



KEYSBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Future Making for Every Student

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Preparing for School Information Booklet



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Keysborough Primary School Purpose Statement

FUTURE MAKING FOR EVERY STUDENT

Learning, Thriving, Connecting and Contributing

LEARNING

Every student is strongly literate, numerate, and curious and embraces 21st century skills. Every student embraces the importance of learning and creativity as enduring features of their lives.

THRIVING

Every student has a strong moral compass to make sense of, and influence their complex world. Every student is optimistic and resilient: possessing a strong sense of identity and worth, with a sure knowledge of who they are and how to live a worthy life.

CONNECTING & CONTRIBUTING

Every student has a strong sense of connection and purpose in their lives. Every student is connected and contributes to family, friends, communities and the planet we share. Every student is enable as a person and committed to improving their world.



Welcome to Keysborough Primary School

On behalf of the staff, children and parents of Keysborough Primary School I welcome you and your family to our school community.

Future Making for Every Student

We are committed to excellence in learning and teaching with a relentless focus on our children flourishing in the 21st Century. Our school community is a welcoming, friendly and caring place. Our purpose is to build a collaborative school where children, teachers and families all feel at home. You will also see a range of exemplary learning programs delivered by professional staff committed to addressing your child's learning needs and helping your child to work towards achieving their very best.

Starting school is a very important event in a child's life, and children adjust to school in different ways. We are keen to work with parents and carers to ensure that each child settles quickly, easily and happily into school life at Keysborough Primary. The school will keep you informed about how your child is settling in, and I encourage you to provide us with feedback from home. Keeping an open communication process between school and home ensures transition to our school will be as smooth as possible. Successful learning is the result of a three way relationship between the child, the school and the home. We look forward to working together with you and your child to build a solid foundation for your child's learning.

The school has wonderful school buildings in spacious grounds. Our school has some of the best facilities available to a Government Primary School. In addition to modern new teaching and learning spaces, our facilities include a full size sports hall, a synthetic turf play area, a Performing Arts Centre with tiered seating, a Visual Arts room, a Digital Technology Hub and new canteen and toilet blocks. The Before and After School Care programs are accommodated in a cheerful, well equipped room. The school expects to open a kindergarten onsite in 2022. In 2019 working in partnership with Darren Reserve Kindergarten we received the Minister of Education's Award in Early Childhood learning particularly focused on remarkable success in transition from pre-school to Foundation.

Teaching and learning within the school is transforming and 2021 will see us continue to build strongly on Inquiry-based learning projects in our Magical Classroom. We have a great respect for children and through our Inquiry Projects are intentionally designed to evoke curiosity and interest for the child. The magical classroom builds into the learning and teaching environments a Reggio Emilia approach. Our work in the continuity of early childhood development builds on learning experienced in an early childhood setting. Our approach is child-centered and encourages self-guided curriculum that uses self-directed, experiential learning in relationship-driven environments for every child to create knowledge and feelings of success. The learning is designed to allow our children to continuously reflect, re-think through being involved in their learning experiences and showing their competencies in different expressive ways.

We believe . . . *The pleasure of learning, of knowing and of understanding is one of the most important and basic feelings that each child expects to receive from the experience he or she is living through: either alone, with other children or with adults. It is a constructive feeling that must be reinforced so that the connected pleasure lasts even when reality may prove that learning and knowing and understanding can be difficult and requires effort. It is through this very capacity of overcoming the difficulty that pleasure transforms itself into joy.* (Loris Malaguzzi)

We look forward to your child starting school at Keysborough Primary. Parents often ask what they can do to assist the educational progress and development of their child. This guide has been prepared to give you some ideas. It accompanies our School Information Handbook. I hope you will find the information in this booklet useful. Please don't hesitate to ask us to clarify any questions that you may have.

Kind regards,
Leanne Armao
Principal
Keysborough Primary School



School Readiness

Starting school is a major milestone in the life of a child. Children are seen to be ready for school when they have reached the chronological age for entry as established by the state.

Research suggests that children who transition to school smoothly and experience early school success tend to maintain higher levels of long term social competence and academic achievements. It is therefore important to look at whether children possess skills that promote their ability to successfully commence school, rather than look at their age.

'Readiness' is what we call the things that assist children in being successful at school. 'Readiness' is not an event that happens at a certain time, but rather a process that every child moves through at their own pace.

When considering a child's readiness for school, families should be encouraged to make decisions based on their child's needs, skills and interests. Developing knowledge and skills in the areas of numeracy (numbers and counting) and literacy (reading and writing) are helpful, however not essential. The development of these skills should be supported when a child is ready, and at a pace, the child can cope with. Social development is crucial for school readiness, and it is highly important for children to have good social skills and be confident learners to set strong foundations for a lifetime of learning.

Beginning school is a very important step for all young children. It involves a number of significant changes in a young child's life. Being able to confidently and happily make the transition between home and school may lay the foundation for future success during the early years of formal education, or even longer.

School readiness refers to whether **your** child is ready to make an easy and successful transition into school. While many people think of academics (e.g. writing their name, counting to 10, knowing the colors) as the important school readiness skills, school readiness actually refers to a much broader range of skills. In addition to some academic basics, school readiness skills also include self care (independent toileting and opening lunch boxes), attention and concentration, physical skills (e.g. having the endurance to sit upright for an entire school day), emotional regulation, language skills, play and social skills.

It is important that children are ready to begin school. Children develop at different rates and so start school with very different skill levels. Teachers make allowances for these differences in the programs they offer and may ask for specific information from parents from time to time. It is important for teachers and parents to work together to make your child's educational experience as successful and enjoyable as possible.

So is your child ready to start school?

Physical Development

Skills

The two main physical skills that children need are:

- ◆ those that are necessary for looking after themselves when an adult is not able to help.
- ◆ those that enable them to join in with all learning activities at school.

These important skills include the following:-

1. Eating

At school children need to:

- feed themselves.
- unwrap food packaging.
- undo their lunchbox.
- unscrew their drink container.
- drink with a straw.
- peel a piece of fruit.
- get a drink from a tap.
- clean up any mess left after eating.

2. Toileting

Children need be able to :

- ◆ go to the toilet by themselves.
- ◆ be able to undo and do up any buttons and zips.
- ◆ flush the toilet.
- ◆ wash their hands.
- ◆ manage the taps.

‘Accidents’ can sometimes happen and Foundation teachers try to prevent these by making regular visits to the toilet during the first weeks. Parents should consider sending spare underclothes if any problems are expected.

3. Dressing

Children must be able to take off and put on their windcheaters, jackets, socks and shoes by themselves. Parents can help children to learn these skills by encouraging them to dress themselves and tie their own laces. The school recommends selecting shoes with Velcro closings.

4. Nose blowing

It is important for health and cleanliness that your child is aware when their nose needs wiping or blowing and that they are able to do this independently. They must also be able to follow up with sound hygiene practices.

5. Eye-hand coordination

This is the ability to direct the hand with the eye. It is important for many things such as writing and catching balls. You can help your child develop these skills with activities such as using scissors, painting, drawing, colouring, water and sand play, building with blocks, throwing, catching and hitting balls.

6. Basic Movements

At school, children will participate in many new games and activities which include walking, running, jumping, hopping and skipping. Most children develop and refine these skills by having opportunities to play freely.

Can your child:

- run, jump, balance and dance?
- skip, stand on one foot, climb steps safely?
- throw, catch and bounce a ball?
- go to the toilet independently? – see skills above
- feed themselves? – see skills above



Health

If your child has an illness or condition which affects their health the class teacher should be told. The teacher should also be told about the effects of any treatment or medication your child is having so that allowances can be made, both in and out of the classroom. The school must be informed of any diagnosed allergies or asthma that your child suffers from. Your child's action plan must be sent to school.

If parents have any concerns about health issues it is worthwhile getting a medical opinion before your child starts school. Some areas for consideration are listed below.

1. Eyesight

There are many different eye problems, some of which may not be noticeable until your child is asked to do various activities such as reading, writing or playing with a ball. If your child finds any of these activities difficult then eye problems may be a possibility.

2. Hearing

Small children frequently suffer from ear, nose and throat infections, which may result in temporary hearing loss. If your child has many of these infections, or does not seem to be hearing well, parents should seek advice from:

- ◆ family doctors.
- ◆ Infant Welfare Centres.

3. General Health

Starting school can be a tiring experience, even for a healthy child. If your child has a minor illness which is stopping him or her from sleeping or eating well it would be wise to have the illness treated. **It is important that your child has enough sleep each night (experts recommend about least 10 hours every night for a child of 5 years of age).** They need a healthy diet every day, which should include a healthy breakfast - giving them a good start to the day.



Social Development

At school children will meet and be expected to interact with many new people, both adults and children. When children have opportunities to mix with other people they learn skills to help them to cope with the social aspects of school.

Language and Communication

Language and communication are essential pre-requisites for school. Children at school also need to be able to follow instructions and understand what is said to them. They need to be able to communicate their needs and to be understood. Children in Foundation should be able to deal with structured content and more formal learning environments. It is important and necessary that children coming to school are able to understand and follow routines and structures in their learning environments.

Can your child:

- listen to stories, learn rhymes, and recognise name colours and shapes?
- play, share, take turns and adapt to doing things differently?
- cope with change and deal with challenges?
- converse socially and express his needs?
- take turns?
- Independantly engage in learning, speaking and building relationships with other children and adults?



Emotional Development

1. Separation

Coming to school each day is made easier if your child is able to separate happily from their parents or carers. When parents tell their child that they are going to leave but will be back, and then keep their promise, their child learns to accept separation. If your child is worried about being separated from you, they may not be able to concentrate and enjoy what is happening in school.

It also helps if parents point out the enjoyable things their child will do at school, highlighting the positives, in a cheerful and encouraging way. It does not help to say things such as “You will not be able to do that at school!” or “Did you miss me?” Give your child opportunities for play dates with friends and family.

2. Self-control

At school children are expected to show some self-control when playing and working with others. Often, children who lose their temper when they must wait for something, or when they do not get their own way, find other children unwilling to play or work with them.

Self-control is developed at home:

- ◆ when parents do not give in to temper tantrums and do not let the child always have their own way.
- ◆ when the child is asked to wait while the parent finishes some activity before attending to the child.
- ◆ when the parent does not give the child everything they want.
- ◆ when set routines help the child feel secure because they know what is expected. E.g. dinner, bath and bedtime story before turning the lights out.

Establish simple rules at home and ensure that all members of the family and extended family work together as team to enforce these. Model good manners such as saying please thank you.

3. Confidence

A confident child generally sees themselves as being successful and will be better prepared to meet new challenges. Parents can build their child’s confidence by:

- ◆ praising their efforts.
- ◆ praising new achievements .
- ◆ encouraging the child to tackle tasks of gradually increasing difficulty.
- ◆ letting them know it is ok to make mistakes, because when a mistake is made we learn something from it.

4. Responsibility

At school children will be responsible for their belongings and their work space. A sense of responsibility is developed when parents:

- ◆ encourage their child to keep their room tidy.
- ◆ expect their child to put away their own toys.
- ◆ encourage their child to do simple tasks around the home.

5. Independence

School provides a wide range of new experiences and activities for children. Those children who do not always need direction can attempt more and will probably learn more. Parents who allow their children to try things for themselves encourage the growth of independence.

6. Persistence

At school new tasks are based on the completion and understanding of earlier tasks. Small children often give up when a task becomes too difficult. Parents can help by assisting and encouraging them to finish a task, so they learn the value of persistence.

Can your child:

- happily spend time with others without you there?
- take care of their own possessions? e.g. Packing their toys away
- not give up when something goes wrong? E.g. try again if their block tower falls.



Intellectual Development

1. General

Children learn by seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling and doing. Knowledge and language develop when children hear and speak the words to describe what they are doing. Children need to be given many and varied opportunities to build, play, make, travel, observe, hear stories, carry out simple tasks, help others, experiment, listen to and play music and visit friends and family. Whenever children are active and talking about something they are doing they are learning.

It is therefore essential for their intellectual development that children are encouraged to ask questions and participate in conversations with parents and other family members. It is important to discourage long periods of time watching TV or playing electronic games and computer programs.

Whenever parents are answering questions, making observations or sharing information with children, they are teaching their child new words to express their knowledge. They are showing their child how to reason and think.

2. Pre-reading skills

Learning to read well is a very complex task and usually takes years to master.

Children develop a love of literature through:

- ◆ sharing books at home for enjoyment and bedtime stories. Children should be read to at least once a day.
- ◆ belonging to the local Municipal library and being able to choose their own stories.
- ◆ being given books as gifts.
- ◆ seeing you reading for enjoyment and information.

If children experience success when first starting to read they will enjoy learning the skills and practise them more often. Being able to read well makes further learning easier and allows a person to find information they need in a variety of situations.

To help your child prepare for reading:

- ◆ talk with your child so that they learn the meanings of words.
- ◆ draw your child's attention to signs, advertisements and writing on packets.
- ◆ tell your child what is written as well as point out differences in symbols which lead to differences in meaning, e.g. Men & Women on toilet doors.

When children are read to they learn many things such as:

- ◆ meaning is obtained from print.
- ◆ reading can be a useful and enjoyable activity.
- ◆ there are 'rules' about print.
- ◆ we read from the top of the page to the bottom, going across from left to right.
- ◆ we use pictures to add meaning to the words.

3. Pre-mathematics skills

Mathematics in Preps includes:

- ◆ counting and recognising the properties of numbers.
- ◆ learning to add, subtract and group.
- ◆ measuring with concrete materials.
- ◆ recognising money.
- ◆ sequencing for time.
- ◆ simple problem solving.

Before children can work with symbols they need to understand the ideas behind them. Children who come to school understanding words such as more, less, the same as, bigger, smaller, how many, etc. are more prepared for early mathematics.

Parents and others can help prepare children for mathematics by:

- ◆ helping the child to count a few objects, such as the plates on the table, or fruit in a bowl.
- ◆ talking to the child about time, such as when a TV program will finish, that it is half an hour until Dad/Mum comes home, how many sleeps until a birthday.
- ◆ letting the child find out what they can buy with a few coins.
- ◆ talking to the child as they build with blocks, e.g. “Can you make it bigger?”, “Can you find some more blue blocks?”, “Is that as tall as the last one you made?”
- ◆ letting the child play with water, sand, dough, etc. so that they learn how much will fit into different sized containers.



Beginning School

As the time gets close for your child to start school there are a number of things you can do to help the child settle in easily. Here are some ideas:

- ◆ walk to school with your child so that they know the way, even if you plan to drive them most days. It is a good idea for them to become familiar with the route.
- ◆ bring your child to 'Prep for a Day' so that they can become familiar with the school buildings, teachers and playground.
- ◆ practise with your child what they should say when asked their name.
- ◆ write your child's name on all their clothes, and other belongings like lunchboxes and school bags. Show your child the labels so that they may recognise them when necessary.
- ◆ talk about how long the school day will be in a way that the child can understand. "It is a bit longer than kindergarten because you will have lunch and a play outside, then a story or game before I pick you up."
- ◆ talk about the difference between 'playtime' and 'lunchtime'. Show your child what you have packed for snack and lunch and explain when they should be eaten. Make sure your child can easily open the lunchbox and drink container.
- ◆ a Keysborough Primary school bag is recommended as it will last throughout your child's primary years. It is comfortable to carry and is the correct size for all the things your child will have to carry to and from school. The school bag can be purchased from our School Uniform Shop.

Parent/School Relationships

The first day of school can mark the beginning of a clear division between home and school for a child. However, staff at the school look forward to working with parents in the interests of your children. You can help your child by:-

- ◆ finding out how to contact your child's teacher if you want to tell them something about your child or discuss their progress.
- ◆ asking if there are things that can be done at home to help the child's progress at school.
- ◆ asking how you can help at school with such things as hearing reading, helping in the canteen, becoming a member of School Council.
- ◆ reading the accompanying information and keeping it for future reference.
- ◆ reading the school newsletter to keep informed about events happening at school.
- ◆ looking in your child's bag regularly for additional notices and returning them promptly when required.
- ◆ attending school special events such as Open Nights, Information Evenings and the School Concert.

Parents' Feelings

The emphasis in this booklet has been on preparing a child for school, but parents have to be prepared too - prepared for the fact that they may miss the child greatly. Most parents accept this as part of a long-term process in helping the child move from total dependence to independence. They accept any mixed feelings about their child's independence and may even find that they have some time for new activities.

Age of Starting

To begin school, children need to be at least 5 years of age by the 30th of April. Most children start school at age 5, however, parents may like to think about the age at which they would like their child to start school. It may be in your child's best interest to delay starting school for another year. Children are not legally required to attend school until they turn 6. It is important that they are ready. It is important that they have the pre-mentioned skills to ensure a positive start to their school life.

It is worth noting that early starting does not necessarily lead to greater academic achievement. It is the parents' right and responsibility to make – within the stated limits – the decision about the age for entry to school of their child. If parents would like information or advice about their child's readiness for school they could consult:

- ◆ the child's kindergarten teacher.
- ◆ the school at which the child will be enrolled.

TRANSITION – A POSITIVE START TO SCHOOL

Summary - 10 Quick Tips for a Successful Transition

1. Encourage your child to ask questions about going to school.
2. Help your child stay healthy – have regular health and dental checks and keep immunisation up-to-date.
3. Encourage your child to try to do things on their own, such as dressing, washing their hands, going to the toilet, unwrapping their food and opening their drink bottle.
4. Talk to other parents about what school is like.
5. Attend the transition programs offered by the school.
6. Talk to the school about how you can be involved in your child's life at school.
7. Show your child where the school is and talk about how you will travel to and from school.
8. Arrange play-times with other families whose children will be going to the same school as your child.
9. Practise the things your child will need to do to get ready for school, for example dressing themselves, eating breakfast etc.
10. Be positive about starting school and enjoy your child's excitement about starting school.