

SERPELL PRIMARY _ PREP 2021

WELCOME!

Welcome to Serpell Primary School! This is an exciting time to start your child at our school and we are very confident that the program that we have arranged will enable your child to thrive in their first year at school. All of our planning has been underpinned by COVID safety protocols.

The 2021 Prep students will be accommodated in the Early Learning Centre. This complex comprises classrooms, toilet facilities, kitchens, meeting rooms, computer areas and play spaces specifically for Prep children. It provides a safe, secure and supportive learning and playing space for our youngest students. From a COVID point of view, this gives the Preps their very own space and facilities, separate from the rest of the school.

THE TRANSITION PROGRAM

We have planned an extensive COVID safe program to familiarise your child and your family with school and to make them feel confident, safe and secure. We have attempted to spread the program across different days and times in the week, so that your child's very important kinder experience is maximised. Please keep in mind that these arrangements may alter according to COVID restrictions.

The Prep 2021 transition to school program is as follows:

Class Lists class lists will be posted out to parents in the week commencing **26th October 2020**. This will allow you to become familiar with the classroom location and teacher names and faces prior to the transition program. You will also receive a WebEx connection, so that you can attend the first transition session on-line with your child's teacher.

If parents have any placement concerns, there is then plenty of time for us to attend to them.

A Welcome to School for Parents and Students will be held on **Wednesday 4th November**. Due to COVID restrictions, this first meeting will be held on-line through WebEx. At this event, you will be able to meet your child's teacher, be given specific information relating to the transition program and school arrangements for 2021. You will also have the opportunity to ask questions.

The Serpell Story and Sports Afternoon will be held on **Monday 9th November 2020** from 2pm - 3pm in the classroom and then in the Serpell Stadium precinct and grounds. All Prep 2021 students are invited to attend with a parent, to experience the joy of story and imagination through theatrical performance and play. The afternoon will provide children with a non-threatening school experience during which they can enjoy several presentations, experience a happy school context and play games in the stadium very close to mum, dad, grandma or grandpa. Due to COVID restrictions, we ask that only one adult attend the transition program with each child.

The 1st Classroom Experience Morning for 2021 Prep students will be held on **Wednesday 18th November 2020** from 9:30am to 10:30am in the Early Learning Centre. At this initial classroom session, your child will be welcomed by his or her teacher and meet with classmates. You are invited to attend with your child. The teacher will take everyone on a familiarisation tour of the Early Learning Centre and Prep play spaces. There will be an opportunity for informal play.

The 2nd Classroom Experience for 2021 Prep students will be held on **Thursday 26th November** from 9:30am to 10:30am. The children will attend their class for next year, again meet with their teacher and friends, and take part in formal school written activities. Parents are invited to leave their children for a short time and have coffee with other Prep parents in the Prep garden. On this day, **the Uniform Shop** will provide uniforms for size comparison and uniforms can be pre-ordered and collected from the office at any time.

The 3rd Classroom Experience – Buddy Day will be held on **Tuesday 1st December** from 9:30am to 10:30am. On this day, your child will be greeted by his or her 2021 Year 5 "buddy". The buddies will establish a caring connection with the children and then take them on a tour of the school facilities, including the library and art room. Parents are invited to leave their children for a short time and share morning tea and chat with other parents in the Prep garden. It will also allow your child to experience a short time of independence, knowing that you will be quite close by.

TRANSITION DIARY

Class Lists and WebEx links mailed out	Week commencing 26 th Oct	
Welcome to School for Parents and Students	Wed 4 th Nov Online WebEx meetings	7pm - 8pm
Storyland	Mon 9 th Nov	2pm - 3pm
Classroom Experience	Wed 18 th Nov	9:30am - 10:30am
Classroom Experience Uniform Shop Open	Thurs 26 th Nov	9:30am - 10:30am
Classroom Experience	Tues 1 st Dec	9:30am - 10:30am

THE SERPELL PREP PROGRAM 2021

Whilst most families have taken advantage of a personal school tour in term 1, the experience is a great deal to take in and questions about programs and facilities may still arise. The following summary is provided to ensure that parents are well informed.

TEACHING STAFF

Teachers allocated a Prep class at Serpell have specific high-level skills and attributes to support your child in the vital first year. These include an in-depth understanding of young children and the way that they learn, an ability to engage children in active learning, the capacity to engender feelings of confidence and success in students, and an outstanding ability to make strong student/home/school relationships.

COVID PROCEDURES

The school implements COVID safety procedures each day to ensure the health and well-being of students and staff. These include:

- temperature testing each morning on arrival
- sanitising hands on arrival
- hand washing and sanitising throughout the day
- classroom and toilet cleaning throughout the day
- regular cleaning of the playground equipment
- access to the school nurse
- physical distancing of all adults
- restriction of adults to the school site

CLASSROOM PROGRAM

In 2021, the class teacher will provide your child with classroom teaching and learning programs each week in the key areas of:

English	10 hours
Mathematics	5 hours
Science	2 hours
History/Geography	2 hours

English is taught in a literacy block each day from 9am - 11am. After a 20-minute recess, Mathematics is taught from 11.20am - 12.20pm. This decision has been made on a school wide basis to allocate the time when children are most alert in the day to the most important subjects.

SPECIALIST TEACHERS

Specialist teaching and learning programs of one hour's duration, with a specialist teacher, will be provided for the students in:

Visual Arts
Library
Physical Education
Languages

LANGUAGES

In the area of Languages, parents may choose from Chinese (Mandarin) or Greek. If your family speaks one of these languages at home, then your child will attend first language speaking classes in this language. You will be asked to select a language for your child early in the school year.

CLASSROOM HELPERS

Our Early Years English Learning Specialist will conduct several programs each year to prepare parents to assist in classrooms. This program is called "Classroom Helpers" and it fulfils two objectives. Firstly, it enables parents to work supportively alongside teachers and children in classrooms, and secondly, it empowers parents with skills to help their children with reading, writing and maths at home. Information about day and evening training sessions will be sent home in February.

GIFTED & TALENTED PROGRAMS

All Serpell teachers have been trained in programs, which identify and support the wide spectrum of student talent and abilities. Additional programs that identify and develop the abilities of gifted and talented students have been developed in our "Infinite Possibilities" program. This reaches from Prep to Year 6 and includes chess, writers' workshops, theatrics, mathematics and robotics, global classrooms, medical science workshops and academic competitions.

SWIMMING

A Prep swimming program will be held in Term 4 at Aquarena Swim School. Each of the 10 swimming lessons are of 30 minutes' duration and develop the skills of the Aqua-pass standards.

EXCURSIONS / VISITS

During the year, an excursion is undertaken each term. These include visits to the Zoo and the Botanical Gardens. In addition, the school will arrange for performers and exhibits to visit Serpell during the year.

PLAY & EATING FACILITIES

The Prep students have newly constructed playgrounds adjacent to their classrooms to provide them with secure, safe and stimulating recreation time. At the commencement of the year they will have separate lunch and play times from the rest of the school. From Prep to Year 6, students eat lunch in their classrooms under teacher supervision. The school canteen operates every day for lunch orders and counter sales. We implement healthy eating policies.

SUPPORT & SERVICES

OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE

The Out of School Hours Care Program (OSHC) is run by Camp Australia and operates during school terms every morning from 7am to 8.45am and every afternoon from 3.30pm to 6.30pm. During February, Prep students may use the service from 3.00pm each afternoon. Please contact Camp Australia on 1300 105 343 or their website www.campastralia.com.au for more information about registering your child.

THE SCHOOL NURSE

If your child has any medical needs, please make an telephone appointment with our school nurse during October or November to discuss the management of the condition. This may include medication routines, an asthma plan, allergies, or an awareness of a specific medical condition. The nurse will document your child's needs so that we are well prepared to support your child's health and safety at school.

INTEGRATION SUPPORT

If your child experiences a medical condition or disability that may require the support of an aide to assist him or her at school, please ensure that you notify the school immediately, since the applications for funding need to be lodged with the Department prior to commencement.

TWINS & TRIPLETS

If you are the parent of twins or triplets, please ensure that you send us a letter about your views on

placement. In this important first year of schooling, we will be totally guided by parents on whether your children are together or separated. After Prep, the decision is made each year depending on the views of the parents, the children and the class teacher.

COMMENCEMENT TESTING

Whilst students in Years 1 to 6 will commence school on Thursday 28th January, the Prep students will not commence until Thursday 4th February. This is to enable the individual testing of your child in English and Mathematics prior to commencement. Your child's teacher will give you a time for the one-hour test later this year. You will be able to accompany your child during the test, to make them feel safer. Please do not be concerned about the results as it is just a starting point to make their learning appropriate and meaningful.

PREP TERM DATES 2021

Term 1	Thursday 4 th Feb - Thursday 1 st April 2021
Term 2	Monday 19 th April - Friday 25 th June 2021
Term 3	Monday 12 th July - Friday 17 th Sept 2021
Term 4	Monday 4 th Oct - Friday 17 th Dec 2021

MORE INFORMATION

Parents can keep up to date with school events by visiting www.serpellps.vic.edu.au Each week, the newsletter is posted on the site and student achievement is celebrated there. It might help to place it in your favourites file.

This is certainly a very exciting time for your child and your family. We look forward to meeting with you during the Prep transition stage and developing a strong school community learning relationship. Please telephone me if you have any questions or concerns.

WILMA CULTON
PRINCIPAL