



The **adventure** begins...



Starting Prep at Leongatha Primary School 2021

BE A LEARNER

BE RESPECTFUL

BE RESILIENT

Welcome to Leongatha Primary School in 2021



WELCOME TO OUR FANTASTIC SCHOOL!

Leongatha Primary School is a dynamic school that strives to provide the best possible learning opportunities for our students. We provide an inclusive, respectful, caring and creative environment for students, teachers, parents and the wider community.

As you enter our school you are met by our school vision and values and a friendly atmosphere that we work hard to achieve. We pride ourselves on providing engaging learning environments, optimistic and caring professional staff and a belief that all students can learn. We encourage personal interests, collaboration, resilience and creativity. Our motto is "Learning for Life" and our values are Be a Learner, Be Respectful and Be Resilient.

The Prep Transition program provides an excellent introduction to our school not only for your child, but also for you. We provide the children with an opportunity to become familiar with the school environment and the staff they will be working with when they begin school. We also provide you, the parents, with information about our school and how best to support your child as they embark on a new stage in their lives.

Our students enjoy a wide variety of learning programs including Physical Education, Play Based and Inquiry learning, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Learning Specialists, Language (Chinese), Library and many others. Literacy and Numeracy are core learning areas explored daily.

We strongly believe that education is a partnership between the school and home. We encourage you to work closely with the school to motivate and support your child. You may also support our school through fundraising efforts and school activities. Parent participation on the School Council is always welcomed. Your continued support helps to provide stimulating learning spaces for students to grow.

A good start at school is extremely important for all children. We hope that this handbook provides you with the information you need in order to help you and your child make an excellent start at our school.

Dot Coghlan - Principal

Our School Values

Our school environment has been designed to be safe and stimulating for all students. Tolerance, and acceptance of the rights and points of view of others are considered to be necessary to a student's all-round development. We emphasise courtesy and cooperation between staff and students and many opportunities are provided for positive reinforcement to promote these behaviours.

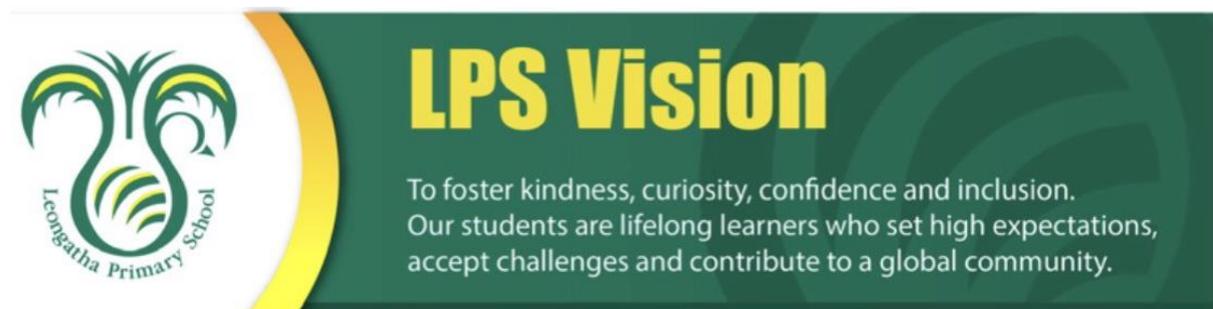
Leongatha Primary School has a clear set of values and expectations which support students to feel safe and supported at school.

These school values are displayed in each classroom as well as throughout the school. We foster and guide all students to be learners, to be respectful and to be resilient.

Leongatha Primary School <small>Learning for Life</small>	LPS EXPECTATIONS <small>Learning for Life</small>	LPS PLAYGROUND EXPECTATIONS <small>Learning for Life</small>
BE A LEARNER	<p><i>My class time is for class work.</i></p> <p><i>I am organised – mind, body, tools.</i></p> <p><i>I listen, think, question and communicate.</i></p>	<p><i>My play time is for fun, friends and fresh air.</i></p> <p><i>I am organised – in the right area, with everything I need.</i></p> <p><i>I listen, think, question and communicate.</i></p>
BE RESPECTFUL	<p><i>I follow <u>all</u> staff instructions.</i></p> <p><i>I care for myself, others and the environment.</i></p>	<p><i>I follow <u>all</u> staff instructions.</i></p> <p><i>I care for myself and <u>all</u> others.</i></p> <p><i>I look after school property and our physical environment.</i></p>
BE RESILIENT	<p><i>I don't give up when things get hard.</i></p> <p><i>I ask for and accept help.</i></p> <p><i>I stop and think about my options.</i></p>	<p><i>I work through problems when things get hard.</i></p> <p><i>I seek help from a yard duty teacher when things are out of my control.</i></p> <p><i>I stop and think about my options.</i></p>

Our School Vision

Our school vision was developed in 2019. Students, staff & parents worked hard to create this vision which is displayed proudly around the school.



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 information that you will need to know about starting Prep at Leongatha Primary School.

Please have a read to ensure a smooth transition to school.

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 learning experiences
- new settings and routines

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



Term dates for 2021

Term 1

Thursday 28th January- Thursday 1st April

Term 2

Monday 19th April- Friday 25th June

Term 3

Monday 12th July- Friday 17th September

Term 4

Monday 4th October- Friday 17th December

Special times for Preps

Children will have their snack and lunch at school within these times.

FIRST DAYS

Thursday 28th January START 9.15am – 1.00pm PICK UP

Friday 29th January START 9.15am – 1.00pm PICK UP

FOLLOWING SIX WEEKS

All full days: 8.55am – 3.15pm

PLEASE NOTE: Preps will not attend school on

Wednesdays for the following six weeks:

Wednesday 3rd, 10th, 17th and 24th Feb and 3rd, 10th of March

FIRST FULL WEEK

Week 8 Monday 15th March 8.55am – 3.15pm

Daily bell times

8.55am- Music plays to signal heading into class

9.00am- Bell to commence class

11am- Bell for recess play

11.30am- Music for children to head into class

1pm- Bell for lunchtime play

1.45pm- Music plays to signal heading back into class

3.15pm- Bell to signal end of day

The First Day

It is natural if your child has some reservations 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.

On the first day of school, 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 named locker 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 1pm.

When you leave your child in their class, please feel free to head down to the Staffroom for a tears & cheers catch up.

First day reminders

Starting time is **9.15am** for the FIRST DAY ONLY.
Children should be dressed in LPS uniforms.

Children will need to **bring with them:**

- A green LPS hat. It is compulsory to wear a Sun Smart legionnaires or wide brimmed hat in Term 1 & 4.
- A 30cmx40cm bag approx for the library. Bags of this size will hold the largest picture book and will help protect the books.
- Lunch and morning snacks in named containers.
- Water in a plastic bottle- no glass bottles or cans please.
- Spare set of underwear, socks, pants/shorts and t-shirt to be left in school bag for an emergency (toilet accidents, slips & spills).
- 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, is cheap and ideal. Art smocks will be kept at school.

Preparation for school

As parents you will realise that coping with periods of separation is a normal, healthy development for your child and something they must learn to cope with. In our experience, children who cry on the first day, stop soon after the parent leaves. 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 expectations of beginners. We have drawn up a list of considerations, which are important for children just beginning 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.

It is helpful if your child can/does

- Say and recognise their first name
- Recognise their named belongings
- Write their name in lowercase with a capital at the start
- Count to 10 or count objects
- Go to the toilet independently
- Dress & undress independently
- Hold and look through books correctly
- Take turns during conversations
- Put on/take off jumpers
- Put on art smocks
- Put on shoes quickly and promptly
- Separate from Mum & Dad
- Use a tissue/handkerchief
- Follow through with 1-2 step instructions
- Share with others
- Have a regular bedtime & routine
- Wait their turn to speak
- Put things away when they are finished
- Carry their school bags and unpack/pack them



Enjoy school with your child

- Develop the idea of going to school as a pleasant thing for them to do.
- Help your child to look upon parents, teachers and playmates as their friends.
- Show an interest in what they do at school.
- Be enthusiastic about the things they bring home.
- Avoid criticism - be positive.
- Avoid comparing your child with other children.
- Listen to your child if they want to read to you from a book.
- Become involved if you have the time. We love having parents in the classroom!

Avoid building anxiety and fears

- Instead of telling them “I am going to miss you so much” say, “You are so lucky to be going to school. You will have the best time!”
- Avoid being over anxious about your child, they will pick up on your anxiety and in turn it will make them anxious.
- Children's fears can be relieved by parents who are willing to discuss these fears with their children.

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.



Develop helpful habits

Habits that will help at school include:

- **Putting things away:**
Establishing a regular routine of picking up and putting items away helps to develop a sense of responsibility and care for property.
- **Listening skills:**
It is vital to listen carefully in order to be able to follow instructions. Communication is dependent upon a two-way flow of information. Therefore, encourage your child to listen to others whilst as well as 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 for example, fill their water bottle up, pack/unpack & zip their bag, put their socks on, dry dishes, wipe down items.
- **Sticking to 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 avoiding 'baby talk'.

Things you can do to help your child

- 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 anxieties.

Health/Welfare

- At first your child will find school very tiring. Therefore, they will need plenty of rest & early nights.
- Partaking in after school activities during the first term isn't recommended due to the children finding school tiring.
- 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. Please notify your child's teacher if you find lice on your child. If your child has head lice, they are not permitted at school until they have been treated.

Child security at school:

- Children are supervised by teachers between 8.30am- 3.45pm.
- If you wish to collect your child during the course of the day, please call in at the office to complete our sign out procedure.
- Preps should be accompanied to and from school by a responsible adult rather than an older sibling.
- All visitors to the school need to report to the general office to sign in.

Punctuality

Parents are requested to drop off and collect their children on time from the area **outside** the Prep building. In the morning, students will line up on their room colour line and enter the building when the teachers collect them. In the afternoon, teachers will bring the students out to the front of the building and stay with them until someone has picked them up.

The morning bell goes at 8.55am.

If late, 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 child's classroom teacher know.



Literacy at LPS

At Leongatha Primary School we believe that success in literacy is essential for all students. Our aim is to create lifelong readers and writers therefore fostering a love of literacy, as well as developing the skills to become literate, is a priority for both teachers and students.

Literacy continues to be a key focus area in our current Strategic Plan. Staff are regularly involved in professional development to ensure they are up to date with current educational research and practices. They are supported in implementing rigorous programs where they are all expected to be able to articulate what their students are learning, how they are progressing and where to take them next. All staff are committed to achieving the highest possible outcomes for our students.

Reading

In our reading workshop sessions, expect to see a community of learners where the students are involved in genuine reading activities and a high level of student engagement is evident. Teachers guide students to become more effective readers using the Reader's Workshop model which consists of:

- Mini Lessons
- Guided Reading / Strategy Groups/ Clinic Groups/ Literature Groups
- Independent Reading
- Individual Conferences

Using this approach, students learn how to work collaboratively with others and develop a real sense of ownership and responsibility over their literacy learning.

Writing

In our writing sessions, students develop writing strategies, learn about the writer's craft and use writing as a tool for learning and communication. They practice writing in different genres and apply conventions to communicate information clearly to a variety of audiences.

Teachers guide students to become more effective readers using the Writer's Workshop model which consists of:

- Mini Lessons
- Guided Writing / Strategy Groups/ Clinic Groups
- Independent Writing
- Individual Conferences



Numeracy at LPS

The implementation of the Mathematics Program at Leongatha Primary School is based on direct, explicit teaching with the use of concrete materials. This teaching philosophy allows students to develop the foundational skills required for them to be able to solve problems that are essential to everyday life.

A whole school coordinated approach sets high expectations and beliefs about the teaching and learning of Mathematics. Teams of teachers meet weekly to plan and discuss the co-ordinated teaching of numeracy for the coming week/month. Mental calculation and the teaching of efficient strategies, problem solving and the use of concrete materials are all priorities.

The Mathematics Program is delivered daily with the focus on the Mathematical dimensions of Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, and Statistics and Probability. At Leongatha Primary School each student participates in at least four explicit, one hour Mathematics lessons each week.

Our beliefs about the teaching of Mathematics incorporate a whole-part-whole approach, where teachers model and teach strategies explicitly, and then students work independently or with the teacher to practise and broaden the mathematical strategies taught. We value the inclusion of concrete materials into the mathematics classroom. Students from Grade Prep to 6 benefit from making mathematical models, experimenting with concrete materials as they problem solve, and learning by doing rather than always listening and watching. Students are encouraged to visualise and demonstrate their learning and transfer understandings from/to other areas of mathematics.

Mathematics is taught through a combination of individual and group 'hands on' learning activities, book work and oral learning. In all classes learning is supported through the use of visual and hands on aides such as iPads, Mathletics tasks, charts and a vast array of concrete materials throughout the learning levels.



Investigations at LPS

At Leongatha Primary School we implement a modified version of the Investigations program which is based on the Walker Learning Approach. This approach stemmed from the recognition of the need to give our children the opportunity to develop their oral language skills, to engage all children in their early learning and to extend their social skills and motivation to learn.

Investigation time involves children exploring their own interests, along with learning **prompts** set out by the teacher to assist children in deepening their understanding of concepts covered during the day.

The program:

- places the child at the centre of the curriculum.
- encourages active engagement by all children.
- provides children with opportunities to learn through play.

Teachers are integral to this process and direct, scaffold, extend and interact with your child in order to ensure that they are actively engaged. The teachers 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.

Through Investigations 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, develop self-esteem and foster a love of learning and exploring. This is achieved through, collaborating with others and developing critical and creative thinking while investigating something they are interested in.



Specialist classes

Physical Education

In P.E children focus on developing their fundamental motor skills through games and explicit lessons on skills. Students develop their team work skills, collaboration, sharing and spatial awareness.



Performing Arts

In Performing Arts class students practice their rhythm, dance and singing. Students get to perform in musicals and experiment with instruments!

Visual Arts

In Visual Arts students experiment with textures, colours and mediums to create pieces of work. They explore lines, complete self-portraits and create 2D and 3D artwork.



Languages- Mandarin

Children are immersed into the Chinese culture during a Languages lesson. They begin to learn how to count in Mandarin and hear words and phrases through interactive videos, games and explicit teaching.



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 6** of Term 1.

When you feel your child is ready to go on the bus, please contact your child's classroom teacher to let them know with plenty of time. There are two types of buses, Country Buses which take children outside the township of Leongatha and are coordinated by the school.

The second, is the Town buses which are privately run to collect children from the Leongatha township.

Only Country bus travellers need to fill in the bus form and return it together with your enrolment form, the country bus form is included in the enrolment pack.

Town bus travellers need to contact the bus service, Winbus PTY LTD on 0428551145 to organise pick up.

Please make sure your child knows their bus number/lane. It is handy to write this information on a bag tag and attach to your child's school bag.



Each country bus traveller will be given a bus buddy by the school to help walk your child 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 Coordinator: Liz Blain on 56674600.

Clothing



We expect children to be dressed in 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>

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 independently when entering the building, velcro is the best option for school shoes.

Please make sure shoes are easy to take on and off.

Preps have shoe racks outside their building and a special shelf for each grade.

Our Sunsmart policy requires compulsory wearing of school hats in Term 1 & 4. The students wear a wide brimmed green hat. These can be purchased from Target or 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 11.00am. Some ideas for snacks you can include are: fruit cut into manageable pieces, dried fruits & nuts, popcorn, muesli bars, or a small cupcake/muffins.

Lunch is at 1.00pm. Some ideas for lunch are: a sandwich, roll, wrap, biscuits and cheese, crackers, salads or veggies.

Everyday the Preps have 'Fruit time'. Children are allowed to eat **fresh** fruit or vegetables at this time.

Food needs to be packed in a practical way which is easy for your child to open and access. All containers (top and bottom) need to be clearly labelled with your child's name and grade.

A drink bottle (with water) is vital each day, but especially during hot weather or sports events. Children need to stay hydrated and are permitted to drink in the classroom during the day.

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

Please have regular conversations about the food you place in your child's lunchbox. 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 lunchbox, so you know how much they have eaten.

Alternatively, food can be purchased through our school canteen every day. During the first five weeks we suggest that Preps bring their lunch from home rather than use the canteen service. If getting a lunch order, students are to write their name, grade, and food order on an envelope enclosed with the money. Each classroom has a lunch order basket that the child needs to put their lunch order into. Lunch orders will then be picked up at lunchtime by a classroom monitor. Snacks can be purchased directly from the canteen without the need for students to place an order in the basket. If you are sending your child to school with money for a snack, speak to them about what they can purchase and remind them not to share money/food.

For a canteen price list please visit the schools 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.

Our school canteen is unable to heat up meals that your child brings in; due to the safe handling of food regulations.

Please note: We are NOT a nut free school.

Money

Most payments can now be made online through Compass. However, at times money will need to be brought to school. Please ensure that money is in a sealed 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 need to be in a clearly labelled envelope. Teachers will not be held responsible for lost money. Bus money for the Town buses should be kept in a safe envelope/wallet.

Contacting your child's classroom teacher

At times, you will need to contact your child's teacher to discuss important information, concerns or queries. The best way to contact 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.

Teachers are contactable during work hours, Monday to Friday, via their emails.

A regular school newsletter is also uploaded to Compass & Facebook once a fortnight 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
- helping with maths activities in the classroom
- PMP
- School Fete
- Excursions
- PALS
- Fundraising
- School council
- Canteen

Please keep an eye on Compass for requests for helpers.



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 activated you will be able to login using your secure password through the school website or on the 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 an observation on your child's progress and how your child is doing in a number of key subjects. These learning tasks occur on a regular basis throughout the term.



COMPASS
School Manager