

2024

GET SET 4 PREP BOOKLET

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Play games which encourage team work and turn taking.



Encourage your child to put on their shoes independently. Velcro shoes are great first school shoes.



Encourage your child to mark make in order to develop the muscles in their hands. This could include finger painting and drawing patterns in the sand.



Keep listening and talking to your child about starting school. Create excitement about their new school adventure.



Practise using a Knife and Fork together. Have a trial run of opening their lunch box.

GETTING SET FOR SCHOOL



Practise dressing and undressing independently.



With your child have a go at using scissors safely.



Provide opportunities for your child to use the toilet independently.



Develop a consistent routine now. This will help prepare your child for a busy school day. Why not have a go at trialling the school run?



Read, enjoy and explore books together. Develop a love of reading.



Congratulations on enrolling in Prep at *Alexandra Hills State School*

Thank you for enrolling your child into Prep. I would like to take this opportunity to personally welcome you to the *Alexandra Hills State School*, it is a fantastic school community!

In a few short months from now, your child will begin Prep at *Alexandra Hills State School* and we will begin an important partnership together. Your child, your family and our school will team up to support each other over the next seven years of your child's primary school education.

We are committed to ensuring that your child will receive the best possible education and look forward to developing a productive partnership with the aim of working together for the betterment of your child.

We aim to make your child's first year at *Alexandra Hills State School* enjoyable, stimulating and academically rewarding.

This booklet is designed to help and support you in preparing your son or daughter for Prep. It outlines the ways the following four aspects of school readiness can be built:

- Physical Readiness
- Social Emotional Readiness
- Language Communication Readiness
- Cognitive Readiness

Over the next few months, we encourage you to read and implement the suggestions within this booklet to help your child prepare for Prep next year.

If you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me personally.



Wayne Fletcher
Principal



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Your child's journey has already begun!

In the lead up to your child starting at Alexandra Hills State School.....

Preparing your child for school:

Starting school can be an exciting time but sometimes a little stressful for you and your child. For a few children it may be the first time that they have been away from their parents. They may be going into a strange environment with unfamiliar people and things around them.

Below are some simple FIRST steps you can take to help make your child's time at school more enjoyable and relaxed.

Encourage your child to be independent by helping them to get used to:

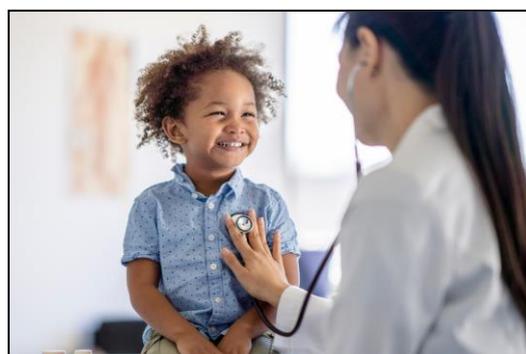
- being away from his or her parents (organise times for them to be left with family and friends)
- putting on and doing up his or her shoes
- eating and drinking without help (opening lunchboxes, wrapping and unwrapping school lunches and drinking from drink bottles)
- caring for, cleaning up and putting away play things or belongings
- using a handkerchief or tissue
- going to the toilet independently
- using playground equipment safely
- carrying his or her own bag
- identifying his or her own belongings



Work with your child to develop their communication and social skills. Help your child to:

Help your child to:

- make his or her own needs known
- use appropriate greetings
- respond verbally when spoken to
- share toys and items with other children
- take turns and wait patiently
- follow directions
- play appropriately with and care for all equipment



Familiarise your child with the school environment and routine by:

- Attending the welcome meeting with your child prior to him or her commencing Prep (While you are in your meeting, your child will be taking part in the Brigance Early Childhood Screener to help us learn about your child as an individual and help us identify his/her strengths and weaknesses)
- introducing your child to other children in the neighborhood who will be attending the same school
- purchasing the required equipment and materials, such as a school bag, library bag and the school hat. Make sure all possessions are clearly labelled with your child's name.
- purchasing the school uniform and shoes and allowing your child to wear them for short periods of time
- encouraging your child to understand that teachers are at school to help.

Getting your child interested in activities to develop gross and fine motor skills

When your child starts Prep next year, well developed physical skills (jumping, hopping, balancing, running and walking) gives him or her an advantage with other learning (reading, writing, etc.). Getting your child away from screens, like iPads, computers and television and outside to be physical is crucial to their development.

Below are some great and fun ways to get your child active so gross and fine motor skills are developed:

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

- Practice walking and hopping skills on a line of masking tape. Use masking tape on the floor to make a straight line. Say, "Walk on tiptoes on the line." Demonstrate first. You could ask your child to hop along the line on one foot.
- Demonstrate running in your backyard or in a nearby playground. Encourage your child to follow along. You might say, "Run from the swings to the fence". Set up timed races and simple obstacle course to make it fun.
- Play catch with your child and make it fun! Start with soft rubber balls, wool, beanbags or Foam balls and move up to larger, firmer balls. Start slowly, tossing the ball gently into the Child's midsection to make it easy to catch. Encourage them to toss it back. Keep it short, 10 – 15 minutes is usually the maximum time Younger children want to play catch.
- Play a game of kickball. Like catching, start in a small area, quite close together. Your child might begin simply rolling the ball with the tip of his foot. You can kick the ball back to your child and enjoy a game of "kick the ball".
- Set up a bowling game with your child. You can use milk cartons, shoeboxes, blocks or yoghurt containers. Set up a few "pins" and have your child knock them down by tossing or rolling a ball from a reasonable distance.



FINE MOTOR SKILLS

- Encourage your child to play with *Play Dough*. Show your child how to knead the play dough to soften it. Mold the dough into figures of people or animals. Use rollers and biscuit cutters to roll out and cut the dough into different shapes. Play dough is a fun way to strengthen the muscles of the hand that will be used for writing.
- Give your child items to thread.
- Give your child old magazines or newspapers to cut up, or allow him or her to make a collage of the things he or she likes by cutting them from magazines and gluing them to a piece of paper.
- Give your child several different writing options (coloured pencils, crayons or felt pens) to help keep him/her interested in writing and drawing.
- Purchase a good pair of child-safe scissors and let your child practice. (If your child is left-handed, be sure to get left-handed scissors). Cutting with scissors takes a great deal of finger dexterity and so can be frustrating for young children.
- Show your child how to hold scissors, how to open and close them, and how to hold and turn the paper while cutting.
- Draw short horizontal lines on the edge of a piece of paper with a Texta. Have your child cut along the lines to make a fringe.
- Give your child simple shapes to cut out.



Once these early physical skills are developed, learning at school often becomes easier. To prepare your child for reading, writing and counting at Prep, start now to get them interested and excited about books, patterns, words and songs. Speak with them continuously. Make learning fun and rewarding!

Getting your child interested in reading:

Read Aloud to Your Child

Reading aloud to children is the best way to get them interested in reading. Before long, they will grow to love stories and books. Eventually they will want to read on their own.



Talk to Your Child

Oral language is the foundation for reading. Listening and speaking are a child's first introduction to language. Talking and singing Teaches your child the sounds of language, making it easier for them to learn how to read.

You could play rhyming games; sing songs, such as the alphabet song and reciting nursery rhymes;



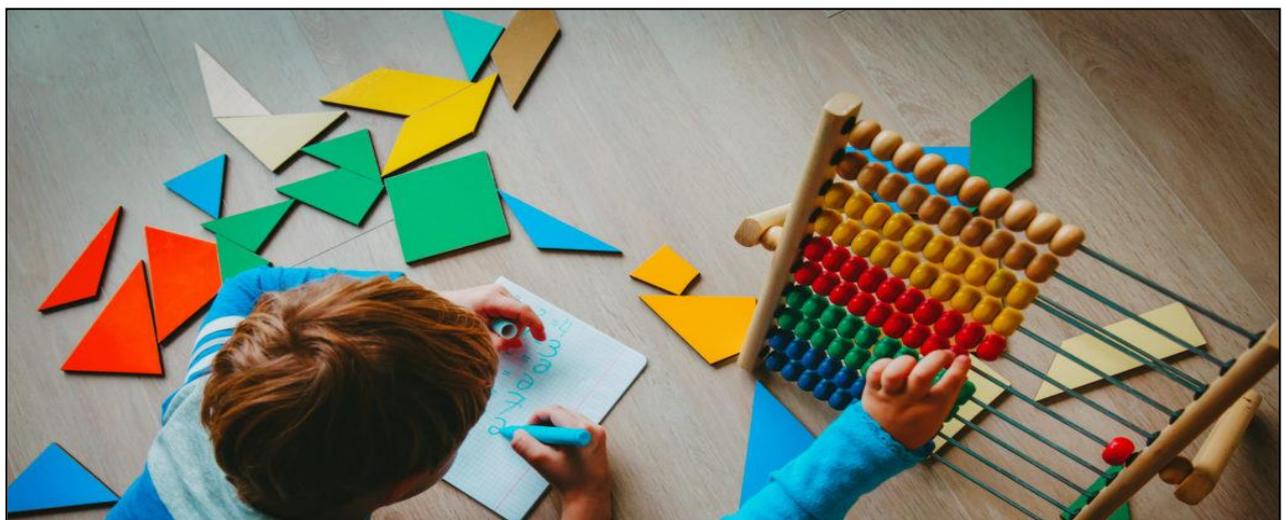
get your child to tell you what he or she thinks or feels; or ask your child lots of questions.

- **Make Reading Fun** – Reading aloud can be a lot of fun, not just for parents but for all family members. To get the most out of reading to your child try reading with drama and excitement (e.g., use your child's name instead of a character's name); re-read your child's favourite stories; read stories that have repetitive parts and encourage your child to join in. Remember, the more you enjoy the reading experience, the more your child will enjoy it.
- **Read Every Day** – Children love routine, and reading is something that you and your child can look forward to every day. By taking the time to read with your child, you show him or her that reading is important and fun to do. Keep reading to your child even after he or she has learned to read. By reading stories that will interest your child but that are above his or her reading level, you can stretch your child's understanding and keep alive the magic of shared reading.
- **Set an Example** – As a parent, you are your child's most important role model. If your child sees you reading, especially for pleasure or information, he or she will understand that reading is a worthwhile activity. You can also share many daily reading activities with your child. Daily reading activities include: o reading recipes, food labels, schedules, maps, instructions, brochures, traffic signs, signs in stores and restaurants, greeting cards, letters, e-mail messages, information in cookbooks, manuals, phone books, atlases and dictionaries.
- **Talk About Books** – Talking about the books you read to or with your child is just as important as reading them. Discussing a story or a book with your child helps your child understand it and connect it to his or her own experience of life. It also helps enrich your child's vocabulary with new words and phrases.
- You could also encourage your child to ask questions and to comment on the story and pictures in a book – before, during, and after reading it.



Getting your child interested in Mathematics:

- Count everything! Count toys, kitchen utensils and items of clothing as they come off the clothes line. Help your child count by pointing to and moving the objects as you say each number out loud.
- Sing counting songs and read counting books. Every culture has counting songs such as 'One, Two, Buckle my Shoe' and 'Ten Little Monkeys' which make learning to count (both forwards and backwards), fun for children.
- Counting books also capture children's imagination, by using pictures of interesting things to count and to add.
- Discover the many ways in which numbers are used inside and outside your home. Take your child on a "number hunt" in your home or neighborhood. Point out how numbers are used on the television set, the microwave, and the telephone. Spot numbers in books and newspapers. Look for numbers on signs in your neighborhood.
- Measure items found around the house. Have your child find objects that are longer or shorter than a shoe or a string or a ruler. Fill different containers with sand in a sandpit or with water in the bath, and see which containers hold more and which hold less.
- Identify shapes and sizes. When playing with your child, identify things by their shape and size: "Pass me a sugar cube." "Take the largest cereal box out of the cupboard."
- Hide a toy and use directional language to help your child find it. Give clues using words and phrases such as up, down, over, under, between, though, and on top of.
- Create patterns using your body. Clap and stomp your foot in a particular sequence (clap, clap, stomp), have your child repeat the same sequence, then create variations of the pattern together.
- Sort household items. As your child tidies up toys or clothing, discuss which items should go together and why. Encourage your child to sort other household items – crayons by colour, cutlery by type or shape, coins by denomination.
- Play games. Play games in which your child finds objects of particular colours and shapes around the house or in the neighborhood as you drive. (e.g., 'I spy something that is green...') You can also play games that involve numbers (e.g., *Fish, Snap, Memory, Bingo*).



Getting your child interested in writing:

- Make sure your child sees you writing for many reasons (lists for shopping or chores, letters, survey returns, diary notes, journals, etc.)
- Have plenty of paper around for scribbling on – backs of printed matter, roll of butcher paper, used notebooks, etc.
- Encourage your child to write along with you, as you are writing (on a different bit of paper, of course!) Say, “I’m going to write out my shopping list now; why don’t you make one, too!”
- Praise and encourage attempts, regardless of misspelled words.
- A small desk with butcher paper taped to it, and a can of crayons makes a busy workstation.
- Ask your child to write you story and read it back. Make sure you “ummm” and “ahhh” at all the exciting bits, even when you know they have only written strings of letters or squiggles.
- Get your child to copy designs, shapes and patterns that you make for them.
- Write your child’s name in prominent places, and teach them the names of the letters. Write their name for them, and ask them to copy.
- Ask your child to make signs for things around the house (like Jack’s Bed, TV....).
- Colouring-in books and copybooks from supermarkets and educational shops are always heaps of fun.



On the first day of school:

Below is a suggestion of several simple steps you can take to make your child's first day at school more enjoyable and relaxed. Be prepared. The best thing you can do is to make the first day as stress-free and relaxed as possible.

The day before, write a list of all you'll need to organise, such as food and a change of clothing. Stick the list to the fridge and tick each item off with your child as you complete it.

ON THE DAY:

- Leave plenty of time to get ready.
- Make a nutritious breakfast — this is essential for sustained energy and concentration.
- Make sure your child has all the equipment and those items are clearly named.
- Help your child pack his or her own bag.
- Talk through the daily routine — start, lunch and finish times (Remind him or her of the arrangements for leaving and collecting: "Once we get to school, Mum/Dad will stay a little while, and then we'll have to go. We'll be back at 2:30pm and we'll meet you.
- Talk through a few simple self-help ideas — for example, asking teachers for help or directions
- be positive and encouraging about your child's attendance at school
- Avoid a rush (Leave home on time and allow time to say goodbye. At first you may stay a while to ensure your child feels secure. Once your child has settled in, a short and reassuring goodbye encourages independence.)
- Be flexible in the early days of school, children may take a little while to settle in.

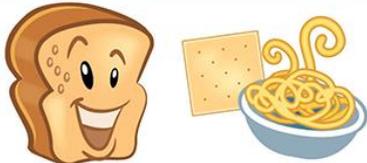


PACKING THE SCHOOL LUNCH:

Being at school is hard work, so by lunchtime your child will be hungry and thirsty. They will need a healthy and filling lunch.

When packing your child's lunch:

- Provide healthy food and drink in realistic quantities for Morning Break and Lunch.
- Ensure that your child can open and unwrap their lunch. Plastic film and other food wrappers can be very difficult for little fingers.
- Avoid ring-pull cans as these can be difficult for children to open.
- Provide a variety of smaller items rather than one or two large items.
- Provide a water bottle every day and encourage your child to drink from it.
- Keep sweets, chips and other party foods for special occasions.

<p>GRAINS / 2 serves</p> <p>Whole grain or high fibre</p> <p>1 serve =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 slice whole grain bread OR 1/2 cup of cooked pasta or rice OR 3 crispbreads 	<p>FRUIT / 1 serve</p> <p>Washed and chopped</p> <p>1 serve =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 cup fruit salad OR 1 medium piece OR 2 small pieces 	
<p>VEGETABLES / 2 serves</p> <p>A colourful selection</p> <p>1 serve =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 cup salad OR 1/2 cup of cooked vegetables 	<p>PROTEIN / 1 serve</p> <p>Keep cool for safety</p> <p>1 serve =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80g lean chicken OR 1 cup baked beans OR 2 boiled eggs 	
<p>DAIRY / 1 serve</p> <p>Lower fat varieties</p> <p>1 serve =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 200g tub of yoghurt OR 1 cup of milk OR 2 slices of cheese 	<p>SNACK / 1 extra</p> <p>For more active kids</p> <p>1 serve =</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 medium banana OR Small bag of cereal OR 1 whole grain muesli bar 	<p>WATER BOTTLE</p> <p>Keep kids hydrated regularly.</p> <p>Explain to them the importance of drinking by themselves, even before being thirsty.</p> 

ONCE SCHOOL STARTS....

- Continue to let your child do his or her own tasks:
- get the uniform ready the night before
- pack/unpack bag
- carry bag and put on bag rack
- get equipment and water bottle out for the day
- take resources and notes into the classroom and put in correct places.
- Be available if your child wants to talk to you, encourage positive talk about their day at school.
- Visit your child's classroom:
- Meet other parents.
- Your child can show you their room, activities and displays.
- Keep in contact with our child's teacher:
- Foster the school-home link
- Write notes, phone, and drop in before or after school (but make an appointment if you need to discuss something as teachers are very busy in that time just before and after school).
- Attend parent information sessions and parent/teacher interviews
- Become a classroom helper:
- Respond to requests
- Help with activities, small group play, excursions
- Offer to help with making things at home, if you work outside the home and can't come in to school
- At home, value your child's creations and awards, have a special display space (fridge, book..).
- Note special days or needs for particular days: library, music, PE, excursions. Help your child to become independent in remembering these as well.
- Attend events and performances.
- Help at the Tuck-shop.
- Attend P&C meetings and assist organising events.
- Make the office aware of current phone numbers, address and medical conditions, and advise immediately of any changes. Make sure your emergency contacts are up-to-date.

A child may face initial difficulties in the first few weeks of Prep, but most are quickly overcome. Stay positive, even if there appears to be some difficulty.



It is not what you do for your children, but what you have taught them to do for themselves, that will make them successful human beings.

Important things to remember

Home/school partnerships and good communication count:

Building a partnership with your child's teacher and the school helps your child to settle in. This partnership supports your child's learning because it provides a foundation for discussing any problems that might come up along the track.

In genuine partnerships, families and educators:

- Value each other's knowledge of the child
- Appreciate each other's perspective on, contributions to, and roles in the child's life.
- Trust each other
- Communicate freely and respectfully with each other
- Share decision making on matters affecting the child.

Research shows two key factors underpin learning success in the first years of school and beyond:

SELF-REGULATION ENABLES A CHILD:

- to control inappropriate behaviour
- to pay attention
- to respond positively to changing circumstances

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT ENABLES A CHILD:

- To listen
- To participate in different conversations
- To interact socially with peers
- To grasp important information the teacher gives



Children who make a positive start to school are more likely to feel:

- Comfortable, relaxed and ready to learn
- Good about themselves as learners and social beings
- A sense of belonging to the school community.



Parents prepare children well for school by:

- Surrounding them with language from birth-
talking, singing, playing games, reading books...
- Making time for outside play EVERY DAY
- Modelling positive behaviours to them
- Establishing, policing and protecting regular bedtimes
- Encouraging them to eat a healthy breakfast EACH morning
- Providing lunches, uniforms, iPads and other necessary bits
and pieces
- Listening to and reassuring them about their feelings and
concerns
- Remaining positive and enthusiastic and encouraging them to be so
- Explaining what school will be like in a realistic way

We trust you and your child will enjoy your time at *Alexandra Hills State School*. Please help us to get to know you and your child by becoming an active part of our school community and keeping in touch about your child's progress and wellbeing.

We look forward to seeing you on Day One!