



The Gap State School

Prep Enrolment Frequently Asked Questions

What is distinct about your school?

The Gap State School is one of four fine options for primary education in the Brisbane western suburb of The Gap. Established in 1912, we are the oldest primary school in The Gap with our buildings and facilities reflecting our school's proud history of growth and development. Our school is renowned for consistently educating students to high academic standards with a strong sense of connection to their community. All students benefit from a tradition of physical activity, including learning to swim in our onsite pool, and music education with specialist instrumental and choral music learning opportunities.



What will be the benefits for my child at your school?

As your child's local school, lasting friendships will be formed as your family connects with an aspirational community committed to nurturing secure early years educational foundations of knowledge, skills and positive dispositions to learning. Your child will grow to understand that our school expects hard work, giving one's best effort in all contexts and being tolerant of individual difference, as we collectively strive for success.



Why should we choose your school?

As a proud state school, operating under the auspices of the Queensland Department of Education, our school achieves the high standards of student achievement and demonstrated quality management and leadership expertise by the Principal, to warrant Independent Public School status. With a school council supporting school governance and an active, committed Parents and Citizens Association, our school aligns its strategic plan and subsequent operational practices to attain continual improvement and high satisfaction levels across the school community. As the largest and oldest primary school in The Gap, our consistency of results with strong connection to The Gap State High School make our site a school of choice in The Gap.



What is the process for enrolment?

All students residing within The Gap State School catchment area, according to the Department of Education catchment map (link available on our website) and under the school enrolment management plan, are guaranteed a place at our school. Siblings of currently enrolled students and children of school employees are also offered an enrolment place. All other expressions of interest for enrolment from families who reside out of the school's catchment area are considered as places become available.

In-catchment and sibling enrolments are confirmed in Term 2. Some out of catchment offers may be made in Term 2. Most offers however are confirmed in Term 3 of the preceding year of enrolment.

An enrolment interview will be organised when it is determined that a child is eligible for enrolment at the school, based on the above conditions. Completion of the interview will confirm the enrolment place, once sighting of original supporting documents of residency and the student's evidence of identity (birth certificate or passport) has occurred.



We don't live in catchment. When might we know if we can enrol our child at The Gap State School?

The number of out of catchment enrolment offers made each year depends on the number of in-catchment and sibling enrolments received by the school in Term 2. Each year, three Prep classes are offered with a maximum of 25 students in each class. Typically, some out of catchment offers are made in Term 2, with enrolment places largely finalised in Term 3.





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Is there a numbered list for out of catchment enrolment enquiries and if so, can I find out what my number is?

Expressions of interest for enrolment received from families whose home sits outside of the school's catchment area, are recorded in order of date of receipt and out of catchment enrolment offers are typically made in the same order, however other factors may need to be considered by the Principal, in line with the enrolment management plan.



How do we know if our child is ready to start Prep?

Students turning five by June 30 in the calendar year of enrolment are eligible to enrol in Prep. If you have any concerns regarding your child's readiness, your child's current pre-prep or kindy teacher is recommended as your first point of contact for consultation regarding your child's strengths and readiness to successfully commence the preparatory year in primary school.



What should we be doing to help our child be ready for Prep?

All of the recommendations from your child's current pre-prep or kindy teacher are supported by our school. Your child's current rate of growth and development is demanding and crucial in laying the foundations of success in the more formal primary school setting. Your child needs to be well rested and nourished every day. Their social and emotional learning needs and well-being must be supported in a safe, predictable environment, with clearly understood expectations and rules to guide acceptable choices resulting in favourable consequences and outcomes.

Your child's *gross motor* development and *core strength* is essential, as are their opportunities to learn to socialise and play with similar aged peers. Sharing, waiting one's turn, delaying gratification and managing emotions, including disappointment and the challenge of entering new environments and meeting new people, are all abilities and attributes that will aid a successful transition to the Prep year.

Fine motor skill development is an essential determiner of success in the Prep year. Your child will be expected to continue to develop and strengthen the skills established in the pre-school or kindy program. Including strengthening activities in your child's play at home in the six months leading up to the commencement of Prep is most helpful. These activities may include manipulating pliable materials such as playdough, clay and mud; engaging in sand and water play; threading with small objects such as beads or pasta and through holes; scrunching and tearing paper; smaller puzzle piece construction and Lego play; using a pincer grip, tweezers, clothes pegs; small and soft ball catching and throwing. All of these activities contribute to your child being able to have the strength and dexterity to efficiently draw, write, cut and manipulate small objects with their fingers and hands to successfully engage with the expected learning tasks in the Prep program.



How many Prep classes do you have?

Three



How many children are in each class?

Whilst a maximum of 25 students is permissible, generally class sizes are slightly less.





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How are classes formed?

Balanced classes are created based upon the information received at the enrolment interview from parents and the child, through conversation with each child's pre-prep or kindy teacher and observations at the Visit in Prep (VIP) morning in November of the year prior to Prep.



Who are the teachers?

Our current Prep teachers are highly experienced early years educators with strong connections to our local community.



Will the Prep teachers be the same next year?

Whilst unforeseen circumstances may occur warranting significant changes to staff allocations, typically this occurs infrequently in Prep. Any teacher assigned to a Prep class is an experienced teacher well suited to the demands and expectations of this unique teaching role.



Can I choose my child's teacher?

Whilst families of children who have an older sibling previously taught by a current Prep teacher may indicate their preference for the same teacher for their subsequent child or not, for a variety of reasons this preference may or may not be considered in the formation of classes and the allocation of teachers to these classes.

We aim for every child to have a friend in their class or at least to know a friendly face from their pre-prep class. Students from kindy settings are typically placed across the three classes.

The formation of balanced classes at the Principal's discretion is the primary determinant in the teacher allocation process.



Our kindy teacher has mentioned a few concerns to us. We thought we would wait until he/she started school to see how things went first. What do you think?

We always recommend that parents carefully consider the kindy teacher's suggestions and take action promptly. Early intervention to support a child's development where necessary is always recommended. Our school has no capacity to facilitate hearing assessments or any therapy service, apart from a very limited speech language pathology service. We strongly recommend that parents do not 'wait and see'. Early investigation through referral is our advice, in consultation with and as recommended by your child's current pre-prep or kindy teacher.



What is your curriculum? Is it play-based?

Our school follows the Australian Curriculum, as do all state schools in Queensland. It is not considered a play-based curriculum, however our Prep teachers ensure age appropriate pedagogies, or ways of teaching and learning, are used.



What do children learn in Prep?

Student learning is based on the Foundation level of the Australian Curriculum. The achievement standards and content descriptors are available online.

The end of year achievement standards for the Prep year are located under the Foundation level statements for English, Mathematics, Science, HASS (Humanities and Social Sciences), Technologies, Health and Physical Education and The Arts. <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/parent-information/>



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When do Prep students start to swim?

Preps begin swimming in Term 1. The emphasis of the Australian Curriculum is water safety. With an onsite heated swimming pool all students from Prep to Year 6 swim in Terms 1 and 4, every year. All students participate in an end of year swimming carnival applicable to their year level. All students over the course of their enrolment at our school not only learn to swim but establish water safety competencies promoting a healthy, active lifestyle.

We've heard you have a good music program, what do you do?

Our music program is recognised as one of the highest quality music programs in the state. With a proud history of excellent music teachers, the Early Years foundation of two specialist music lessons establishes a strong platform of knowledge, skills and a love of creating music together. Our award-winning choral and instrumental music programs are well subscribed and supported by a dedicated group of parents who form the Music Supporters' Group, a sub-committee of the Parents and Citizen's Association, fondly known as the MSG. Our primary school has strong links with The Gap State High School with many of our senior students joining the Accelerated Music Program in Year 7.

My child is quite bright, they are already showing an interest in reading. How does your school cater for different abilities?

Each teacher is responsible for recognising and accommodating for the needs of every child. Whilst the Australian Curriculum is set, with assistance from other support staff as required, adjustments are made to ensure your child is learning at their level of developmental need to ensure success and continued engagement and progress in the learning process.

Do Prep students have different start and finish times?

The school day is the same for all students. 8.40am – 2.50pm.

Do Prep students have different play times to the rest of the school?

No. All students eat and play at the same time. Prep students however, have designated eating and play areas which have Prep members of staff in attendance to supervise and support students.

How is behaviour managed at your school?

Learning behaviours are actively taught at our school for all year levels beginning in Prep. School and classroom rules are reinforced through the school's Positive Behaviour for Learning plan (PBL), a weekly, sequential approach included in teaching programs and school assemblies.

Our whole school social and emotional learning program 'You Can Do It' compliments the PBL program to develop in every student the key attributes of a successful learner and school community member: Confidence, Persistence, Resilience, Organisation and Getting Along. Student problem solving and conflict resolution skills are also taught as part of this program.

Our school has clearly stated school expectations for all students:

- Be a learner
- Be safe
- Be respectful
- Be responsible
- Be kind



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For students whose behaviours do not match these expectations, classroom teachers and support staff redirect and guide these students through reflective conversations and practices to reshape behaviour choices. This work will often support students to redress the consequences of their actions and to make better choices in the future. Parents are informed of significant incidences at school when such conversations are required.



What does your school do about bullying?

Our school defines bullying as repeated intentional behaviours to exert power over another. Our school takes all such incidences very seriously. Our school culture promotes, expects and accepts reports of such actions responding quickly to address and resolve the circumstances for all involved, as per our school's Student Code of Conduct. Where applicable and necessary, additional specialised support is engaged to support students and families impacted.



How many staff are in each Prep classroom?

Each class has an experienced teacher and full-time teacher aide in the classroom.

Prep students also receive weekly specialist lessons from the PE and Music teachers and the Teacher / Librarian.



My child has a medical condition / allergy. How will that be managed?

All information is initially received at the enrolment interview and then updated regularly as changes occur. This information is stored on the Department of Education secure database and shared with respective members of staff, as required to ensure the safety of students at all times.



I / my partner went to this school as a child, can our son / daughter be in the same sports house?

Yes, you may. Please mention this during the enrolment interview.



What do we have to pay for at your school?

Staff allocated to our school by the Department of Education, facilities and general running costs of the school are of no cost to parents. All uniforms, equipment, consumables and materials used by students, and any additional programs, including swimming, incursions or excursions are paid by parents. Invoices for relevant class events are usually issued toward the end of the term prior to the event taking place.



What are the uniform requirements?

The Gap State School is a full uniform school. This means that the P & C endorse the wearing of the school uniform in its entirety by every student, as an expectation upon enrolment. Uniforms are purchased through the P & C operated, onsite uniform shop. The Uniform Shop has a full online shopping capacity.

Further details about uniform purchases will be issued to parents later in the school year.



Do you have before and after school care?

Yes. The out of school hours and vacation care provider at The Gap State School is YMCA. We have a well-established and close working relationship with Ms Delina Wombold, a nationally recognised coordinator of the program and her staff. The provider at our school is consistently recognised for the high quality of



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service provided and regularly showcased for their operational standards of achievement. Prep students are personally accompanied to the rooms every morning and collected at the end of the school day. Provision is made during the summer vacation prior to the commencement of the Prep year for students to attend YMCA to familiarise themselves with the program and staff. The YMCA rooms are located nearby the Prep precinct in lower E Block. Enrolment enquiries for YMCA occur separately with details available on the YMCA website. Future enrolments for Out of School Hours Care typically open in October.



When can we visit the school again?

Please refer to the transition program of events included in your enrolment pack. More information about each event will be emailed to enrolled families closer to those dates.



Does your school have fridges for children's lunches?

No. Students store their lunches in an insulated lunch bag which they keep in their school bag and take to and from their designated eating area at each lunch break.



Will someone help my child with their lunch and toileting?

Prep aged students are expected to be able to manage their own belongings, including lunchboxes, ability to eat, toilet and dress themselves (before and after swimming lessons). Students are expected to be able to take their shoes and socks off and on, e.g. when playing in the sand pit. Our experienced Prep staff will be on-hand to support and guide students as their independence and confidence develops.



How will I receive more information about what I have to do for my child to be ready for Prep?

Throughout the remainder of the year parents will be informed via email of significant upcoming events, activities and processes to support your child's successful transition to the Prep year.

