The Adventure Begins...

Starting Prep at Leongatha Primary School

2017
Starting School

Starting school is an exciting and happy time for parents and students. The children have heard and talked about school at kindergarten and have had several opportunities to visit Leongatha Primary School. Now it is finally their time to start!

We would like to join with you in making your child’s transition to school as smooth as possible. The staff at Leongatha Primary School will work hard to ensure that your child receives the best educational opportunities.

Included in this booklet is a lot of information that you will need to know about starting Prep at Leongatha Primary School. We want you to have lots of tips to make it an enjoyable start for everyone.

The transition to school requires children to learn many new skills and can bring a lot of exciting changes to their life. This will include:

- first steps to independence
- separation from home
- new feelings
- new friends
- new experiences
- new setting
- new routines

We will work closely with you to make sure you and your child feel comfortable with these changes.
Term Dates For 2017

Term 1:
Student's start on:
Tuesday 31st January to Friday 31st March

Term 2:
Tuesday 18th April to Friday 30th June

Term 3:
Monday 17th July to Friday 22nd September

Term 4:
Monday 9th October to Friday 22nd December

Special Times for Preps

After consultation with many parents, we have developed the following special set of times for Term 1, 2017. Children will have their snack and lunch at school within these times.

FIRST DAY
Tuesday 31st January - START 9:00am-1:00pm
Wednesday 1st February 8:45am-1:00pm
Thursday 2nd & Friday 3rd February 8:45am-3:15pm

FOLLOWING 5 WEEKS
Full days: 8:45am-3:15pm
PLEASE NOTE: Preps will not attend school on Wednesdays for the following five weeks:
Wednesday 8th, 15th, 22nd Feb and 1st & 8th March.

FIRST FULL WEEK
Tuesday 14th March 8:45am-3:15pm

Public holiday – Monday 13th March
NO SCHOOL
The First Day

It is natural if your child has some fears about starting school. Parents may even find the first day very hard, be positive and happy about your child starting school and they will be too. Talk to them about all the exciting things to look forward to including new friends, games, great books, friendly teachers and fun. Don’t forget to draw on the experiences they have already had on their orientation days.

A lot of children’s anxiety comes from their parents. Think about the way you word things. Instead of telling them “I’m going to miss you so much” say, “You are so lucky to be going to school. You will have the best time.”

Preps will commence school at 9.00am on the first day. Please wait outside the Prep building until the Prep teachers open the door and invite you in. Please proceed to your Prep classroom and help your child unpack their bag. You will need to help them put their name tag on, put their drink bottle in the drink bottle tub, put their named art smock and library bag in the appropriate tubs and then find their locker with their name on it and put their bag in there. Then, please leave your child at an activity with the teacher in a relaxed and confident manner. Say a cheerful farewell after reassuring him/her that you will be back at 1.00pm. Then, if you like, you can make your way to the staff room where you can enjoy a tea or coffee and a chat with other parents.

First Day Reminders

Starting time is 9:00am for the FIRST DAY ONLY.

Children should be dressed in LPS uniform.
Children will need to bring with them:

1. An LPS hat. It is compulsory to wear a Sun Smart legionnaires or wide brimmed hat in Term 1 & 4.
2. A bag 30cm x 40cm with drawstring - for library. Bags of this size will hold the largest picture book and will help to protect the books.
3. Lunch and morning snack in containers.
4. Water in a plastic bottle - no glass bottles or cans please.
5. Spare set of underwear, socks, pants/shorts and t-shirt to be left in school bag for an emergency (toilet accidents, slips & spills).
6. Art Smock: Every child needs an art smock, which needs to be roomy. An adult’s old shirt with the sleeves cut to size and elasticised, with the child’s name on the back in texta, is cheap and ideal. Art Smocks will be kept at school and sent home periodically for cleaning.

Please ensure all items are CLEARLY LABELLED.
The Developmental Curriculum at Leongatha Primary School

In 2008, Leongatha Primary School implemented a Developmental Curriculum, which stemmed from the recognition of the need to give our children the opportunity to develop their oral language skills, to engage all children, particularly the boys, in their early learning and to extend their social skills and motivation to learn.

The Developmental Curriculum places emphasis on the child's oral language, cognitive, physical, social and emotional development.

The program:
• places the child at the centre of the curriculum.
• encourages active engagement by all children.
• provides children with opportunities to explore processes rather than just end products, understanding that mistakes are part of learning.

Teachers are integral in this process and must direct, scaffold, extend and interact with children in order to ensure that they are actively engaged. The teachers in the Prep Team are committed to providing all children with the opportunity to succeed to the best of their ability. We understand and respect that all children are different and learn in a variety of ways.

Each day will begin with the first hour and a half devoted to investigations. These investigations will stem from activities and ideas presented by the teacher and/or from the students' own interests. The rest of the day will be devoted to the teaching of Reading, Writing, Mathematics and specialist classes.

In addition to this curriculum, we concentrate on developing social and personal skills necessary in life. For example, we encourage independence, self-discipline and respect for others. We support children to build their confidence and develop high self-esteem.

Specialist Classes at LPS
• Physical Education.
• Music.
• Art.
• Languages. (Mandarin)
Developmental Domains

Our Prep program this year aims to give children the opportunity to grow in each of the Developmental Domains. Below is a brief description of each of these areas.

Social Domain
- Accepting others.
- Working in groups.
- Making friends.
- Seeking help.
- Getting along.

Emotional Domain
- Confidence.
- Independence.
- Responsibility.
- Decision making.
- Resilience.

Physical Domain
- Use classroom equipment safely.
- Play safely inside/outside.
- Develop fine motor skills.
- Develop gross motor skills.

Cognitive Domain
- Creative thinking.
- Following instructions.
- Extending ideas for Investigations.
- Problem solving.

Language Domain
- Communicate effectively with others.
- Clarity in speech.
- Asking questions.
- Express feelings, needs and wants.
Things To Know about LPS

Health/Welfare

• At first your child will find school very tiring. Therefore, they will need plenty of rest.
• In times of sickness your child needs to be home to allow a speedy recovery and to prevent further spread of illness. You are required to lodge your child’s absence on Compass.
• Unfortunately all schools experience spates of head lice. Please regularly check your child’s head for any signs of eggs/lice. Keeping head lice under control requires everyone to play their part. Please notify your child’s teacher if you find lice/eggs on your child. If your child has head lice, they are not allowed at school until they have been treated.
• Child security at school:
  o Children are supervised by teachers between 8.30am and 3:50pm.
  o If you wish to collect your child during the course of the day, please call in at the office to complete our sign out procedures.
• Preps should be accompanied to and from school by a responsible adult rather than an older sibling.
• All visitors to the school, including parent helpers, need to sign in and wear a visitor’s lanyard (each building has a sign in book and their own lanyards).

Punctuality

Parents are requested to drop off and collect their children on time from the area outside the Prep building. In the morning, students enter the building when the bell sounds. In the afternoon, teachers will bring the students out the front of the building and stay with them until someone has picked them up.
The morning bell goes at 8:45am. If late, the children miss out on important tuning in and preparation for the day ahead. It also causes children great distress and creates unnecessary anxieties about coming to school.
The home time bell goes at 3:15pm. If you are going to be late, please let your classroom teacher know.
Transport

We realise many children travel to school on buses. We would, however, like Prep children to be brought to school and collected by parents/carers until week six of Term 1. When you feel your child is ready to go on the bus, please contact your classroom teacher to let them know when they will be catching the bus. Country bus travellers need to fill in the appropriate forms, which are included in the enrolment pack. Town bus travellers need to contact the bus service, Winterhalter Bus lines, directly on 5655 1145, to organise pick up. Please make sure your child knows their bus number.
Each country bus traveller will be given a bus buddy by the school to help them walk down to their bus stop and walk up to the Prep building. Town bus travellers will have to organise their own.
For any queries regarding buses or to arrange a bus buddy for Country Bus travellers, please contact the school’s Bus Co-Ordinator: Liz Blain on 5667 4600.

Clothing

We expect children to be dressed in the appropriate LPS uniform. Our school colours are green and white, with a yellow emblem. Our uniform is now available to purchase online from Buxwear. [http://shop/buxwear.com.au](http://shop/buxwear.com.au)
You can also purchase plain green pieces of clothing from Target or visit the local op shop and pick up a second hand uniform.

Students can wear any type of comfortable footwear, as long as their toes are covered when outdoors and they are suitable for all activities e.g. Physical Education.
Students are required to remove their shoes when entering a building, so please make sure their shoes are easy to take on and off.
Please make sure children can do up their own shoelaces, as teachers do not have time to help 20 children several times a day. The best option is to have Velcro instead of laces. The Preps have shoe racks outside their building and a special shelf for each grade.

Our Sunsmart Policy requires compulsory wearing of school hats in Terms 1 & 4. The students wear a wide brimmed green hat. These can be purchased from Nicks, Target and Buxwear.
Meals

Children will become hungry at school and therefore require substantial and healthy meals. They have three food breaks throughout the day. Recess is at 10:30am. Some ideas for snacks you can include are fruit cut into manageable pieces, dried fruit, muesli bars, or a small cupcake/muffin. Lunch is at 12:50pm. Some ideas for lunch are a sandwich, roll, wrap, biscuits and cheese, vegies, etc.

Every day the Preps have ‘fruit time’. Children are allowed to eat fresh fruit or vegetables in this time. Food needs to be packed in a practical way, which will make it easy for your child to handle. All containers (top and bottom) need to be clearly labelled, so we can return any items that are lost. A drink bottle (with water) is vital each day, but especially during hot weather. Children need to stay hydrated and are permitted to drink in the classroom during the day.

Please be wary of how much food you pack as some students can feel they have to eat everything you place in their lunch box.

Also, please have regular conversations about the food you place in your child’s lunch box. Check if they like the food you are putting in there. The teachers ask the students to put all unfinished or disliked food back into their lunch box so you know how much they have eaten.

Alternatively, food can be purchased through the school canteen every day. However, we suggest that Preps bring lunch from home for the first five weeks, rather than use the canteen service. If getting a lunch order, students are to write their name, grade and food order on an envelope and place it in their classroom basket with money included. Lunch orders will then be picked up at lunchtime by a classroom monitor. Snacks can also be purchased directly from the canteen without the need for students to place an order in the basket. We highly recommend Preps not purchasing icy poles at recess, as they do not have enough time to finish it. For a canteen price list please visit the school’s website. www.leongathaps.vic.edu.au
For health and hygiene reasons we encourage you to support our policy that children do not share food or drink. This is vitally important for the children who have severe allergies and reactions to certain foods.

Please note: We are NOT a nut free school.
Money

Most payments can now be made online on Compass. However, at times money will need to be brought to school. Please ensure that money is sealed in an envelope and clearly marked with your child's name and grade and given to the teacher on arrival at school. Please do not send children with loose money. Money for lunch orders needs to be in a clearly labelled envelope. Teachers will not be held responsible for lost money. Bus money for the Town buses, should also be kept in a safe envelope or wallet.

Contacting Your Classroom Teacher

At times, you will need to contact your teacher to discuss important information, concerns or queries. The best way to contact classroom teachers is via email. The mornings are very hectic. It is hard to talk to parents when the teachers are busy trying to help the students unpack and get ready for "Tuning In". You will find your classroom teacher's email on Compass. The teachers are on their emails every day (Monday-Friday).

A regular Prep and school newsletter is also emailed out to parents once a week to keep you updated with what is happening in the school.

Parent Helpers

We love having parents and grandparents help out in the classroom. There are several ways you can help:
- reading, listening to and changing books
- helping with reading activities in the classroom
- helping with writing activities in the classroom
- PMP
- School fete
- excursions
- School Council
- LAP
- canteen

A note will come home early in the year to ask if you are able to help.
After School Care

Uniting Care After School Hours Care operates at LPS daily from 3.15pm until 6.15pm and offers a structured and varied program for all children participating. Afternoon tea is included in the normal fee. We believe this service meets a great need in our community.
Should you wish to use this service, please contact the Coordinator.
Phone 5662 5150 for enrolment and further details.
This program is dependent on numbers.

Compass School Manager

Compass School Manager is a whole school administration package. It is used by Leongatha Primary School to streamline many school operations, from attendance, communication to and from teachers, excursion management and student school reports. When your child is enrolled and the system is activated you will be able to log in using your secure password through the school website or later on an App.

As a Parent you have access to ...

My News -
• displays attendance information
• view the grade and school Newsletters
• lets you know of special events and excursions concerning your child

Student Profile -
• Attendance - lets you review your child’s attendance record and allows you to ‘write a note’ for absences
• Student Schedule - allows you to view your child’s schedule/timetable
• Communication - allows you to email your child’s teachers and book parent/teacher interviews
• Reports - past and present school reports issued each semester

Learning Tasks -
• This allows you to view your child’s learning tasks. These are mini reports on how your child is doing in a number of key subjects. These learning tasks occur on a regular basis through the term.
Develop Helpful Habits

Habits that will help at school include:

- **Putting things away;**
  Establishing a regular routine of picking up and putting away helps to develop a sense of responsibility and care for property.

- **Learning to listen;**
  It is vital to listen carefully in order to be able to follow instructions.

- **Listening to others;**
  Communication is dependent upon a two-way flow of information. Therefore, encourage your child to listen to others whilst they are expressing their point of view.

- **Relating to others;**
  Sharing and helping are important skills required for gaining acceptance and friendship.

- **Develop independence;**
  Allow your child to complete small tasks and simple chores.

- **Sticking to a routine;**
  Regular bedtime and meal times contribute to a child’s feeling of security and help to maintain their physical and mental wellbeing.

- **Speaking**
  Encourage your child to speak in a cheerful, confident voice.

Things You Can Do to Help Your Child

- Visit the classroom and share your child’s experiences.
- Show interest in your child’s work.
- Become involved in classroom programs when able to do so.
- Encourage them to share their newly acquired knowledge with family and friends.
- Relate their school experiences to home and community life.
- Recognise that school is a huge and important part of your child’s life and therefore needs to be talked about.
- Be at school on time to save disruptions and embarrassment.
What You Gain From Being Involved

* A better understanding/appreciation of school life - curriculum, programs, organisation, teaching strategies, learning styles.
* Get to know your child’s friends, school staff and other parents.
* Develop strong communication links.
* Your presence can provide your child with increased confidence and support in tackling school tasks.
* A feeling of belonging as an integral part of Leongatha Primary School - YOUR SCHOOL.
Build Confidence

As parents you will realise that coping with periods of separation is a normal, healthy development for your child and something the child must learn to deal with. Parents who stay on at the school watching over the child make the child’s job of adjustment more difficult. In our experience, children who cry on the first day, stop soon after the parent leaves. So even if you are feeling upset too, treat it all as a matter-of-fact, natural happening and leave the child with the teacher. Some parents have asked about the school’s expectations of beginners. We have drawn up a list of considerations, which are important for children just starting school. Please read through them to see if there is anything further that you may be able to do to ensure a happy start for your child. This is most important.

Does your child...

- Know his or her name and address?
- Recognise own name and belongings? (please name all articles)
- Know how to write his or her name?
- Manage toilet routines without assistance?
- Dress and undress unaided?
- Have stories read to him or her regularly?
- Have a supply of good children’s books to enjoy?
- Listen carefully to what you have to say?
- Have the capability to carry out simple instructions?
- Display a willingness to share with others?
- Get enough sleep? (11 hours a day at least) Have a regular bedtime? We recommend that you begin a school bedtime routine 2/3 weeks before school starts, as children need that length of time to get used to a new routine. It is much more difficult to start when school starts.
- Watch too much television? Watch suitable programs?
- Know how or what to do if left alone by older brothers and sisters, or if you’re late?
- Have any physical, emotional or behavioural problems that may impair learning? If this is the case, it’s wise to inform the teacher at the start of your child’s schooling.
- Have the opportunity to talk to you? Your child should also be able to wait for a turn to speak.