend. A sick child is better kept at home than sent to school unhappy and spreading germs. Children who become ill during the session will be removed from the group to rest - the parent will be notified as soon as possible. Medication will only be administered if it is prescribed by a doctor and details of the dosage and times are stated clearly on the labels. Prep Teachers can administer the prescribed medication only.

TREASURES FROM HOME
It would be appreciated if toys were not brought from home unless they are for a special occasion or show and share. Treasures can be lost or broken - they are safer at home. Encourage your child to bring interesting objects - rocks, shells, insects, photos etc. to enrich our program.

BIRTHDAYS
We are happy to celebrate this special occasion. Speak with the classroom teacher prior to your child’s birthday so adequate preparation time can be arranged by the classroom teacher.

If you wish to have candles but can’t be present for the cake cutting ceremony, provide the teacher with the candles and a lighter. The teacher will ensure you receive these items back at the end of the day and your child will not have inappropriate items in their possession.
EXCURSIONS
At appropriate times, the school may organize excursions or visitors. Written permission from parents will be necessary. If money is involved, please seal it in an envelope with the name and amount, as all monies must be sent to the main office for counting, banking and receipting. For some excursions we may require parent help to ensure safe supervision of children.

NEWSLETTERS / NOTICEBOARD
There is a parent notice at the entrance to the Prep classroom. Please check this for messages daily. There are also parent pockets inside for important messages, book club and other items. School newsletters are emailed home each week on Friday and the youngest student in the family is provided with a hard copy every Friday also.

TECHNOLOGY
Every child has an iPad in the Prep Classroom. Supervised access to the internet and educational apps is always provided by Prep staff. Children will also have access to the desktop computers in the classroom and to the lap tops and desktop computers in the school library. Interactive Whiteboards are also utilized in the Prep classroom to use digital teaching and learning resources.

SPECIALIST LESSONS
All children will receive instruction on a weekly basis from specialists in the areas of music and physical education.

THE PREP PROGRAM – THE EARLY YEARS CURRICULUM
The Preparatory Year is a learning time for four and five year olds before the formal years of schooling. Prep staff uses the Early Years Curriculum Guidelines to plan for and monitor children’s learning and development. The Early Years Curriculum is based on current research into how young children learn.

These guidelines state that quality prep programs have six factors which help children to be prepared for school and later success in life.

• Social and emotional competence with a focus on social learning and independence
• Health and physical wellbeing, particularly in making healthy choices and gross- and fine-motor development
• Language development and communication, focusing on oral language and early literacy
• Early mathematical understandings with emphasis on early numeracy
• Active learning processes with a focus on thinking, investigating, and imagining and responding
• Positive dispositions to learning.
**Early Learning Areas** – In school the learning areas include English, Math, and The Arts etc. In Prep, learning is organised into Early Learning Areas. The early learning areas are:

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

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<tr>
<th>Prep Early Learning Areas</th>
<th>Specific focus within the early learning areas</th>
<th>Primary Key Learning Areas</th>
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| Social & personal learning | Social learning  
   Personal learning | SOSE  
   HPE |
| Health & physical learning | Making healthy choices  
   Gross-motor  
   Fine-motor | HPE |
| Language learning & communication | Oral language  
   Early literacy | English  
   LOTE |
| Early mathematical understandings | Early numeracy | Mathematics |
| Active learning processes | Thinking  
   Investigating  
   Imagining and responding | Science  
   SOSE  
   Technology  
   The Arts |

Within flexible preparatory learning environments, teachers purposefully create five main contexts for learning and development:

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

These contexts also provide meaningful contexts for assessment in the early phase of school. Children have opportunities to learn within each of the five contexts in both indoor and outdoor preparatory environments. The contexts for learning and development are designed to actively engage children, parents, teachers and teacher aides as partners in learning. Together, these partners co-construct, reconstruct and reflect on new ways to make sense of their world and relationships with others.

**PLAY**
In the early phase of schooling the purpose of play is to support children’s learning and development. Therefore teachers need to scaffold the play to extend children’s learning.
Play occurs in both indoor and outdoor environments. It provides a powerful context in which children learn as they actively engage socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually with people, objects and representations.

Through play, children develop thinking and problem-solving strategies. They use and extend oral language capabilities, learn literacy and numeracy practices, explore a range of ways to symbolise experiences and develop imagination and creativity. Play-based experiences provide children with opportunities to build their personal identities as successful and responsible learners. In play, children are able to learn through all their senses, make connections with their prior knowledge, practise and master learning, sustain concentration and take risks in enjoyable and non-threatening contexts.

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<tr>
<th>Types of play</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tr>
<td>Socio-dramatic</td>
<td>Children setting up and running a flower shop.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fantasy</td>
<td>Children creating props for space adventures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exploratory</td>
<td>Exploring the properties of new manipulative or construction materials; looking through magnifier/ lenses to see how they work and the effect they have.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manipulative</td>
<td>Doing puzzles, making necklaces or constructions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Running, hopping, skipping, climbing, moving through obstacle courses.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Games with rules</td>
<td>Playing board and card games; outdoor games; child-created games with rules.</td>
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(Source: Early Years Curriculum Guidelines, Queensland Studies Authority, 2006)

Further information about learning in the prep year will be given throughout the year, in newsletters and talks with parents.

Please feel free to discuss your child’s progress with the teacher at any time.

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM
In 2013 the Foundation level Australian Curriculum in English, Mathematics, Science and History will also be implemented. There are specific content descriptors for Prep in these areas organized under a range of strands. There are also achievement standards for all Prep students to be attained by the end of the year. Whilst these content descriptors and achievement standards will guide the “what” is to be taught in Prep the Queensland Early Years Curriculum Guidelines outlined above will continue to be the “how” we teach Prep in Queensland. More information about this will be provided at the Prep Parent Information Sessions.

HOMEWORK
In the Prep Year, students will be asked to do a small amount of homework around their phonics sound of the week and later in the year as home reading is introduced students will have a home reader and some sight words to learn, if they are developmentally ready for this.
PARENTS IN THE PREP CLASSROOM
Parents play an important and valued role in the education of their child and so we welcome parents to become involved in Prep by:

- volunteering to help out in the Prep Classroom
- supporting the parent group (P&C)
- volunteering in the school tuckshop Wednesday to Friday
- reading the notice boards and newsletters
- collecting recycled materials to use in collage
- supporting and encouraging your child to develop a positive feeling of his / her worth
- offering to share hobbies, interests or expertise (musical, pottery, cooking etc.)
- assisting with maintenance and beautification of the Prep grounds.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP WHEN VOLUNTEERING IN PREP
When visiting the Prep Classroom please feel free to join the children as they work. Talk with them about the activity they are working at and encourage them to solve their own problems.

Here are some ways you can help:

- At first names will need to be written on all work in the top left hand corner. Please try to use the beginner’s alphabet, as this is what they will be using as they begin to write.
- When the children are playing with puzzles, help them to take the pieces out one at a time, rather than tipping them out. Make sure they are not left unfinished. Please give the child clues, but don’t do the puzzle for them.
- Help supervise outdoor play - chat to the children in the sandpit or the water trough, ask them what they are discovering.
- Take a small group activity, eg; cooking or reading a story.
- Assist with Perceptual Motor Programs, Oral Language Programs, Literacy Rotations by supervising small groups of children.

SHARING INFORMATION
Events in family life such as major illness, visits, accidents or death of family, friends or pets can be of major concern or excitement for children and may affect their behaviour. It is important for the home and prep teachers to share information, which may affect the child.

COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT
If you have a problem or concern it is best to first of all speak to the Prep Teacher about your concern as often many problems can be sorted at the classroom level before they escalate and require intervention from the school administration. If of course you do not feel your concern is dealt with in a satisfactory manner you may wish to make an appointment to speak with the Principal (Broader whole school issues) or the Head of Curriculum (Teaching and learning issues). Don’t hesitate to discuss any queries or worries that you may have regarding your child’s education, with your child’s teacher - she will try her best to help or will put you in contact with somebody else who possibly can.
**LIBRARY**
The children will borrow books during library lessons at the school Resource Centre each week. They must have their previous book returned in their provided Ipswich North State School book bag to be able to borrow each week. It is important that books are cared for and kept in the book bag when not in use to enable them to be borrowed by other students in the future. If books become lost or damaged, families may be billed for the replacement cost.

**PARENT GROUP**
You will be invited to join and take part in our Parents and Citizens group. This may involve assisting in the organising of functions for social, educational, or fundraising purposes. See school newsletter for details.

**RECYCLED MATERIALS PLEASE**
Many important skills are developed through the use of recycled junk material and we need a constant supply of all sorts of:

- Paper / cardboard
- Greeting cards
- Buttons
- Magazines
- Wrapping paper
- Unused Ice cream sticks
- Envelopes
- Bottle tops
- Stamps / calendars
- Egg shells / bark / seeds
- Computer paper
- Yoghurt containers
- String / lace / ribbon
- Polystyrene trays
- Wool / material scraps
- Silver and gold foil
- Cellophane / crepe paper
- Cardboard cylinders (not toilet rolls)
- Boxes; matches to fridges

**BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT**
Our school expectations are:

- Respect
- Ownership
- Co-operation
- Kindness
- Safety

The expectations are explicitly taught and modelled using positive reinforcement.

**You Can Do It**
A social and emotional program that equips students with the following keys to become a successful community member:

- Persistence
- Confidence
- Getting Along
- Organisation
- Resilience
IN CONCLUSION
Our main aim is to provide a happy and stimulating educational environment in which children can achieve success and enjoy recognition for their individual achievements. We encourage the children to take responsibility for themselves so that they develop ownership of their own behaviour and actions. It is important to encourage the children to develop as individuals while respecting the rights of every child to be a unique person while learning to live within their environment.

AND FINALLY WE WELCOME YOU TO IPSWICH NORTH STATE SCHOOL AND WE HOPE YOUR ASSOCIATION WITH OUR EXCEPTIONAL SCHOOL IS VERY POSITIVE FOR YOUR CHILD AND YOU!