




St Margaret's



Pre-Prep
HANDBOOK 2022

Contents

Welcome	3
School Mission	4
School Motto	4
What is special about St Margaret's Advent Centre?	4
Pre-Prep philosophy	5
Beliefs about the school community	6
Beliefs about learners	6
Beliefs about learning	6
Learning environments	6
Aims for children	6
Aims	6
Pre-Prep management	7
Pre-Prep staff	7
Parent library	7
Informing families of policies	7
Starting your child at St Margaret's Pre-Prep	8
Pre-Prep program hours	9
Arrival and departure procedure	9
Home visits and pop in day	9
Car parking	9
Holidays	9
Outside School Hours Care	9
Absences	9
Medication	10
Uniform	10
Stationery and books	10
Educational program and practice	11
Pre-literacy development	12
Pre-numeracy development	12
Social and emotional development	12
Fine and gross motor development	13
Health and Physical Education	13
Language	13
STEM	13
Music	13
Pre-Prep overview	13
Home learning	13
Excursion/incursions	14
Assessment of learning	14
Meals	14
Toileting	14
Birthday and cultural celebrations	14
Treasures from home	14
Supporting and guiding behaviours	15
Parent/Guardian participation	15
Communication	16
E-News	16
Primary parent information evening	16
Class parent representatives and classroom helpers	16
Noticeboard	16
New parents' morning tea	16
Parent concerns	16
Pre-Prep policies and procedures	17
Confidentiality of children's records	18
Anti-bias and inclusion policies	18
Child safety	18
Incidence/emergencies	18
Evacuation procedures	18
Sun protection	18
Visitor and parent volunteers	18
Prevention of infection and hygiene practices	18



Welcome

The Sisters, School Council, Senior Leadership Team, educators, and ancillary staff warmly welcome all families to the Pre-Prep community. We are excited to provide your child with his/her first formal educational experience. As part of the St Margaret's community, we look forward to sharing a rich, stimulating environment with you and your child. We view Pre-Prep as the foundation step your child will take in their learning journey. It is here that they will build the fundamentals needed to develop a deep love of learning as they are encouraged to take part in all school activities.

The Pre-Prep program offered by St Margaret's aims to ensure that each child in our care will develop independence, organisational thinking, collaboration, and learn to use language to communicate ideas, feelings, and needs.

School Mission

“In a supportive Christian environment, reflecting the philosophy of the Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Advent, St Margaret’s Anglican Girls School aims to provide excellence in teaching and learning with a broad, balanced and flexible curriculum complemented by other school activities, preparing confident, compassionate, capable women able to contribute in a global community.”

School Motto

Per Volar Sunata (Born to Fly Upwards)

What is special about St Margaret’s Advent Centre?

St Margaret’s Advent Centre is an exciting, warm, learning community where staff and families work together to build an environment that is rich and welcoming. The centre focuses on our families and building a community that supports and complements the learning journey of every child. This nurturing environment is the pivotal point that underpins the rich dialogue, friendships and projects that take place in the centre. It is this community that focuses on the potential and development of the children.



St Margaret’s six core values are embedded in every endeavour students undertake:

Spirit

A St Margaret’s child will value and demonstrate an enthusiasm for the school, our heritage, and our environment. The St Margaret’s spirit is in all students and is there for life. It is a thread which connects St Margaret’s children with each other.

Faith

A St Margaret’s child welcomes and embraces all in sharing the Christian message, the spirit of love through example, compassion, hope and charity. They demonstrate their faith by service to those members of the wider community who need assistance.

Integrity

A St Margaret’s child is known for their honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, truthfulness, courtesy, understanding, reliability, and ethical behaviour.

Courage

A St Margaret’s child has strength of character and confidence in doing what is right. They have the courage to embrace challenge and change.

Respect

A St Margaret’s child has respect for themselves and others. They understand they are a member of a diverse community and take responsibility as a team member to care, support and cooperate with others.

Passion

A St Margaret’s child has a positive outlook on life. They understand that commitment and persistence are necessary for learning and achievement.

These values serve as the school’s cultural cornerstones and reflect the values of the Sisters who established the school.

Pre-Prep philosophy



St Margaret's believes learning is a lifelong journey. We acknowledge parents are a child's first teacher and it is through collaborative relationships with educators, families, and community members that the foundations of formal learning begin. Central to this learning is the knowledge of children as learners, a child-centred and play-based curriculum, within a positive learning environment.

Pre-Prep philosophy

Beliefs about the school community

The Pre-Prep Program:

- acknowledges the importance of all stakeholders in the development of early learners
- values the relationship between and among children, educators, parents, and the community
- acknowledges effective partnerships through consultation, negotiation, and collaboration
- acknowledges the rights of children, parents, and educators.

Beliefs about learners

The Pre-Prep program is committed to the following beliefs about learners:

- Every child is created in the image and likeness of God.
- Every child's image is that of an active competent, capable, and responsible learner.
- Each child has a unique developmental and learning pathway.

Beliefs about learning

The Pre-Prep program is supported by the following pedagogical principles:

- Every child will be supported in terms of both their actual development and their potential.
- Every child can achieve success in learning.
- Every child will be offered opportunity to participate in a variety of integrated learning experiences that promote literacy and numeracy.
- Every child will be offered learning experiences that are relevant, authentic, engaging, and meaningful.
- Every child will be given opportunities to initiate learning and contribute to the development of the program.
- Every child will have a teacher who supports, facilitates, encourages, observes, guides, and challenges the students' learning.

Learning environments

The Pre-Prep learning environment is the third teacher:

- The teacher will provide a physical environment that contributes to each child's effective learning.
- The teacher will provide an environment that is physically and psychologically safe.
- The teacher will provide opportunities for each child to be co-constructor of the learning environment.

AIMS FOR CHILDREN

Aims

At St Margaret's Advent Centre, we aim to:

- Understand the identity of the children – secure respectful and reciprocal relationships
- Understand the family contexts of each child as they are the child's first teacher.
- Help children explore understandings about the world in which they live.
- Embed a culture of thinking for the future.
- Develop positive and practical ways of sustainability.
- Become aware of our daily practices and their impact on the environment.
- Build relationships and partnerships between our Centre and home.
- Implement a child-centred program with joint contributions of educators, families, and children.
- Use documentation as the visible tool which outlines:
 - o Provocations
 - o Hypotheses
 - o Strategies
 - o Deepening the project experience



Pre-Prep management

St Margaret's Pre-Prep is operated by St Margaret's Anglican Girls School. As part of the school, the Pre-Prep's beliefs and practices promote the mission, vision, and values of St Margaret's Anglican Girls School.

St Margaret's Pre-Prep is licensed by the Department of Education and Training – Office of Early Childhood Education and Child Care, under the National Quality Framework and must comply with the *Education and Care Services National Law* and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*. Further information or inquiries about the Framework can be obtained by contacting the Department of Education and Training – Office of Early Childhood Education and Child Care on P: 137 468.

Our Pre-Prep program offers one classroom, under the care and guidance of two adults at all times with a maximum class size of 22 (current regulations require a ratio of 1:11 for this age group), which caters for children aged between 3.5 – 5 years. The program is developed by the qualified early childhood staff members, and the program is delivered by the Early Years Teacher.

Pre-Prep staff

Nominated Supervisor/Director:



Head of Primary
Angela Drysdale
DipT, GradDipEd(EC), MEd(Research), ASDA
Tel: (07) 3862 0722

Educational Leader/ Early Childhood Teacher/Responsible Person:



Teacher
Belinda Knowles
BBSc, MEd(ECE), GradDipEd
Tel: (07) 3862 0720

Assistant Educator:



Teacher Aide
Katy Hobbs
NNEB Diploma in Nursery Nursing
Tel: (07) 3862 0720

Educators are qualified and experienced in different areas of child development, care, health and welfare. All educators hold a Blue Card issued by the Blue Card Services Queensland and a current First Aid Certificate.



Compliance book

The licensee is required to keep, maintain, and make available a compliance history logbook (Compliance Book). The Compliance Book will contain information about any formal notices (other than building notices) issued to a service in line with the Education and Care Services Regulation 2013.

Parent library

Pre-Prep has a parent library consisting of publications relating to subject areas such as child development, parenting, recreation, and health and fitness. The library also contains publications translated into languages other than English. Information on state regulatory bodies can be made available to parents.

Informing families of policies

When you enrol your child in St Margaret's Pre-Prep program, you will be informed of the various policies in place for the safety of your child. However, you can ask for copies of these policies at any time during the school year. You will also be told of any policy changes when they occur. Families will be invited to make contributions and comment on the current policies and procedures.

Starting your child at St Margaret's Pre-Prep



Pre-Prep program hours

The Pre-Prep playground and classroom are open from 8.20am. All children are encouraged to arrive by 8.20am. The program runs until 2.30pm and children must be collected from the classroom at this time.

After 2.40pm any children remaining will be signed into Outside School Hours Care (OSHC). After 3pm an additional fee will be charged.

Arrival and departure procedure

Pre-Prep opens at 8.20am. At this time, you are invited to enter the room and take part in a few activities aimed at helping your child settle in for the day, particularly in Term 1. The Pre-Prep program formally begins at 8.30am. Please remember to sign your child in (and out) each day. Your child needs to be inside the Pre-Prep room during sign in. If an adult unfamiliar to staff is collecting your child, please give the staff a note of authorisation, or telephone through the details. Once signed out, children are to remain with parents until they leave the school grounds. Never leave your child unattended in the Pre-Prep room.

If you find on arrival at the Pre-Prep room the Pre-Prep group is not in their classroom (perhaps in another area of the Primary School), you must either escort your child to their class or wait with them in the Pre-Prep room until the class returns. Under no circumstances are children to be left alone or to walk unattended. Staff will not allow a child to go home with a parent/ guardian in contravention of a court order. Please inform staff if your child will be attending Outside School Hours Care. If your child is affected by a court order, please make sure the Head of Primary has a copy of the document at the time of enrolment or when it is issued by the courts.

A parent/guardian (over 18 years of age) must sign their child in on arrival and out on departure from the Advent Centre.

The National Quality Framework outlines that staff in the Pre-Prep centre cannot, for safety reasons, release your child to anyone that has not been prearranged without your consent. If an emergency should occur and you or anyone on your emergency contact list is unable to collect your child, there is provision for a parent of the child to make phone arrangements directly with a staff member of Pre-Prep. A staff member of Pre-Prep will then record the name of the person collecting your child and check their identification when they arrive. No one else may come to the Pre-Prep centre and inform the staff that they have the authority to collect your child.

Home visits and pop in day

Optional home visits and schedule drop in will occur in January. More detailed information regarding these events will be sent out during the Christmas holidays.

Car parking

Pre-Prep parking signs need to be visibly displayed when parking in the Pre-Prep parking bays.

There are four parking bays that are allocated to Pre-Prep parents for drop off and pick up for a **maximum of 10 minutes**. If you need to stay longer in the centre, please make an appointment time or park outside the school grounds.

Please only park in parking bays. Please do not park in front of other cars.

If a vehicle is parked in the Pre-Prep carpark, please notify the staff so they are able to follow up.

Please be aware that you are not permitted to drive up to the chapel. The area beside the chapel is the parking area for the school buses and cars so there are vehicles constantly coming and going. For everyone's safety, please use the pedestrian crossing at the mosaic Pre-Prep sign if you wish to enter the primary school.

As we have many extended family members such as grandparents who collect children, **please ensure that they are also aware of our parking policy.**

Holidays

As part of St Margaret's Anglican Girls School, Pre-Prep has the same holidays as school. A St Margaret's calendar containing these dates is provided to each family at the start of the academic year. Term dates are also posted on the Pre-Prep Notice Board and are available on The POD.

Outside School Hours Care

St Margaret's Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) offers high quality before and after school care as well as a vacation care program for school-aged children including Pre-Prep children.

Before School Care hours – 7:00am-8:15am – Breakfast will be served between 7:15am and 7:45am

After School Care hours – 2:45pm-6:00pm – Afternoon tea is served
Vacation Care (subject to numbers) – 8:00am-6:00pm

How do I make a booking or find out further information? If you would like further information regarding the Outside School Hours Care program or if you would like to make a booking, feel free to contact the coordinator on 0423 547 653 or email oshc@stmargates.qld.edu.au. Please note we are unable to accept your booking without a completed enrolment and Ezidebit form. These can be obtained by emailing oshc@stmargarets.qld.edu.au.

Please note, your child is eligible to enrol in this service from enrolment.

Absences

If your child is unable to attend Pre-Prep due to illness or some other reason, it is school policy that you inform the Pre-Prep Office of their absence by phoning 3862 0720 or emailing a member of the Pre-Prep staff. St Margaret's Pre-Prep does not offer replacement days for absence due to illness, family holidays or school closure days.

Starting your child at St Margaret's Pre-Prep

Medication

If a child has to take medicine during their time at Pre-Prep, written authorisation from the parent/ guardian must be completed. Parents are asked to make their way to the school nurse, where they will be required to confirm with the nurse before medication can be administered.

The medicine must be sent in from home as no medicine is kept on site. The container must bear the original label with the child's name, dosage instructions and time it needs to be administered. The nurse requires the names of the people who may be contacted in the event of a child becoming ill during the day. Any medicine administered to your child is recorded on your child's profile online and must be signed by the child's parent/ guardian. Medication must be handed directly to the nurse by the parent/ guardian.

Uniform

All children attending St Margaret's Pre-Prep are required to wear a navy-blue polo shirt, navy blue shorts, Pre-Prep sunhat, Pre-Prep tracksuit, sand shoes (no laces)/sandals and a small St Margaret's backpack.

Please ensure that the backpack is large enough to hold spare clothes, library bag, and a lunch box and water bottle.

All uniform items (except for the footwear) are available at St Margaret's Supplies Shop which is open Monday – Friday 8.00am – 2.00pm, except for Wednesday (10.00am – 5.00pm).

Equipment list

- School bag (attach a distinctive charm or key ring to the bag to help your child easily identify it)
- Bottom sheet
- Single top sheet
- Drawstring bag to store sheets
- Change of clothes, including underwear, to be kept in school bag (does not need to be the uniform)
- Spare hat
- Sunscreen
- Water bottle to come to school each day
- Library bag
- Lunch box
- Raincoat
- Gumboots

All items must be clearly labelled with your child's name. In addition, a complete set of clothes, including underwear, must be available at the centre for use in emergencies. This does not have to be uniform items, just appropriate play clothes.

Parents are requested to apply sunscreen to their child before arriving at the centre and complete the Sunscreen Register when signing in. Sunscreen is available in each room and will be applied to the child before they go outside to play. All children must wear a school play hat when they are engaging in outside activities. Any child without a hat will need to take part in activities in the undercover area next to the classroom or wear a spare hat available from the centre.

Stationery and books

You are required to purchase a small number of stationary items for your child prior to starting Pre-Prep. The Pre-Prep booklist is located on the School website and can be ordered through Sequel. You are not required to label any books or stationery in Pre-Prep as all items are pooled and then shared amongst the class.



Educational program and practice



St Margaret's Pre-Prep curriculum can be best described as a child-centred approach balanced with structured inquiry learning into literacy and numeracy development. St Margaret's Pre-Prep program is inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy and based on the principles outlined in the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines (QKLG).

Educational program and practice

Each child is viewed as competent, capable and co-constructors of knowledge. Their strengths, interests, and perceived needs are the focus of the educator's observations which are in turn used for curriculum planning. The program is collaboratively put together with our community, specialist staff, families, and children to prepare the learning environment and resources to facilitate individual and group learning experiences. Experiences are frequently child-initiated and child-directed with the educators as the facilitator of the learning by providing open-ended questions, resources, and support when necessary so that the child can comfortably construct and re-construct the world around them.

St Margaret's Pre-Prep is situated on the primary school campus of St Margaret's Anglican Girls School. Our location provides us with the unique opportunity to participate with the whole school community as well as have access to additional facilities from which children and families benefit. These occasions build strong partnerships between families, educators, and the wider school community.

The following is a sample daily schedule of a typical day in Pre-Prep. Our weekly program is flexible and consists of a broad range of learning experiences such as:

- Whole group mat time (pre-literacy and pre-numeracy focus)
- Indoor activities
- Extended project activities
- Child centred play activities
- Outdoor play – spontaneous and structured
- Gross and fine motor activities
- Music
- Language/drama
- Arts and crafts
- Library
- Health and physical development
- STEM (Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics)
- Religious and values education
- Cooking

This changes regularly due to learning opportunities that may present themselves through play, exploration, and experiences from home. We value children's thinking time and play and aim to provide periods of uninterrupted play.

Children engage in a range of early literacy and numeracy activities through intentional and explicit teaching strategies leading to hands-on experiences, play and trial and error. Educators identify opportunities to challenge, collaborate, encourage and explain literacy and numeracy concepts.

Pre-literacy development

Experiences in the early years provide fundamental building blocks in the promotion of reading competency. The following skills are nurtured in Pre-Prep to assist the child on the pathway to becoming a confident and motivated reader.

- Concentration: through the use of short progressive activities that stimulate the mind and allow the time to develop the skills to focus, forever increasing longer periods of time e.g. threading beads/puzzles.
- Language/Speaking and Writing: using appropriate and

correct words; allowing the child the freedom to speak; writing signs and symbols.

- Confidence/self-esteem/motivation: through sharing news; Show and Tell; and asking open-ended questions; drama and music opportunities in a supportive environment also help to promote risk taking and the children learn to value all levels of participation.
- Songs/rhymes/stories/games: children love to learn through repetition, rhymes and chanting. Stories are read and told to the children using a variety of sources including books and pictures. Pictures allow the adult to ask questions and encourage the child to create the story. They can also assist in the promotion of comprehension skills as the child can sequence the story via the manipulation of the pictures. Other tasks used to support language developments include pairing, finding opposites and memory activities.
- Listening skills: to learn a new language we all need the ability to listen. To develop these skills the children play a range of games including, whispering, following directions of more than one step and positional language, e.g. hide the object under the..., beside the

Phonological and phonemic awareness activities are embedded into our literacy program. The ability to hear, identify and manipulate individual speech sounds is the aim of these activities in preparation for learning to read. Heggerty's is a tool used in the teaching of phonological and phonemic awareness in Pre-Prep and throughout primary school. The 44 speech sounds of spoken English and their associated spelling choices are represented on the Heggerty's which the children will be introduced to in Pre-Prep.

Pre-numeracy development

There is far more to mathematics than numbers and sums. It is an important language that helps us to explore, describe and explain the world in which we live. Therefore, during the Pre-Prep year, educators aim to develop the children's ability to think about numbers and to raise their awareness of mathematical concepts through the manipulation of concrete materials.

Please remember that pre-mathematics is philosophically underpinned by the belief that learning is best supported with a hands-on approach.

Social and emotional development

Often, we think of school readiness as describing a concrete set of cognitive and academic skills. Research has shown that for the very young child, social/emotional skills, i.e., the ability to listen, communicate, and form relationships with others, are crucial for supporting the development of academic competency. Well-developed social and emotional skills provide children with the solid base they need to become proficient in more traditional areas of school readiness, like literacy and numeracy. As with cognitive functioning and fine motor development, children are at different stages of development in their social and emotional maturity when they begin Pre-Prep. Significant growth in this area is evident during the year and it prepares the children for the challenges that the Prep year presents.

Fine and gross motor development

Children often write before they can read, therefore it is very important for them to be assisted to develop their fine motor control and a pincer grip. Threading and craft activities, tracing and cutting all help in the promotion of hand/eye coordination, concentration, strength, and control and therefore are included in the daily Pre-Prep program.

Helping a child to write and recognise their name is an important step in promoting independence. For the children to understand formal writing and so as not to confuse the concept of upper and lower case, it is important that the child is encouraged to use lower case letters only except for the first letter of their name.

Specialist lessons are provided to the Pre-Prep children to enrich the daily program.

Health and Physical Education

The Pre-Prep Health and Physical Education program endeavours to promote engagement in physical activity, develop enthusiasm for movement and enhance gross motor skills.

Throughout the year the children will engage in a Fundamental Movement Skills unit that provides exposure to a wide variety of athletics, dance, ball skills and games in an effort to build physical literacy, movement confidence and team awareness. Learning experiences will involve:

- walking, running, galloping, skipping, hopping and leaping
- expressive movement and dance
- large and small ball handling including rolling, tracking, scooping, throwing, catching, passing, shooting and dribbling
- ball skills involving the feet and striking implements such as mini tennis racquets and small cricket bats
- skipping with ropes
- co-operative activities and games that incorporate the capacities listed above
- a ton of fun along the way!

Parents may wish to consider enrolling their child in swimming lessons (outside of school hours) provided all year round by our St Margaret's Aquatic Centre; please contact (07) 3862 0754 for more information.

Language

In the language program in Pre-Prep, students will engage in short conversational phrases, counting, colours, food, body parts and other common vocabulary words. This is taught through a range of songs, games, gestures, storytelling and movement.

Pre-Prep language lessons are also supported through educational iPad apps and other consolidation activities.

Studies suggest that learning a language at a young age is beneficial for students' cognitive development and can improve problem-solving skills and creativity.

STEM

In our rapidly changing world, STEM skills have become increasingly important. St Margaret's believes that its students should be provided opportunities to develop these skills from an early age. Therefore, students in Pre-Prep visit the purpose-built makerspace in the primary school, the Atelier, for weekly

STEM lessons. Lessons encourage students to raise questions and explore their interests. In this play-based environment, students are familiarised with scientific processes and are introduced to early coding and programming using different robotic devices.

Music

The preparatory music program endeavours to enhance and develop listening skills, keeping in time with the music and using the singing voice to engage in lessons and encourage a love and appreciation for a variety of music from around the world.

Lessons and learning experiences are delivered twice a week for 45 minutes and have a sequential approach using Kodaly, Orff and Dalcroze with links to curriculum being covered in the classroom.

Pre-Prep overview

- Music analysis and elements – Tempo: fast/slow/reaction Dynamics: Loud/soft Pitch: high/low
- Beat: perform, walk, point, and play the beat on instruments
- Rhythm: read, perform, improvise, and echo simple rhythmic patterns
- Melodic: sing and identify high and low pitches in the environment, pitched instruments and voices; play along to songs using percussion instruments
- Intune singing: echo teacher patterns, confidently sing songs and melodic patterns in-tune
- Listen to and learn a range of songs including Chapel Songs, Indigenous music and music from different cultures, songs that integrate with classroom themes and curriculum
- Classical and orchestral pieces to listen to and identify different music elements including duration, pitch, expressive devices such as dynamics, form tone, texture, and style
- Introduction to different instrument families – string, percussion, woodwind, brass

By the end of Pre-Prep, students communicate about the music they listen to, create, and perform and where and why people make music. Students improvise, compose, and perform music while developing literacy skills. They demonstrate aural skills by staying in tune, keeping in time when they sing and play and identifying a range of music elements using Italian music terms.

The students work towards preparing and performing at the end of year Pre-Prep Final Chapel Service where they sing a variety of themed songs with movement to their parents and teachers, which is always a highlight.

Home learning

Throughout the school year, the Pre-Prep children and families will have the opportunity to engage with additional educational resources provided by the school. These home learning packs are designed to build your child's participation in learning, enhance their confidence and encourage responsibility for resources.

Commencing in Term 1, families and children will have the opportunity to participate in our playdough club. The purpose of playdough club is to develop your child's fine motor skills. By using playdough in a variety of tasks and activities, children

Educational program and practice

will develop strong, flexible fingers, hands and arms. In addition, playdough club promotes better hand-eye coordination, differentiated movement and manual dexterity.

During Terms 2 and 3, it will be arranged for your child to complete a variety of literacy and numeracy pre-skill tasks at home with some assistance. In addition, your child's learning interest may also be employed as stimulation for home learning tasks.

Other home learning opportunities available for your child consist of educational applications including IXL and Khan Mappers. Credentials for these resources will become available to you and your child from Term 1.

Excursion/incursions

Excursions and incursions are part of our educational program. Upon enrolment, you will be asked to give permission for your child to go on excursions or attend incursions.

There are clear guidelines and procedures that include:

- consultation with the Principal to obtain approval
- arranging organisational details
- permission notes
- the adult/child ratio is 1:4 on all excursions.

Assessment of learning

- Term 1 – Parent/teacher interview
- Term 2 – Mid-semester reports
- Term 4 – Parent/teacher interview for transition statement

Each child's portfolio is kept on Story Park, with printable copies available upon request. Your child's portfolio is a wonderful tool for families to use to discuss your child's learning. The portfolio holds samples of your child's learning that are linked to the *Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines* and *Early Years Learning Framework*.

Printed portfolios, are clearly labelled for your convenience. There are times when families and educators come together to share portfolios. However, educators are always available to discuss portfolios with families.

Meals

The centre promotes that nutritional food and drink is offered to children frequently and at appropriate intervals. Parents are asked to provide morning tea, lunch and a full water bottle each day for their child. Meals can be packed in a lunch box made at home or tuckshop facilities are available for Pre-Prep children via flexi schools.

As we encourage independence in all aspects of your child's day, please pack their lunch in a manner that will allow them to access the food without any undue stress. To support our sustainable practices, we suggest complying with the 'nude' food initiative by packing foods in reusable containers or providing unpackaged foods.

The centre will ensure that perishable foods are stored under refrigeration. Additionally, staff are unable to re-heat or cook hot food for the child.

Several suggestions for lunch box ideas are available in brochures at the centre. Feel free to take one at any time. A full copy of the centre's Nutrition Policy is available upon request or from the Parent Information Folder found near the exit of the Advent Centre.

Rest

The centre ensures supervised opportunities for sleep, rest and relaxation are provided to meet the individual needs of each child in alignment with the national licensing standards. Between 1-2pm children are provided a designated rest period which allows for children to reflect and gather their strength for the remainder of the school day. During this time, a qualified staff member will work alongside another St Margaret's staff member to settle the children with quiet music, taped stories, or a staff member may read stories to the children. Rest and relaxation time is an integral and valuable part of the program. Although, some children may not need to sleep, all children are required to have some quiet time. A rest mat is provided to each child and parents are requested to supply a fitted single-bed size sheet, top sheet, and small pillow all secured in a small bag. Bed linen is sent home each Friday to be washed or if wet or soiled.

As the children get older and the year progresses, the rest and relaxation period may change. These changes are communicated to parents by the Pre-Prep staff, however, children will continue to have the right and opportunity to request a sleep mat to rest or sleep. Please note that the name of the staff member supervising the children during this time will be displayed on the Pre-Prep notice board as part of the weekly roster.

Toileting

It is a requirement that all children in Pre-Prep are toileting independently. When children are at the toilet, staff maintain a high level of supervision. A regular routine for toileting and hand washing occurs before mealtimes. The children are also encouraged to use the toilet whenever the need arises. Staff will ensure that the dignity and rights of each child are always respected.

Bathroom routines and hygiene breaks are built into the day. Toileting and hand washing is required before meals and rest time as well as after outside playtime.

Birthday and cultural celebrations

Birthdays are a special time that we enjoy celebrating in Pre-Prep. Families are welcome to bring into the centre either individual cupcakes or icy poles to share with your child's school friends. As we encourage healthy choices, we ask that no lollies or lolly products are provided.

Where possible, we ask families to make contact prior to any special occasion to ensure that we can cater for any additional allergy or dietary requirements that may be present in our classroom. We enjoy celebrating with your child at 2pm prior to collection.

Treasures from home

While we do not wish to dampen children's enthusiasm, we would appreciate it if toys brought from home were limited to those received on special occasions or shared during show and share. Treasures can be lost and broken so it is best to leave them at home. Your child is encouraged to bring any type of interesting specimen or object - rocks, shells, flowers, or animals - to enrich the program. If your child needs the 'security' of a familiar and much-loved object, e.g., blanket, sheepskin, soft toy, these are of course welcome at the beginning of the year to assist your child to settle into their new environment. Your child will be encouraged to put these 'treasures' in safe places when not needed.

Supporting and guiding behaviours

The image of the child as competent, independent, and capable allows the educators to support the children to construct and learn together during conflicts. Supporting children to develop socially acceptable behaviour and self-regulation is a primary goal for educators and families. This is embedded in fundamental documents including the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), The Education and Care Services National Regulations and the National Quality Standard (NQS).

Educators, children and families co-construct classroom rules and guidelines that respect everyone and everything and promote intrinsic learning and behaviour. Educators and families remind the children of these respectful expectations.

Educators gently and quietly talk with the children involved in a problem situation. Children are supported to use 'their words' to solve problems and to construct new understandings surrounding such situations. Usually once each child has been able to express their feelings, an amicable agreement is reached.

Educators will not intervene in conflicts until enough time has been given to the children to solve their problem. We have found that children develop the confidence to express themselves in situations because we value and model our image of the child that they are capable and competent.

Educators and families work on developing and supporting social skills to enhance communication.

We foster children's sense of belonging to help them explore themselves and have successful relationships with others. The children see that school and home are connected and it gives them a greater sense of belonging.

Parent/Guardian participation

We value partnerships between parents and educators and welcome active parent participation and encourage families to be actively involved. Some of the ways in which you can support us may take the form of:

- contributing ideas for our program
- planning to share some special event with us, e.g., the arrival of a new baby
- sewing and mending dolls clothes, dress up clothes
- bringing scrap materials/boxes or any other recyclable material from home or work for the children's use in play
- sharing a skill or talent e.g., music, language, cooking
- assisting with excursions
- joining the P&F Association
- attending classroom events
- becoming a class representative

The centre values all suggestions and feedback that may improve the curriculum and facilitate the centre's development. A suggestion box is located in the sign out area. Questionnaires and feedback forms are also circulated throughout the year. The centre appreciates the time and effort parents provide in assisting in the centre's future development. Parents/guardians can ask for information about the following:

- a general description of the activities and experiences given by the centre
- services philosophy about learning and child development, outcomes and how it is intended the outcomes will be achieved
- the goals about knowledge and skills to be developed through the activities and experiences provided by the centre.



Educational program and practice

Communication

The school's weekly eNews, is also used to communicate upcoming events in the centre. Each week, a centre newsletter will be issued to parents via the Pre-Prep POD page.

Please keep the teacher informed of any change in your home/work phone number, doctor and/or additional contacts' phone numbers.

Parents are encouraged to speak with their child's teacher about their child's progress, or any concerns they may have. Open communication between parents and staff is an essential component of our program and facilitates positive home/centre relationships based on trust and cooperation. Information about the curriculum and program is shared regularly through a number of ways that may include:

- individual parent/teacher meetings
- sharing of documentation/individual children's portfolios
- StoryPark app.

Please remember that you hold the most important role in your child's education. We invite you to remain in contact with teachers, other parents, and school administrators and to share your experiences, ideas and concerns

eNews

The eNews is emailed weekly and contains information and articles relevant to St Margaret's Primary and Secondary School.

Primary parent information evening

The Primary Parent Information Evening held on February 2, 2022 provides an opportunity to hear about the Primary School focus, to visit your child's classroom, to meet the class teacher, and to choose from one of the workshops on offer.

Class parent representatives and classroom helpers

Information about registering interest for classroom helper and class parent representative positions will be sent out with the Parent Handbook early in 2022.

Noticeboard

The weekly program of inquiry play is available on the parent noticeboard, located near the entry to the Advent Centre, as well as posted on our StoryPark app. Available on the noticeboard is additional pictorial views of how your child is participating in the National Quality Areas.

New parents' morning tea

Shortly after Term 1 commences you will receive an invitation to attend the new parents morning tea with all the new primary families. More information to follow.

Parent concerns

The first step in this process involves parents raising any concerns they may have regarding their child's care with the Pre-Prep Early Years Teacher. If parents still feel the issue has not been resolved, they are then encouraged to make an appointment with the Head of Primary School. The staff at St Margaret's Pre-Prep are committed to discussing, appropriately responding, and informing parents/guardians of outcomes on all issues.

Immediate concerns or complaints need to be brought to the attention of the Head of Primary School as soon as possible, so appropriate action can be taken. All concerns will be dealt with in a confidential manner. Please refer to the Complaints Form in the Pre-Prep Policy Folder for more information



Pre-Prep policies and procedures



Pre-Prep policies and procedures

Confidentiality of children's records

St Margaret's Pre-Prep is committed to protecting your privacy and abides by the National Privacy Principles contained within the Privacy Act. It is important for Pre-Prep to collect relevant personal information from parents for enrolment purposes and for staff to maintain records of each child's individual development. This information may be of a personal nature and some of it may be considered 'sensitive'. To ensure your personal information is not disclosed to others, all kindergarten records are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Pre-Prep Office. Please refer to the Pre-Prep Confidentiality Policy document.

Anti-bias and inclusion policies

St Margaret's Pre-Prep recognises that Australia is a multicultural society composed of people from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds. Pre-Prep recognises the impact culture plays on families, staff and the community and makes every effort to provide an educational facility that is sensitive to the needs of different cultures. It also aims to foster within each child an awareness and acceptance of other cultures by:

- Recognising the beauty, value, and contribution of every child
- Acknowledging the child's home culture
- Involving parents in the program
- Fostering self-esteem
- Teaching children about different cultures
- Exploring differences and similarities between cultures
- Helping children learn from each other through play
- Developing an awareness of how to operate in a democratic learning community
- Encouraging children to retain their first language

For further information, please refer to The Anti Bias and Inclusion Policy,

Child safety

As part of St Margaret's commitment to protect children at all times, active measures have been put in place to identify cases of child abuse or neglect. The school will establish and maintain records that can then be passed on to the appropriate authorities when necessary. Where abuse or neglect has occurred, or is suspected to have occurred, the school will respond in a manner that aims to keep children safe and one that is legislatively sound. Please refer to the Pre-Prep Child Protection Policy.

Incidence/emergencies

In the event of a minor incident, first aid will be administered by staff and recorded on the St Margaret's Pre-Prep Accident and Incident Report form. If a more serious incident occurs, parents will be contacted immediately. Please ensure Pre-Prep has current telephone numbers including numbers for each child's emergency contact person. In emergency situations, should the person in charge of Pre-Prep determine the injuries are serious, an ambulance will be called.

Evacuation procedures

Regular evacuation drills are necessary for regulation purposes. Emergency evacuation plans are displayed in the Advent Centre

inside the front door. Staff are familiar with evacuation procedures and policies. Parents and visitors to the classroom will be asked to make themselves aware of the evacuation plan and where first aid equipment is kept because if they are present during an evacuation drill, they are required by law to participate. In the case of an unforeseen emergency, every effort will be made to contact parents to collect their child.

It is the aim of staff to make evacuation procedures enjoyable rather than stressful events for the children. Regular rehearsal of emergency procedures gives the children an opportunity to become familiar with the routine and planned evacuation.

Sun protection

As a member of the Cancer Council's SunSmart Shade Initiative, the Pre-Prep children will be encouraged to apply sunscreen, under teacher guidance, before outdoor play. All children and teachers must wear hats during any activity or play based outdoors.

Please refer to the Pre-Prep Sun Safety Policy.

Visitor and parent volunteers

Visitors and parent volunteers, university students and childcare students are welcome at Pre-Prep but must adhere to the St Margaret's Pre-Prep philosophy. Volunteers will always work under the guidance of trained staff. All students and trainees are required to hold a Suitability Card issued by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian and complete our online volunteer register and code of conduct registration.

Please refer to the Kindergarten Volunteer and Student Policy.

Prevention of infection and hygiene practices

Hygiene Practices

There are a number of procedures that are followed to minimise infection and the spread of germs within the centre. Hand wash and paper towels are available in bathroom areas. Hand washing is monitored closely before food is eaten at mealtimes. All food storage and preparation practices are closely monitored to help minimise contamination.

Staff wear disposable gloves when preparing food or attending to a sick or injured child.

Dental Hygiene

Your child's teeth are important. Children do not have the skill to use a toothbrush properly until they are about eight years old. Until they reach this age, their teeth should be brushed by an adult at least once a day (as well as once by the child).

Please refer to the Kindergarten Dental Health Policy.

Infection and Disease

Some medical conditions require children to be excluded from school or childcare to prevent the spread of infectious diseases among other children and staff, as well as the broader community. Minimum exclusion times are recommended under the Public Health Act 2005 (<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/publichealthact/>). Some conditions may require clearance by your doctor or local public health unit before returning to school or childcare. More information as well as a list of infectious diseases requiring exclusion are listed on our Pre-Prep POD page under Quality Area 2.





St Margaret's



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