Prep Parent Handbook

2014 – 2015

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## CONTENTS PAGE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information:</th>
<th>Page:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome to Harristown</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Motto</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Overview</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absences</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrivals &amp; Departures</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour Management</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Partnerships Between Home and School</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Needs</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Response Procedures</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursions / Activities</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Day at Prep</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting your child set for Prep</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost Property</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents &amp; Citizens Association</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep Hours</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep Program</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuckshop</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniform</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor’s Pass System</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What to Bring to Prep</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WELCOME TO HARRISTOWN

At Harristown State school we strive for excellence in education. We have a team of highly professional and caring staff who are committed to the provision of a safe, nurturing school environment that supports students to reach their potential and develop into active and productive members of society.

Welcome to Harristown State School. We look forward to providing your child a rewarding year in Prep where they will grow and develop their skills and knowledge through many exciting and challenging learning experiences including:

- listening, responding to and giving directions
- learning how to cooperate with others
- becoming independent thinkers and problem solvers
- understanding and using language to communicate ideas, feelings and needs
- developing literacy, numeracy and scientific skills through a range of meaningful learning contexts.

SCHOOL MOTTO

Our school motto is: Towards Excellence Together. By setting high expectations we encourage our students to try their best and strive towards excellence in everything they do.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Harristown State School caters for students from Prep to Year 7. Our school is set on extensive grounds including 3 sports ovals, tennis and basketball courts, netball courts, cricket practice nets and a 25m heated swimming pool. We have a purpose built early years play area featuring a large all-weather sandpit, 3 play structures and plenty of free space. Our brand new Performing Arts Hall compliments our engaging Arts program. Digital classroom delivery is evident in every classroom with electronic whiteboards and data projectors in all classrooms.

We have a comprehensive whole school curriculum program covering Prep to Year 7 that is directly linked to the Australian Curriculum. Curriculum delivery is supported by close tracking of individual student learning, a range of specialist and intervention programs and opportunities for extension activities. Harristown SS also has a Special Education Program running throughout the school.
The school has an inclusive policy where students with disabilities are supported within their class group whenever possible.

Our school staff are committed to high quality teaching and learning and value the strong home school partnerships that exist. We work together to set high expectations to ensure that every day, in every classroom, every student is learning and achieving.

**ABSENCES**

If your child is unwell, please call the school office or send a note to your child's teacher on his/ her return to school. We believe that every school day counts and any prolonged or frequently unexplained absences will be investigated.

If your child needs to be absent from school for an extended period, please inform the school in advance so that arrangements can be made for a package of school work to be provided.

**ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES**

Children must be brought to and collected from school by a responsible adult known to the teacher. If at any time you arrange for someone else to collect your child, please inform their teacher of the arrangement. Parents must accompany their child to and from the Prep classroom.

Parent's cars are not permitted to enter the school grounds without prior permission from the Principal.

Whether arriving by car, bicycle or on foot, you need to use a pedestrian entrance. In the interest of safety, students must not take a short cut through staff car parks.

**BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT**

It is our aim at Harristown State School to provide a safe, caring environment for all members of our school community. At our school, we believe that it is most effective for school personnel and parents to work together to provide a consistent approach to behaviour management.

The School’s Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students includes a comprehensive range of school-wide positive behavioural support strategies and a clearly scaffolded range of consequences.
Each classroom displays, teaches and enforces a set of classroom rules and the school playground rules. We have a number of procedures to reward positive behaviours at Harristown State School as we recognise and value the contribution our students make.

**BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL**

As a parent, you play a vital role in your child’s education. By getting involved in the school you can help your child make a smooth and happy start to their education.

You can do this 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 positively with your child about their day
- attending parent information sessions
- reading the school newsletter
- attending P & C meetings
- volunteering to attend school excursions or participate in classroom activities

You can also help your child progress at school by taking these steps at home:

Take an interest in your child’s schooling and value the importance of attending. Ask your child over dinner: ‘What new things did you do at school today?’

Read aloud to your child. Reading aloud helps develop the imagination, because it allows listeners to form a picture in their minds. It also helps develop an awareness of the patterns of language.

Provide a variety of experiences to stimulate your child’s imagination — for example, visit the zoo, park or airport.

Play card games and board games with your child. This helps to develop mathematical, problem-solving, language and social skills such as turn-taking and not always winning.

Spend time together as a family — activities such as shopping, going to the park or working in the garden build children’s awareness and knowledge of the world around them as well as develop language skills.
Find opportunities to write with your child. This includes making lists for grocery shopping or things to take on trips and writing letters. These opportunities build children's awareness of vocabulary and the importance of reading and writing. Sing familiar songs and nursery rhymes together with your child.

Show respect for your child's natural curiosity. Be patient and try to find the time to answer the many questions they ask or make ways to find answers together.

Help your child become responsible and independent by encouraging him or her to pass on school notices and newsletters or to pack his or her school bag each day.

COMMUNICATION

A newsletter, with all messages from our school community, is sent home each fortnight, to the youngest child in the family. Please remember to ask you children for the newsletter each week so that you know what is happening and when. We also post messages and calendar events on our school website.

Prep can be a very busy place with many things happening each day. For this reason your child's teacher will have a special place near the front door where notices will be put. Please make sure that an adult check this each day. After Term 1, Prep students will begin to bring home a Homework folder containing a home reader and sight words that they will need to practice daily.

Please inform the teacher of any important events in your family life as these can be a major concern or excitement for children and it may affect their behaviour.

Individual parent interviews will be held at the end of Term 1 and Term 3. Individual Student report cards will be sent home at the end of each semester.

Please ensure that at all times you provide the school with your most recent contact details. It is very important to notify the office of any changes in addresses or phone numbers - including home, father's and mother's work and mobile numbers and emergency or alternate contact details. This will help us to make contact quickly if an emergency arises.
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

As students and families have unique needs, we offer the services of the following support staff:

- Guidance Officer
- Speech Language Pathologist
- Access to OT and Physiotherapist
- HOSES (Head of Special Education Services)
- STLAN (Support Teacher - Literacy & Numeracy)

Students may be referred to these services by teachers, administrators or by parent request during the year. Please be supportive if your child’s teacher approaches you as we are aiming to ensure that your child is learning and achieving success.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES

Emergencies lead to mainly two types of response:

- An evacuation of rooms - An evacuation is signalled by a siren being sounded over the school PA.
- A lockdown of rooms - A lock down is signalled by the continuous ringing of the school bell.

Regular drills are performed so that the students are familiar with the procedures for each type of emergency response.

If your child is involved in an accident of a serious nature or if they become ill, every effort will be made to contact you. If we cannot reach you, the Principal will take any necessary action to ensure the well being of your child.

EXCURSIONS / ACTIVITIES

As part of the Prep curriculum, our Prep classes may be involved in excursions or have special guests come to school that are of educational value. On these occasions a permission note will
be sent home for you to sign to enable your child to participate. Please return this note with payment, if required, by the due date. **All money must be handed in at the office payment slot.**

Parents are encouraged to join us to assist on excursions. However, younger children cannot accompany us on these days as we need parent volunteers to devote their total attention to the group of Prep children that they are given to supervise.

**FIRST DAY AT PREP:**

Make your child’s first day at school more enjoyable and relaxed by being prepared. The best thing you can do is to make the first day as stress-free and relaxed as possible.

On the day:

- leave plenty of time to get ready
- make a nutritious breakfast — this is essential for sustained energy and concentration
- talk through the daily routine — start, lunch and finish times
- talk through a few simple self-help ideas — for example, asking teachers for help or directions
- be positive and encouraging about your child’s attendance at school
- assist your child’s teacher in setting up routines by leaving the classroom as soon as the bell goes so that learning can commence on time.

**GETTING YOUR CHILD SET FOR PREP:**

Here are some simple steps you can take to help make your child’s first time at school more enjoyable and relaxed.

Encourage your child to be independent by helping them get used to:

- putting on and doing up his or her shoes
- eating and drinking without help (opening lunchboxes, wrapping and unwrapping school lunches and drinking from drink bottles)
- caring for and putting away play things
- using a handkerchief or tissue
- going to the toilet independently
- using playground equipment safely
carrying his or her own bag
identifying his or her own belongings.

Work with your child to develop his or her communication skills. Help your child to:
make his or her own needs known
use appropriate greetings
respond verbally when spoken to.

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
  introducing your child to other children in the neighbourhood who will be attending the
  same school
  encourage children to understand that teachers are at school to help.

HEALTH

MEDICATION:
Students are not to bring medicine, tablets, inhalers etc. to school unless it is accompanied by a
note from parents / guardians explaining the reason, dosage and times. Medications and notes
must be handed into the school office. School staff can only administer prescribed
medications and they must be in their original packaging.

ASTHMATIC REGISTER:
The school maintains a register of all students who may require asthma medication. Students
may carry a puffer with them if the school has been notified. If a student requires frequent,
long-term administration of asthma medication, they will need to provide the school with a
doctor's action plan for treatment.

FIRST AID ROOM:
Please notify the school if your child has any medical problems. Students are also required to
report to their teacher of any accident they suffer or of any sickness or anything else that
causes them distress. Students requiring first aid will be sent to the first aid room in the
office. Any first aid given will be recorded in our register. Contact with a parent/guardian will be made if the student is unable to return to class.

HEAD LICE:
If you detect head lice in your child, please treat them before your child returns to school. Information on the treatment of head lice is available from the school office.

SICKNESS EXCLUSION TIMES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Period of Exclusion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicken Pox</td>
<td>Should be excluded for at least seven days after the beginning of the illness and until the last lesion has healed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>Should be excluded for at least seven days from the appearance of rash or until a Medical Certificate of Clearance is produced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubella (German Measles)</td>
<td>Should be excluded for at least seven days from the appearance of rash or until a Medical Certificate of Clearance is produced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whooping Cough</td>
<td>Should be excluded for four weeks unless a Medical Certificate of Clearance is produced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impetigo (School Sores)</td>
<td>Not to be excluded if lesions are covered. Impetigo is contagious. Lesions on any part of the body except the face must be covered. On the face, the lesions must be under treatment, and a layer of ointment or paint is accepted as a &quot;cover&quot; in this situation only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctivitis</td>
<td>Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Lice</td>
<td>Exclude until properly treated. Untreated cases of head lice or scabies infestation should be excluded from school. With proper treatment, the period of exclusion may be as brief as one day.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please consult the school if you have any queries about infectious conditions.

LOST PROPERTY

All lost property is kept in the Student Support Centre. Parents and students are encouraged to check here for lost items. At the end of each term, any clothes not claimed will be donated to charity.
PARENTS AND CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

At Harristown SS we encourage an active participation of all families. We value parent’s skills and experience and encourage all parents to become involved in the P and C and their activities, including the tuckshop and uniform shop.

PREP HOURS

Prep hours are from 8:50am - 3:00pm each day.

At the conclusion of the school day, please be punctual when bringing and collecting your child. When a student is late they can miss important explanations and learning experiences. Students can become worried very quickly if their friends have left Prep and they are still waiting to be collected.

PREP PROGRAM

Our Prep Program is based around the Australian Curriculum and the Early Years Curriculum Guidelines. These frameworks support teachers as they integrate learning, teaching and assessment and they promote continuity in children’s learning.

What our students learn in English, Mathematics, Science and History is outlined for our teachers in the Australian Curriculum. The Australian Curriculum sets out the core knowledge, understanding, skills and general capabilities that are important for all students. It identifies what all young people should learn as they progress through schooling, and is the foundation for high quality teaching to meet the needs of all students.

The Early Learning Framework consists of the following five Early Learning Areas:
  - Social and Personal Learning
  - Health and Physical Learning
  - Language Learning and Communication
  - Early Mathematical Understandings
  - Active Learning Processes

LEARNING AREAS:
These Early Learning Areas link to the Key Learning Areas (KLAs) in Years 1 - 10 and are listed in the table below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EARLY LEARNING AREAS</th>
<th>SPECIFIC FOCUS</th>
<th>KEY LEARNING AREAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social and personal learning</td>
<td>Social learning</td>
<td>History, Geography, Health and Physical Education (HPE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and physical learning</td>
<td>Making healthy choices</td>
<td>HPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gross motor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fine motor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Language learning and communication</td>
<td>Content Strands (Language, Literacy, Literature)</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receptive modes (listening, reading, viewing)</td>
<td>LOTE (Languages Other Than English)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Productive modes (speaking, writing, creating)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early mathematical understandings</td>
<td>Proficiency strands (Understanding, Fluency, Problem Solving and Reasoning)</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Content strands (Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geometry, Statistics and Probability)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active learning processes</td>
<td>Content strands (Science Understanding, Science Inquiry Skills and Science as a Human Endeavour)</td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imagining and responding</td>
<td>History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td>Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Investigating</td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The Arts</td>
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</tbody>
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**HANDWRITING**

Students learn to write using the Queensland Beginners Alphabet Script. Young children must learn to write in lower case first. Give your child an advantage by providing the correct model when writing his/her name. For example, use a capital letter only for the first letter of their name and not capitals for all the letters - e.g. Kate not KATE. It is easier if your child learns the correct form of the letters rather than something that has to be relearned once they are at school. Below is a copy of the Queensland Beginners Alphabet Script:

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm
Nh Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

**SPECIALIST LESSONS:**
Prep students have weekly Library, Music and Physical Education lessons. Students in Years 1 to 7 have these weekly lessons also and students in Years 6 to 7 also have LOTE (Languages Other Than English) lessons in Indonesian.
LIBRARY BORROWING:
Students in Prep may borrow one book for a one week period and they must have a Library bag. This Library bag is used to protect any books borrowed. Library borrowing is each Friday.

All books must be returned on time and in good condition. If a book becomes overdue, all borrowing rights are suspended until the book is returned. Parents will be asked to pay the replacement cost of any lost or damaged books.

TUCKSHOP

Our tuckshop operates from Wednesday - Friday. A menu is sent home at the beginning of each year and as the menu changes. Copies of the menu can be collected from the tuckshop and can be viewed on our website. Prep students must place their orders at the beginning of the school day.
Our tuckshop is run by a convener who relies on the generosity of parents to donate their time to work in the tuckshop. Please contact our convener to volunteer. Even once per month would be a great help. Unfortunately due to work place health and safety regulations children are not allowed in the tuckshop.

Please refer to the tuckshop menu for further information about ordering tuckshop. All hot food must be ordered through the envelope system.

UNIFORM

Our Prep uniform consists of navy shorts/skorts/ skirts and a navy and striped polo shirt. A navy tracksuit can be worn in Winter with the polo shirt. A wide-brimmed navy hat will be available for all Prep students to purchase. All students must wear this hat to protect them from the sun - our school rule is NO HAT NO PLAY. Students must wear closed in shoes that are suitable for indoor and outdoor play. It is best if the shoes are velcro or slip-on so that your child can independently remove and replace them. The Uniform Shop is open every day from 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.
VISITOR’S PASS SYSTEM

All volunteers and visitors must report to the school office to register and sign in. A pass will then be issued and it is a requirement that the visitor wears the pass around their neck as this clearly identifies them as an authorised visitor. When the volunteer or visitor leaves the school they must return to the office, sign out and return the pass. This system helps us to ensure a safe environment for students, staff and visitors and also assists us in the event of an evacuation.

WHAT TO BRING TO PREP

- A bag big enough to carry all belongings including their homework folder
- A Library bag to use each week
- A wide-brimmed hat needed daily
- A full set of spare clothes to be kept at school for the term
- Morning tea and lunch in a named lunch box
- A water bottle

PLEASE CLEARLY NAME ALL ITEMS WITH A WATERPROOF PEN

Parents are asked to monitor carefully the items which children are allowed to bring to school. Expensive items, toys and large amounts of money are to be kept at home. Students must accept responsibility for what they bring to school - it is not a school responsibility.