We would like to warmly welcome all children and parents to Prep for 2014. To your child, prep will be a whole new world full of exciting things to do. Here your child will find new friends to share experiences with as well as staff who are committed to creating a supportive environment that promotes educational and social learning.

Goals of Prep

As children engage in the prep curriculum they will develop skills and understandings that will help them become life long learners. Children will become:

- Embed and develop the importance of phonetics in reading and first steps in decoding text.
- Knowledgeable with deep understandings
- Complex thinkers
- Creative problem solvers
- Active investigators
- Effective communicators
- Independence

School Contact Information

Phone: (07) 4067 5389        Fax: (07) 4067 2968

Email: the.principal@mcdonnellcreekss.com.au

Website: www.mcdonnellcreekss.eq.edu.au

Postal: PO Box 324, Babinda QLD 4861

2013 School Calendar

(Changes expected due to Government moves to standardise school and public holidays)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Pupil Free Days</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>Finish Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>23 January</td>
<td>Tuesday 28 January</td>
<td>Friday 4th April</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Friday 27 June</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Monday 14 July</td>
<td>Friday 19 September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>20 October</td>
<td>Tuesday 7 October</td>
<td>Friday 12 December</td>
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Preparatory Education at McDonnell Creek

Welcome to the Preparatory Year at McDonnell Creek State School. This booklet can be used before and during the year your child starts Prep and should be used in conjunction with the school’s Parent Handbook.

Prep students will be involved in the life of the whole school:
Sharing the same:

- eating areas
- drinking and toileting facilities
- play areas
- break times
- variety of whole school activities (including specialist lessons for Music and H.P.E)
- extra curricular activities

Older children within the school are encouraged to assist prep students adapt to life in the whole school community.

The Prep Class

Our Preparatory students are part of a multi-aged classroom. Prep students will experience independent or free play, guided play and investigation, group work with other Prep students, multi-age group work and whole class work. Prep students will also work with the teachers and teacher aides as part of their daily program. Prep students have the same hours and breaks as the rest of the school and join in all school activities as appropriate.

Staff

McDonnell Creek State School will experience their first multi class school in 5 years with two classes being P-2 and 3-7.

Mr Symes (Principal) will teach in the 3-7 class on Monday through to Thursday, Lynne Rees will be in this class on Fridays.

Our P-2 teacher is Miss Gemma Ewin. Gemma Gemma was a great addition to our staff beginning in 2013.

Both classes will have a number of lessons during a week which will be taught by the team from P-7.

Mrs Magnus, Mrs Bufi and Mrs Addison will all have time working with the P-2 class during the week as teacher aides.
Attendance

Session Times
8.50 am to 3.00 pm 5 days per week.

Regular Attendance
Regular attendance is essential to your child’s progress. Please give the office a call or send an e-mail if your child is going to be absent or send a note with your child on their return to school. It is important that you notify us of long absences in advance. This is a legal requirement for child safety.

Bus Travel
Prep students are able to access the bus services to and from school, managed by Miss Lolly’s Kindy and Day Care. The bus route travels from White Rock, through Bentley Park, Edmonton, Gordonvale to Fishery Falls, daily to and from school. The bus has subsidies for CRN number holders and includes seat belts and booster seats.

Learning
The Prep Year builds on your child’s learning at home and in other places such as kindergarten and child care.

Prep assists students to make a smooth transition to Year 1 and beyond.

The Prep curriculum has been guided by the Queensland Studies Authority. Our classroom has been designed to be fun and to offer challenges for children through play based and structured learning activities. Planning incorporates teacher and child initiated tasks.

Five Key Early Learning Areas explore what children learn:
- Social and Personal Learning
- Health and Personal Learning
- Language Learning & Communication
- Early Mathematical Understandings
- Active Learning Processes

Five Contexts for Learning:
- Play
- Real life situations
- Routines and transitions
- Appropriate focused learning situations
- Investigations

Reporting and Assessment
Early Learning Records are used as the basis for discussion during the parent teacher interviews offered at the end of Term 1 and 3 including reporting periods Term 2 and 4. A copy of the completed Early Learning Record will stay in your child’s school file. If you require interviews at other times, please contact the school.
The First Vital Weeks

It is important that children settle into school as quickly as possible. Some children and parents will naturally experience some separation anxieties at this time. Experience shows that it is best for parents to leave after 5 – 10 minutes to allow children to develop a relationship with other students and teachers. You are welcome to telephone the office during the day to check on your child’s progress, if you are concerned.

Helpful Hint: Practise the school routine and daily event times with your child for the two weeks prior to day 1

We encourage you to become actively involved in your child’s education by:
◆ Visiting school and joining in the class program. Please organise an appropriate time with the class teacher prior to arrival)
◆ Discussing any problems or issues with teaching staff.
◆ Reading the noticeboard and newsletters.
◆ Supporting the student group.
◆ Collecting recyclable materials (notes will be sent home indicating the items we need)
◆ Sharing your interests and hobbies with us.
◆ Supporting and encouraging your child in his / her work

Parents may like to volunteer to:
• come into school and help with activities
• cut up or draw up activities at home
• make resources or help to set up the classroom in the mornings or afternoons

Important Information:
• School starts on Tuesday 28 January 2014
• Be prepared the night before so that your morning runs smoothly.
• Make sure your child is well rested (at least 10 hours sleep each night)
• Make sure your child has a substantial breakfast before coming to school.
• Teachers will be in classrooms to welcome you and your child at 8.30am.
• Prep staff will supervise Prep students at all breaks for the first few days.
• At 3.00pm, children will be dismissed from the classroom. Parents are then able to come inside and help their child pack up or discuss items with the class teacher. Students will be assisted to go to the bus line by a staff member. Those being collected by parents/carers will remain supervised initially within the classroom and later within the school grounds until parents arrive.
• Encourage your child to use school toilets and ask for help if required.
• Children should carry their own bags and belongings and be responsible for unpacking these.
• Ensure that the first day of Prep is not the first time your child has been away from you. Organise times for them to be left with family or friends.
• Ensure your child can communicate their needs and feelings.
**Parent Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to take an active interest in:

- their child’s learning experiences, growth and development
- the classroom program
- whole school activities and functions
- P&C activities and meetings

We would appreciate parents sharing information which can assist a child’s learning. Teachers will reciprocate with sharing information obtained from their child’s time at school.

Please discuss with the classroom teacher any areas of school life that you would like to be involved in and negotiate appropriate times to assist with classroom learning. From time to time requests may be made for parent assistance. Your participation in programs is valued as it helps us to provide better educational outcomes for your children.

**Confidentiality Requirements**

Please note classroom helpers are governed by the rules of confidentiality. They should not discuss outside the classroom, the progress or ability of any children in the class.

**Visitors Register**

Please sign this register located in the office, if you are at the school for any activities other than “dropping off” your child at school each day.

**Communication**

Please don’t hesitate to discuss with us any queries you have regarding your child’s education as the year unfolds. Any concerns should be directed towards the class teacher. Should the classroom staff not be available, concerns should be directed to the Principal.

Communication from the school will take the form of:

- Face to face discussions between teachers and caregivers
- School newsletters
- P&C notes
- Phone calls as required

**Illnesses**

As most parents are aware, it is best to keep your child home when they are ill. This will ensure your child recovers fully from their illness as well as preventing the spread of illness towards other children in the class. Remember to notify the school of the reason for any absences. A phone call, note, email or personal communication with teacher are all accepted. If children become ill throughout the day they will be taken to the office where they can rest quietly while a parent is notified to come and collect them. Some contagious diseases require a specific amount of time away from school. If your child has a contagious disease please inform the school immediately.
School Uniform

Prep students are strongly encouraged to wear the school uniform. Uniforms are available for purchase from the school. For Health and Safety reasons the wearing of closed-in footwear is mandatory. Parents should notify the staff if there are any medical or other reasons why children are not wearing the correct footwear. Jewellery is also restricted to items of religious or medical purpose and a watch.

Sun Safety Policy

We are very conscious of sun safety at our school and recommend that you apply sunscreen prior to your child’s arrival at school. The school also has a container of sunscreen which contains insect repellent which you are welcome to use. All children must have their own hat to wear – wide-brimmed McDonnell Creek State School hats may be purchased through the P & C.

We strongly adhere to the school rule: NO HAT, NO PLAY

On “Free Dress Days” which will be advertised prior to the event, all children must wear appropriate sun safe clothing which means that shirts / dresses must have sleeves and preferably collars.

Spare Set of Clothes

It is always a good idea to leave a spare set of clothes in your child’s bag (including underwear and socks) in the case of an accident or spill at school. Your child will be supervised by two staff members to clean and change themselves if you cannot be contacted to assist with this procedure.

If the school provided clothes do go home, please wash and return to school as soon as possible, as we have limited supplies for this purpose.

Names and Labels

As young children often do not recognise their own belongings, we cannot emphasise enough the need to label absolutely everything – bags, shoes, lunch boxes, hats, library bags and clothing. This allows any lost items to quickly be returned to their rightful owners.

Senior Buddy System

Your child will be buddied with a year 6 or 7 child for 2013 who will be there for your child to offer support as a friend, a friend in the school yard, a mentor and a great role-model and a person who your child may feel comfortable to talk to if they feel need help if a teacher is not about. Your child will have their buddy for the whole year who will also assist in daily routines, preparing for excursions, managing their possessions and other housekeeping matters.

What to Bring

A book list with all relevant materials to bring to Prep will be provided at your enrolment interview. Please ensure, where stipulated, you purchase the correct brand of item. This is for quality or functionality requirements. Please ensure that all children’s belongings are clearly marked with your child’s name.

School Bag – the bag needs to be large enough to hold a drink bottle, lunch box, books and spare jumpers, raincoats etc. The backpack style is recommended. Please choose a bag that your child can carry and pack easily.
School Lunches

Munch Break: (10.00am)

Fruit, vegetables or tree nuts are required for munch break each and everyday at school. Here are a few suggestions…

- Fruit- apple, banana, orange, grapes, mango, pineapple, kiwi fruit, melon, strawberries etc…
- Dried Fruit- apricots, apple, sultanas etc…
- Vegetables- carrot, beans, peas, celery, capsicum etc…
- Tree Nuts- almond, macadamia, pecan, pistachio (NO PEANUTS– due to allergies)

Lunch: 11.00 a.m. – 11.40 a.m. (15 minutes eating)

Students will have 15 to 20 minutes to eat the bulk of their food and drinks from their lunchboxes. Students are encouraged to select their food choosing healthy selections to eat first. After eating an acceptable amount of lunch, children are released to play.

Afternoon Tea: 1.10 p.m. – 1.50 p.m. (10 minutes eating)

Students will eat remaining lunch items/afternoon tea before being released for play.

Hints & Tips:

- Nutritious lunches are important.
- Plastic containers (named) are most suitable for food. Make sure these can be easily opened by your child.
- Children should take home any food that has not been eaten that day.
- Pack spoons or forks if required.
- Glass containers are not appropriate to send to school.
- The school does not have access to heating students lunches, so food which does not require heating will need to be supplied
- Add a cold pack to your child’s lunch container to keep their lunch fresh and cool, especially in the summer heat.
- Please ensure you pack foods you know your child likes to eat.

Foods to Avoid/Keep to a minimum

- Please check with staff before sending your child to school with peanut based foods.
- Foods high in saturated fats, sugars or harmful additives (chocolates, chips etc).
- Fizzy soft drinks are not allowed at McDonnell Creek State School.
- Food in tins can present safety issues. Please empty contents of tinned food into a plastic container.

Water Bottles:

- Children need to have a full water bottle at school for ready access.
- Do not freeze this water.
- Water does not need to be refrigerated.
**Birthdays**

Birthdays are a special time for children and we are happy to celebrate them at school. This celebration can be on the actual day or the nearest school day to their birthday. If parents wish to provide a simple cake or patty cakes to celebrate their child’s birthday, they are more than welcome to do so. Please inform the teacher of your plans and organise an appropriate time for the celebration. Please inform staff if you do not wish for your child to participate in these events due to religious or other reasons. Please also inform staff of any food allergies that may need to be monitored when consuming shared food.

**Classroom Programs**

**Show and Tell**

We would appreciate it if toys were not brought to School.

Your child may be encouraged to bring science/nature objects, family photos/ postcards etc, during times when we are researching for a particular unit. We have a rostered show and tell session. Children are only to bring in these items on their rostered day and place it on the show and tell shelf where it is to remain until it is handed out to take home at the end of the school day. If parents wish to bring in particular items that need to be accompanied (eg. Pets) they need to organise an appropriate time in advance with the class teacher. The bringing of toys, jewellery and money etc is not acceptable.

**Classroom Literacy Programs**

Preps are introduced to the literacy programs used within our school in a supportive, safe, enjoyable learning environment. These include:

- Reading Eggs—Computer Based
- Phonics
- Handwriting
- Lots of Reading
- Soundwaves—Spelling Blends

**Library**

Children are encouraged to borrow one book from the library within their designated library lesson each week. They are to read it at home with their family and return it by the end of the week to the library. Children are required to use their library bag to protect the books during lending period. Parents will be asked to replace books lost or damaged whilst on loan.

**Rest Time**

Rest time is not generally offered to Prep students in a multiage context. However, children who are obviously tired will be allowed to rest in the book corner.

**Support Services**

Prep students can be referred to Speech Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, special education teachers, advisory visiting teacher, guidance officers and other specialist staff if required. Contact the school if you require these services. If Prep teachers have a concern in this area, a referral form will be discussed with parents and requires parental signature and approval. These services are free of charge.
### Handwriting Hints!

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<td>Sammy Snake</td>
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Are you holding your pencil correctly?  Are you sitting comfortably and with good posture?
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number Rhymes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tall and straight but leaning over number one is a tired soldier.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Around and down and across we go number two is made just so.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Round and round like a little bee, Sniffing flowers is number three.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Slanted down to near the line, Turn right and across, four is so fine.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>His head is first, his body is so fat. And don’t forget on top his hat.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Straight little back and a big round tummy. Number six is oh, so funny.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Left to right and down we zoom, Number seven is standing in the room.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Make an S and do not stop, Until you reach the very top.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Along and round and up and down, Number 9 is a real clown.</td>
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