



POMONA STATE SCHOOL
Station Street
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**Starting Prep and Year 1
in 2010
at
Pomona
State School**

Caring, Sharing and Achieving Together

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

We look forward to your child starting our school. It is a time of change and parents often ask what they can do to assist the educational progress of their child. This guide has been prepared to give you some ideas. It accompanies our general Parent Handbook.

It is important to teachers that contact with parents is established and maintained early in the year and we are happy to initiate this partnership with parents in this guide.

Please do not hesitate to call on your child's teacher or myself at any time you have a question or concern about the educational progress or development of your child.

I hope you will find the information in this package useful.

Regards

Sharyn Rieger

**Acting Principal
Pomona State School**

BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS

WE SUGGEST YOU:

- Introduce the school. Drive past many times. Talk about what will happen. Show your child over the school so they know where the toilets are and where you will pick them up
- Visit your family doctor or clinic to get complete physical examinations, including speech, hearing and vision, and let us know if there are special circumstances we need to cater for.
- Check that all relevant vaccinations are current.



HELPFUL HABITS:

Encourage your child to develop helpful habits. Please take the time to mark off the things you know your child can do, then practise or discuss the others.



- Can put on and fasten own shoes
 - Cooperate and share with others
 - Be responsible – help with household chores, etc.
 - Be a good listener – give your child simple instructions to follow.
 - Be organised and tidy – have a regular tidy up time at home.
 - Persist with a task to completion, seeking help if needed
- Have a regular home routine – medical advice recommends that Prep and Year 1 children have 10-12 hours of sleep each night.
 - Be able to dress themselves – encourage independence.
 - Organise their school bag each night before a school day.
 - Be responsible for their own belongings as this will be necessary to organise their home reading later in the year.
 - Use common courtesies
 - asking to go to the toilet politely
 - not interrupting adults
 - using names when speaking to people

- Be able to use the toilet and wash hands independently. This includes routines such as paper use and hand washing. Children need to be able to monitor when they need to use a toilet and should not need reminding. Parents are asked to talk with their children about the signs that tell them when they need to go.
- Manage own lunchbox (i.e. take off lids and unwrap food) and drink bottle.

TEACH YOUR CHILD TO BE SAFE

Your child should know the following and should be able to answer clearly:



- Full name – **first and surname**
- Phone number **and** home address
- Method of getting home, and where to wait within the school grounds if being collected by an adult or older sibling
- Traffic rules, i.e. crossing the road, using the school crossing
- Discuss **some protective behaviours** with your child, i.e. who to go to for help, appropriate touching.

FOOD AND EATING AT SCHOOL

Eating is a big part of the Prep routine at school. It is essential that children have a nutritious meal at morning tea and lunch breaks – a meal that helps get them through the busy day. There have been many studies on child nutrition and we are bombarded with what is best for our children. Water is so important, and in Prep we ask children to drink water constantly through the day. Juices and cordials are not encouraged and we ask that water be the only drink sent to school or milk as a treat in the lunch box. Fresh foods such as fruit, cut up vegetables, yoghurt and cheese are terrific lunch items. 'Packaged' foods such as rollups, muesli bars, chips and sweets are discouraged.

At Prep and in Year 1 students eat their main meal such as a sandwich, salad, pasta or meat selection at morning tea which is at 10:40 am. This is when children are most hungry. Often breakfast is eaten early in the morning, often rushed as busy house holds start their day, so children can be quite hungry by morning tea. It is also a lovely time to sit and talk about important issues, just like you might sit at a dinner table and share your day at home. So, eating times are very important learning experiences in the lower school as good independent eating habits are started.

SHOW THAT LEARNING IS FUN

Show your child that learning is fun. Do not force learning on your child but enjoy these activities together.



PRE-READING AND PRE-WRITING

- Encourage climbing, jumping, running, skipping
- Cut and paste pictures – make an 'animal' book, a 'flower' book, a 'car' book etc.
- Sew up pieces of paper or material
- Model with dough or clay
- Put jigsaw puzzles together
- Draw shapes/pictures. Display and discuss these.
- Trace over patterns, letter, child's name.
- Provide a blackboard and chalks.
- Finger painting
- Play word games such as Memory and Concentration, simple card games.
- Play rhyming games and word games like 'I Spy'.
- Learn Colour names.
- Read and discuss story books daily.
- Read and discuss alphabet books.
- Correct 'baby' speech patterns by encouragement,
 - eg. t.b. = T.V.
 - fank you = thank you
 - wolly = lolly

PRE-MATHEMATICS

- Sort shells, buttons, etc into:
 - different shapes, eg. circle, square, rectangle, triangle
 - different sizes, eg. big, little
 - different colours, eg. red, blue, green, yellow
 - different thickness, eg. thick, thin
 - position eg. behind, between etc.
- Count actual objects up to 10
- One to one correspondence – touching, pointing, crossing out when counting
- Help with cooking – discuss measuring, temperatures, time.
- Recognise coins – e.g. 5c, 10c, 20c, \$1, \$2

GETTING READY FOR THE FIRST DAY CHECKLIST

- Make full payment of the Prep Parent Contribution by the end of the year, so that all equipment can be purchased promptly.
- Cover and name all books and stationery.
- Give your child a few practice lunches. They will need practice at opening new lunchboxes, drink bottles, yoghurt containers, unwrapping plastic wrappers, etc. on their own
- Ensure your child has a school bag large enough to accommodate all items required each day – including a foolscap sized reading folder, lunch box, drink bottle, hat, spare clothes, library bag, jumper in Winter, etc
- Have your child in the habit of wearing a hat outside – **No hat - No shoes – No play** is one of our school rules.
- Clearly name all items of clothing – hats, jumpers, also school bags and library bags. (It is an idea to have a change of underclothes in a plastic bag left permanently in their school bag.)
- Discuss travel/pick up arrangements beforehand. Don't wait until the first morning to give your child important details about where to wait/who'll be meeting them, etc.
- Discuss coming to school often, and in as positive and enthusiastic a manner as possible. Highlight the fun and interesting aspects such as making lots of friends, learning new things. Don't reinforce unrealistic expectations, e.g. learning to read or write in a day or two!
- Discuss problem solving skills to help social interaction with other students.

THE BIG DAY HAS ARRIVED

Some points to remember for your child's first day at school:

- Have your child's things organised the night before so that the beginning of the day goes smoothly and you do not have to rush.
- Plan morning tea and lunch with your child and pack food that is healthy and that your child likes.
- Be positive and talk about the new things in a happy way.
- Don't slip away. Always tell your child you are leaving and that you will be back after a definite event such as lunch time.
- Encourage your child when they make things to show you, because lots of effort went into them.
- Arrive on time, but not too early, as a long wait may add to the strain and tension – about 8.30am would be suitable.

- Tell your child that you will be back to collect them from school at 3 o'clock. Practise when this is at home: after lunch, keep checking the clock with them for when it is 3 o'clock.
- Make arrangements for transportation and meeting your child. Make sure they understand these clearly.
- Be positive when picking children up. Do not ask if they have been good. Ask them about their day, what they've done and with whom they've played.
- Leave cheerfully – letting go may be hard, but don't let your doubts or nervousness dampen your child's enthusiasm. PLEASE DON'T REMAIN UNLESS THE CLASS TEACHER INVITES YOU TO. This only prolongs uncertainty for your child and may start a habit which may be difficult to break.
- Name **ALL** clothing (including underwear – for swimming days) books, pencils, lunch boxes and drink bottles. It is helpful to have a bright picture or patterned contact on books to make it easy for your child to distinguish his/her books.
- Provide your child with a clearly named hat - remember '**No hat – No shoes – No play**'.
- Let the teachers know if anything is happening in your family that might upset your child at school

COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR CHILD

During the first week of school you can expect your excited child to be telling you about many things. These are very important to your youngster. Please find time to talk about what is happening at school with your child. She or he will:

- meet teachers. Say 'Hello' each morning.
- discover the wonders of the classroom environment.
- be very aware of the 'big kids'.
- learn some of the rules of his/her classroom.
- have his/her own place in the classroom.

Some children, when they first start school, find it so stressful they don't want to go. They may get tummy aches or be tearful in the mornings. If this happens to your child listen to their fears. Try not to let them see you are worried. Let them know that you believe that they can manage to go to school and you will help them. Ask them what they think would help, for example, going with a neighbour instead of you may help. If the worries don't get better, talk to the teacher about the best way to help your child. Forcing children sometimes does more harm than good.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We are keen to have you in our classrooms to help with some activities. It is, however, necessary that this takes place in an organised manner rather than a drop in situation, which can be unsettling for children and for classroom management. We will send home notices early in the term for you to complete, stating times when help is required. We require helpers on a regular basis for reading.

There are many other areas of the school that parents can be involved in. Ask at the office for more information.

Parent volunteers are asked to read and sign an agreement before working in classrooms. This is to ensure safety and confidentiality of all children.

TREASURES FROM HOME

While we do not wish to dampen your child's enthusiasm we would appreciate it if all toys are left at home. Treasures can be lost or broken...they are safer at home.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Children with infectious diseases must be excluded from Prep for specific times. In cases of minor ailments, parents are asked to use their own judgement about whether a child is fit to attend Prep.

If your child has a specific health problem, please discuss this with your child's teacher.

Education Queensland has strict guidelines concerning the administration of medication to students. These guidelines state that:

- ✓ Medication can only be given to a student when it is:
 - accompanied by a written request from the parent/caregiver
 - prescribed by a doctor
 - in the container issued by the pharmacist with the instructions written on it. The instructions must state the child's name, time, the required dosage and the name of the medication that should be given.
- ✗ Please do not send single tablets
- ✗ The staff cannot give children non-prescribed medication such as cough medicine, cough lollies, paracetamol, vitamins. *Please do not send these to Prep.*

BECOMING SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS

To become successful learners children need:

- Love, kindness and friendship
- Regular routines for meal and bed times, also TV viewing
- Good health, including plenty of sleep and nutritious food
- Encouragement and legitimate and genuine praise
- Appropriate teaching techniques and committed teachers.
- Interested adults and communication between home and school.
- Realistic expectations
- Discipline and firmness
- Rules and guidelines
- Desire to learn and purpose for learning
- Regular attendance at school

WHEN THEY LEARN: People learn all their lives. Children learn best if they are safe and secure, if they are loved, healthy and happy.

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY: Play helps a child learn how to:

- Meet new people
- Make friends
- Get along with others
- Share toys, books
- Give and take
- Take turns
- Adapt and cope

HOW TO ESTABLISH AN INTEREST IN READING

- Read to your child each day
- Discuss books and story characters with them
- Encourage them to talk about the books
- Ask questions about the book and really listen to the answers given



- Borrow books from the local libraries
- Show your child that you enjoy reading for your own pleasure. One of the reasons given for the high incidence of reading difficulties in boys is the fact that men do not model reading behaviour to their sons. It is very important that both parents be seen as **READERS**.
- Teach children to care for books
- Encourage correct pronunciation when speaking. Baby talk or poor speech patterns make reading and writing difficult. Insist on initial sounds being clear. Reading and Spelling depend heavily on speech and hearing. Do your utmost to help in this area.
- Join a local library

Note: Reading books doesn't happen on the first day. Remind your child of all the things they can read such as stop signs, food packets, etc

ALPHABET

These are the letters that your child will be learning to write. Please use these letters to model hand writing for your child. Using all capitals to write names is to be discouraged as it is a very difficult habit for children to break.

a *b* *c* *d* *e* *f* *g*
h *i* *j* *k* *l* *m* *n*
o *p* *q* *r* *s* *t* *u*
v *w* *x* *y* *z*

NUMBERS

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

WE WELCOME YOU!

Don't hesitate to discuss any queries or worries that you may have regarding your child's education with your child's teacher. We will try our best to help you.

We are looking forward to sharing a happy and beneficial year with you and your child.

Developing Early Literacy and Numeracy Skills for Year 1

Dear Parents

The following ideas have been compiled in response to many questions from parents about how they can help at home

The responsibility for a child's learning is shared by school and home. We feel it is important for parents to realise that learning is much more effective if parents support the school's efforts with similar experiences at home.

Please peruse the following ideas and select those that you consider suited to your child's individual interests, ability levels and learning style.

Gwen Sands
Principal



Literacy:

- Magnetic letters on fridge
 - What's this letter?
 - What sound does it make?
 - Making words with letters.
- Collecting pictures starting with a certain letter. Paste in a scrapbook, a page for each letter.
- Playing 'I spy' with your child – finding things beginning with a certain letter.
- Sorting pictures and words according to initial letters
 - e.g. "s" words
 - "t" words
- Matching words and pictures (looking at initial letter) - e.g.



cup



tap

- Assist child to recognise his/her name and then to write it.
- Label common items at home and point them out focusing in initial sounds.
 - cupboard
 - mirror
 - door
- Have the alphabet (in order) on show in bedroom, playroom.
- Sometimes scribe for your child. The child tells you what to write. (They'll see how an oral message can be expressed in print).
- Encourage children to 'Have-a-go' at writing words – even if they can only get the initial letter. Give real purposes for 'having a go' at writing.
 - list to buy at the shop
 - thank you note to a relative
 - invitation etc.



(Accept approximations – praise and focus on what is right, don't criticise what is wrong.)

- NB: Don't worry if children write in capital letters or a mixture of both. This is common as children develop.
- Guess spelling e.g. 'Try writing this word e.g. frog.' Child has a go. Look for what is correct e.g. Did he/she get the first letter, last letter, middle sound ?. Taking risks, having a go and accepting that mistakes are a part of learning are necessary if a child is to reach her/his full potential.
- Picture Guess – try writing the word under the picture



How many letters can you hear – what is the first one? – What is the last one?

— — —

- Rhyming word strings. Add to list as words arise. (Hang them somewhere)

set tap an
pet map ran
get cap can
met fan
 man

- Keep a list of 'Words I know'. Continually add words to the list that the child recognises instantly – e.g. Mum, Dad, dog, I. Keep them in a prominent place, e.g. wall of word bricks, placemat, chart.
- Read to your child as often as you can. They absorb more about reading than you realise.
- Ask questions about what you're reading together e.g.
 - What do you think will happen next?
 - Why do you think this happened?
 - Retell what you read to Dad.



This encourages your child to focus on 'making meaning' which is what reading is all about.

- Read and leave off the end word. Encourage your child to "have a go" predicting what it is. "He crept forward slowly and suddenly he _____". This helps the child later in using an important reading strategy of using the clues from the context of what's being read to 'have a go' of a word
- Do everyday reading with your child e.g.
 - consult grocery list together
 - consult T.V. guide together
 - look up a street directory, a phone book, a recipe etc.
 - try to make reading a real part of everyday life. Children who realise how important it is to be able to read and write in real life are more likely to be motivated to succeed.
- Use the environment for pointing out words, e.g.
 - on billboards
 - on road signs
 - in shops
 - focus on finding particular words you're learning to recognise e.g. the, is, and.
- Point out common essential words when reading (the, and, is, here, said, etc.) Encourage your child to try to find them in texts.
- Written conversations – try writing notes to your child. Encourage your child to respond. This really helps your child see writing as a real means of communicating with another person.
- Write notes from others and leave for your child to find e.g. Tooth Fairy, Easter Bunny, Santa, Man in the Moon etc. These are very special to a child. Encourage your child to write to them also.
- Limit television – viewing 1 hour per day is more than enough! There are so many other worthwhile things young children can do including just spending time talking to you.
- Use 'Sentence Makers'. i.e. cards with individual words. Put the cards together to make sentences. This helps children 'write' when their physical skills may not be ready.



I like cake

- Try writing a sentence together – either on from a book you're reading or one you make up together. Cut it up and try putting it back together again – just like a jigsaw!

Numeracy:

- Counting everything '1 to 1' e.g. 'Give me 5 pencils'. Count out 5 pencils, saying the number as you put each one down.
- Adding things 'I have 2 lollies you have 3. How many do we have altogether?' Use real objects. Encourage the child to put the objects together and to count out loud while doing so. Model how to do it.
- Money play
 - recognising coins 'Which one is this?' 'Give me the 20 cent coin'
 - compare value of coins 'Which can buy more?'
 - talk about how much things cost when you shop 'This costs 50 cents'
 - let the child buy occasionally and receive the change.



- Recognising colours is an important skill. Encourage its development e.g.
 - find blue things
 - sort red blocks and yellow blocks
 - name the colours as you go
- Recognise numerals by name. How many is this? Count to 7
- Can you show me this many? Use real objects to demonstrate.
- Continually talk about L & R. Hold out hands in front, fingers and thumbs outstretched. Look at your left hand with thumb out. It forms an L for Left. This works anywhere to help a child know which is Left.
- A number line in your home down the hall is a great idea for teaching sequences of numbers. Count as you walk down the hall.
- Talk about common doubles
 - $5 + 5$ (5 fingers on each hand)
 - $2 + 2$ (2 front legs 2 back legs on a dog)
 - $4 + 4$ (4 legs on one side of spider, 4 on the other)



- Measure things e.g. mass, volume, length and talk about measuring. gm/kg ml/l mm/cm/km sec/min/hr.

REMEMBER

- Everyone is unique. Every child has special interests, certain strengths and particular learning styles
- Everyone develops at different rates. (Age is not a determinant of ability!)
- Everyone needs to have success, to feel good and to have confidence to tackle new tasks.
- Everyone needs to enjoy learning in order to learn.

For further ideas and information please see us. We are willing to assist in any way we can.

The early years are the most receptive time in a child's life for learning. The time you put in now will reap valuable rewards in later years always. Keep it a fun filled exciting experience. If children resist any activities don't pursue them, try something else. Children simply may not be ready or the activities may not suit their particular learning styles.