

GROVELY STATE SCHOOL

PREP YEAR



**LIFELONG CURIOUS LEARNERS THROUGH
QUALITY PROGRAMS
MAINSTREAM AND MONTESSORI**



What is Prep?

Grovely State School commits to fostering lifelong curious learners in our school community.

Curriculum is student-focused, aims to maximise achievement for all students and provides opportunities for enrichment. Student learning opportunities are scaffolded to support students towards becoming independent learners.

At Grovely State School the foundation for building connections between home and school begin with shared goals between home and school to support each child's individual development.

Prep provides the foundation for your child's success at school by developing:

- *A positive approach to learning*
- *Independence and confidence*
- *Thinking and problem solving skills*
- *Language skills*
- *Early literacy and numeracy*
- *Physical abilities including gross and fine motor skills*



Children must be 5 by 30 June in the year they start Prep.



Prep is a full-time program and children attend from Monday to Friday during normal school hours from 8.50am to 3pm.

The Curriculum

The Australian Curriculum and Early Years Curriculum Guidelines and ACARA (Australian Curriculum) provides teachers with a framework for interacting with children as well as planning, assessing, reflecting and reporting on an effective Preparatory Year Curriculum.

Children are assessed and reported on English, Maths, Science, History, Geography and the Arts. They are also reported on the areas of active learning processes and social emotional development.

A balanced Curriculum provides opportunities for children to participate in all 5 contexts for learning regularly and throughout a range of contexts daily. The 5 contexts for learning and development consist of:

- *Real life situations*
- *Investigations/Inquiry*
- *Routines and transitions*
- *Targeted learning - next steps in learning for children*
- *Teaching literacy and numeracy skills*



Mainstream Prep



Prep in our Mainstream classroom generally consists of an open space for group and individual activities with a carpeted area for the whole group experiences like story telling and singing.

There is a kitchenette/preparation area and access to an outdoor learning area. Prep classes comprise up to 30 students. In some schools, Prep children maybe included in composite classes. A key feature of Prep is that it makes connections between school and children's experiences at home, kindy and childcare.

In Prep your child will have opportunities to learn in many different ways, for example through investigation and play. Children are encouraged to develop independence and personal organisational skills. Working with other children and adults is also an important life skill that is part of the Prep program.

In Mainstream Prep, children will be:

- ▶ Participating in structured early literacy lessons and experiences - vocabulary and sight word development, shared and guided reading, modelled and scaffolded pre-writing and writing experiences
- ▶ Engaging in scaffolded mathematical investigations and inquiry based learning
- ▶ Using blocks, creating collages and engaging in a range of fine motor enhancing experiences
- ▶ Drawing and painting to encourage oral language, reading and writing skills
- ▶ Initiating and participating in dramatic play to build an understanding of the world around them
- ▶ Being encouraged to apply early literacy and numeracy concepts as part of their play
- ▶ Playing and investigating independently, in pairs, small groups and as a whole class
- ▶ Participating in outdoor activities
- ▶ Planning with the Teacher
- ▶ Participating in music and experiences

These learning experiences will help children to:

- ▶ Understand and use language to group, sort and describe objects and to communicate ideas, feelings and needs
- ▶ Develop early literacy and numeracy skills
- ▶ Develop independence and problem solving skills
- ▶ Learn how to cooperate with others
- ▶ Develop physical coordination skills
- ▶ Listen, respond to and give directions
- ▶ Increase self-confidence



Montessori Prep



What is Prep in a Montessori Environment?

Maria Montessori believed strongly in the innate capacity to do their own learning. She recognised learning is stipulated by an inner need and carries for the child its own innovations and rewards.

Children in a Montessori Cycle 1 classroom, often work alone or in small groups. Each child is given the time and space to explore and complete their own work. The children participate as community members learning to be responsible to making choices in their environment and learning.

Discipline in the classroom is critical - inner discipline is what is being developed in the children. A disciplined and focused child is calm.

Key Principles of the prepared environment:

- **Independence**
- **Order**
- **Choice**
- **Multi-age**
- **Control of error**
- **Materials**



The classroom belongs to the children. To allow time to be given to the prepared environment classrooms are open in the afternoon rather than the morning for this to occur.

What is expected of your child in a Montessori Classroom?

Each child is expected to complete self work each day, as well as undertaking appropriate Montessori work of their own choosing. This leads towards independence, time management, responsibility and life-long learning.

Each Child:

- Shows respect for self, others and the environment
- Displays good manners
- Tries their best
- Is careful with materials
- Does not interfere with others
- Exhibits behaviours that do not impact adversely on the behaviour of others
- Works alone sometimes and also with others
- Makes good choices
- Chooses activities independently
- Concentrates on their work
- Returns materials properly
- Helps and cooperates with others
- Looks after all personal belongings
- Participates positively in all lessons, excursions and projects
- Has a go in choosing challenging work

How will I prepare my child for Prep?

Preparing your child and also yourself is a process that commences well in advance of the weekend prior to the first school day. It involves many months of preparation and organisation.

Detailed in a suggestion list:

- ▶ Buy the school book pack, uniform, hat, socks, shoes, lunchbox, drink bottle, bag and label all of your child's items. This helps to ensure nothing is lost and if lost can be found and easily identified.
- ▶ Encourage your child to be independent by helping them to learn how to dress and undress themselves, practice daily hygiene routines.
- ▶ Being responsible for and being able to identify their own belongings, caring for and putting away play equipment, eating and drinking without help (including opening lunchboxes and wrappers).
- ▶ Work with your child to develop his or her communication skills, such as using appropriate greetings and responding to others including verbalising his or her own needs.
- ▶ Speak positively to your child about going to school.
- ▶ Do not show your own anxiety to your child - ***trust your Teachers.***



*Educating your child
for their future....*

Familiarise your child with the School environment and routine by:

- ▶ Driving or walking by the school a few times so that the school becomes a familiar place.
- ▶ Making sure your child knows how to get home from school safely or where to wait for you in the afternoon or where to go for after-school care.
- ▶ Visiting the school, if possible, when other children are there so that your child can get used to the number of children, the playground and the movement of children around the school grounds.
- ▶ Introducing your child to other children in the neighbourhood who will be attending the same school.
- ▶ Read to your child regularly, let them be exposed to this medium. It helps them to acquire skills so that they too will become a reader.
- ▶ Allow them to help you with the organisation of things e.g. setting the table, cleaning up, preparing the dinner, choosing a bedtime story to read.
- ▶ Use play as a medium to help them acquire skills and knowledge e.g. basic shapes, colours, comparisons - big/small, heavy/light, self help skills, counting, recognition of letters/sounds, cutting, name writing.
- ▶ Ensure that you regularly talk about the commencement of the Prep year with your child and what it may involve e.g. going to big school, meeting friends, Teachers, particularly in educational programs, listening, following instructions etc. It is important that this is done in a positive way.
- ▶ Begin a nightly routine at least 1 month prior to commencement of school. Set a bedtime and follow through - dinner, bath, bedtime story, sleep.



Making the first day a success!!!!

It is important that the night before and the first morning of Prep are as relaxed as possible. Ensuring that you and your child are organised and well prepared enables an enjoyable experience.

Night before:

- Ensure that your child is in bed at the agreed time the night before.
- Talk through a few simple self-help ideas e.g. asking Teachers for help or directions.
- Be positive and encouraging about your child's attendance at school.
- Prepare for and pack your child's bag with them (hat, lunchbox, drink bottle, book pack, spare set of clothes including underpants).



First day:

- ▶ ***Provide your child with a good breakfast - cereal, toast and drink.***
- ▶ ***Arrive at school by 8.45am. Please do not be late on the first day. Proceed to the school hall. Class groups will be detailed on the wall and children will proceed to classes at 9am with classroom Teacher.***
- ▶ ***Leave book pack at designated spot, these will be taken to the classroom.***
- ▶ ***Say goodbye. Please leave promptly even if your child is upset. Your child's needs will be attended to.***

Packing your child's school lunch:

- ▶ Growing and active bodies and thinking minds need good fuel for sustainability throughout the school day. Your child's school lunch contributes to their ability to be able to concentrate, as well as apply themselves to all developmental learning tasks. A few tips when making your child's school lunch daily: **Provide healthy food and drink in realistic quantities for morning tea and lunch.** Ensure that your child can open and unwrap their lunch - plastic wrap can be very difficult for little fingers. **Provide a variety of smaller items rather than one or two large items.** Provide a water bottle everyday and encourage your child to drink from it. **Keep sweets, chips and other party food for parties or special occasions.**

Picking up your child:

Mainstream Prep

- ▶ Arrive at the under covered area (right side of E Block). Parents are invited into the classroom to collect their child.

Montessori Prep

- ▶ Children will be escorted by Teachers to the under covered area outside (left side of E Block).

Older siblings can collect children with a prior arrangement. Children in OHSC will be collected by Staff.

How to become involved in Grovely's community!

As a Parent/Caregiver you are a major contributor towards your child's education. At Grovely we encourage and look forward to your impending support by:

- ▶ Introducing yourself to your child's Teacher.
- ▶ Sharing information with your child's Teacher.
- ▶ Keeping the Teacher informed of any changes that may affect your child.
- ▶ Talking with your child about their day.
- ▶ Attending Parent information sessions.
- ▶ Accessing the school newsletter.
- ▶ Attending school events and have fun!
- ▶ Participating in a safe walking to school program with other children or families who live nearby.
- ▶ Attending Parent association meetings and talking to other Parents.
- ▶ Volunteering to attend school excursions or participate in classroom activities.

Making your child's first year of education a success!

Fostering the first year of your child's education contributes to the success of their learning journey pathway.

Regardless of your choice of pedagogy Mainstream or Montessori you can help your child's progress at school by adopting some simple steps:

- ▶ Value the importance of attending.
- ▶ Have conversations with your child about their school day.
- ▶ Read daily to your child and ask them questions about the text you have shared together e.g. who were the main characters in the book? What happened first/next? What was your favourite part?
- ▶ Play a variety of games and board games including early number, language, problem solving and social skilling.
- ▶ Spend time together as a family - take part in activities such as shopping, working in the garden, going to the beach.
- ▶ Find opportunities to write with your child e.g. name writing, shopping lists, letters, stories, labelling features of constructions, drawings.
- ▶ Sing familiar songs and nursery rhymes.
- ▶ Encourage your child's autonomy and independence to encouraging him or her to pass on school notices and newsletters or to pack his or her school bag each day.
- ▶ Encourage and foster your child's natural curiosity. Question them, allow them to question you and try and find out answers independently and together about many topics.
- ▶ Get to know the families around you.

"They may forget what you said but they will never forget how you made them feel."

Carol Buchner