

Parent Information Booklet




Prep Year starting 2025

**Welcome to the start of a
very special journey**



Galilee Regional Catholic
Primary School

2025 Prep Teaching Staff

Class	Teaching Staff	Contact details
Prep BK		bkavanagh@gsm.vic.edu.au
Prep CK		ckennedy@gsm.vic.edu.au
Prep O		lobyrne@gsm.vic.edu.au

2025 Special Dates: Term 1

Friday 31st January, 2025	<p>Prep Meet the Teacher.</p> <p>This is an opportunity for you to share information about your child and your family with their Prep teacher.</p>
Monday, 3rd February, 2025	Preps start school
<p>Thursday 30th January</p> <p>Wednesday 5th February</p> <p>Wednesday 12th February</p> <p>Wednesday 19th February</p> <p>Wednesday 26th February</p>	<p>Preps do not attend school on these days</p> <p>English and Maths assessment will occur on these days</p> <p>Your child will attend two of these assessment sessions. Each session will go for one hour, on different days.</p> <p>All the English assessments are completed for all students first, then the Maths assessments</p>
Week starting Monday 3rd of March	Preps attend school full time
Monday 10th March	Labour Day public holiday
Friday 4th April	<p>Last day of Term 1</p> <p>1.30pm finish</p>

Prep 2025

Typical Daily Routine

8.35 am: School gate opens and children can come up to the classroom

8.50 am: School day begin

8.50-9.50am: Learning Session 1: Reading, Writing or Maths (followed by a short fruit break)

9.50-10.50am: Learning Session 2: Reading, Writing or Maths

(eating time - 10.35-10.50)

10.50-11.30am: Break time- Children play outside

11.30-12.30pm: Learning Session 3: Reading, Writing or Maths

12.30-1.30pm: Learning Session 4: Investigation time through directed play and exploration (STEM, Geography, History, Health)/ Religious Education/Personal, Social and Emotional Development

(eating time - 1:25-1:40)

1.40-2.20: Break time- Children play outside

2.20-3.25: Learning Session 5: Investigation time through directed play and exploration (STEM, Geography, History, Health)/ Religious Education/Personal, Social and Emotional Development

3.25: Dismissal

Specialist Classes

Galilee's has four specialist classes that run over the week. The specialist classes are Performing Arts, Italian (LOTE), Visual Arts and Physical Education.

A timetable will be sent out at the beginning of the year.

The first few days of Prep

The night before:

- Ensure belongings are **clearly named** (please check regularly).
- Help your child pack their school bag.

What your child will need:

- Their school bag (hang a key ring or tie a ribbon so that it can be easily identified)
- Please put sunscreen on your child in the morning
- A clearly named **bottle of water**
- A Galilee hat (labelled)
- Lunch box with fruit snack, snack and lunch
- A pair of clearly labelled socks, undies and shorts in a plastic bag. Please let your child know these clothes are in their bag in case of any accidents at school.
- Put sunscreen on your child in the morning as required.

***** ALLERGIES and ANAPHYLAXIS *****

- As there are students with **SERIOUS** allergies, it is important that students **do not swap or share food**.
- We ask that you are mindful of these allergies and if possible **avoid sending nuts or nut products (peanut butter, nutella, nut bars) to school**.

- Children eat lunch in the classroom to minimize exposure to allergy triggers and we ask that students and parents avoid eating in the school yard.

Drop off and pick up for the first few days:

Please bring your child to their classroom on the first day and leave him/her in the care of the classroom teacher. It can be unsettling for your child and others if he/she sees that you are apprehensive about leaving. The earlier this routine is established, the earlier children become accustomed to it and settle at school.

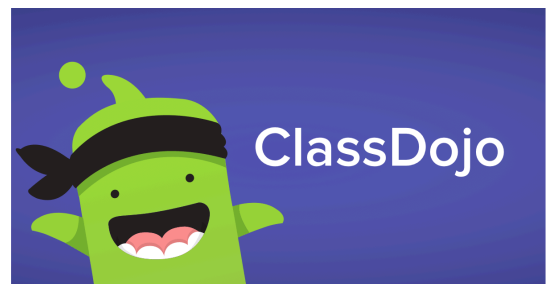
At the end of the first day collect your child from their classroom at 3.25. After the first week the children will be dismissed from the playground area.

Things that can help prepare your child for school:

- Practise packing and carrying a school bag
- Practise getting dressed in school uniform
- Practise putting shoes on and break leather shoes in (velcro shoes are beneficial if possible so your child does not have to do up their laces throughout the day)
- Practise opening and closing lunch boxes and containers
- Encourage them to take care of their belongings
- Practise the journey to and from school to ensure you're on time (both drop off and pick up)
- Arrange playdates with other families attending the school
- Establish routines for mornings and evenings
- Ensure you read school correspondence, newsletters, Dojo posts and check the parent calendar
- Develop a positive goodbye routine.

Communication

Communication must always be respectful.



We use an app called Dojo to communicate with one another. Teachers can instantly share messages, updates, events, and photos from class. It's simple, secure, and gives you a window into their school day! You will be sent the login details early next year.

Class Dojo is our preferred method of communication. We will try to respond as quickly as possible but when we are also teaching it can be tricky. We ask for a 48 hour window to be able to respond properly. Detailed, lengthy and higher priority messages should be sent via email.

Students can also upload work to their portfolio to show you on Class Dojo.

We will send homework and weekly reminders on Class Dojo too.

Learning in Prep

Religious Education

Students explore Religious Education units such as: God's family, praying to Jesus, understanding the Easter story and the resurrection of Jesus, recognising the world that God created and the story of Christmas.

This is taught through: scripture, questioning, sharing thoughts and feelings, hands on activities, art, craft and role play.

Each student has a prayer journal where they can respond to and write prayers and reflect on their classroom learnings and wonderings.

We prepare school masses and Year level and whole school Masses (parents encouraged to attend).

In Prep, we begin each day with a prayer.



English

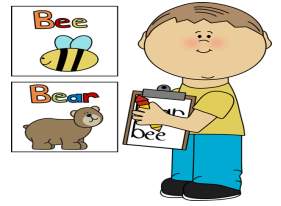
Oral Language

Oral Language is part of every learning experience in the Prep year and is integrated throughout the curriculum. Students will be provided with a rich range of opportunities to engage with each other, to experiment and practise with words, language and conversation. They will also develop their listening skills.



Reading

The Reading program will take the form of listening to and discussing stories, individual and shared experiences with big books, poetry, rhymes, fictional and factual texts and recorded class experiences. The explicit teaching of phonics (letter-sound correspondence) occurs in sequence, supporting students to blend and segment sounds in words.



Writing

In Prep, students will be encouraged to orally share and record their thoughts through drawings then writing. Students' skills will develop as they refine their writing strategies and letter and word knowledge. Our writing experiences include talking, phonics, alphabet knowledge (a-z names and sounds), making and breaking words, letter formation and word spacing, explicit teaching of writing genres and punctuation.

SMART approach to phonics and spelling

Sounds and letters are taught explicitly and systematically in a carefully structured sequence from the Words of the Week. The Sentence of the Week places the most commonly seen words into meaningful sentences. These common words are explicitly taught by the classroom teacher.



Mathematics

A wide variety of practical activities and real life contexts will be used to support students to see mathematics as part of their everyday world. Counting, problem solving, patterns and order of numbers, place value, measurement, and spatial relations will be presented through problem solving, explicit teaching, concrete materials, games, practical activities and supportive written work.



Sweaty Brain Time

Sweaty Brain time provides thought-provoking problems that encourage students to problem-solve and aim to challenge all students in each lesson. Students are challenged to work in new ways, with an emphasis on mathematical thinking and reasoning.

S.T.E.M

Science, **T**echnology, **E**ngineering and **M**athematics.

During STEM, children will be exposed to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics based learning. Teachers use an inquiry approach to facilitate student exploration of concepts in a hands-on manner. Students get to form their own questions about topics and then explore their findings. Concepts, skills and knowledge are explicitly taught. STEM provokes students to consider how and why things work and encourages reflection on new learning. Students also learn and develop valuable skills relevant to working in groups.



Humanities

Children explore concepts from History and Geography, such as exploring special places, their community and their own personal history.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

During the Prep year children are learning and developing skills to help them on their journey through school life. Skills such as:

- Perseverance
- Resilience
- Confidence
- Organisation
- Getting Along with others
- Understanding and following directions
- Sitting still
- Active listening
- Seeking help when needed
- Trying your hardest
- Having a go and finishing tasks.



We use books, songs, images, video clips, activities, role play, Circle Time, group activities and oral language to discover more about ourselves and our peers.

Things to remember

All children learn differently and develop at different rates.

This is important to remember!

Throughout the school year there will be children who are still learning to write their name, use scissors, listen to instructions, manage their emotions, keep their hands and feet to themselves and everything else in between.

It is important to not compare your child to others and to not judge the learning journey of other students..

It is vital that we are encouraging, patient and



understanding of all children.

Supporting your child's learning at home:

- Read with and to your child every day.
- We will send 'take home books' home with your child towards the end of Term 1. These books support class learning by reinforcing and practising skills taught. Initially, the texts can be **read to** and shared with your child, helping them to tune into the reading process. As the year proceeds, the students will then bring home books, which **should be easy to read with little challenge**. These books also give families an opportunity to share books together.
- If your child chooses to bring home a book they have read before, this will provide the opportunity to enjoy favourite books and at the same time, prove valuable for reinforcing skills and experiencing success. It may happen that your child will occasionally choose a book that is a little hard. In this case, please make sure that reading stays an enjoyable and relaxed activity, with parents either sharing the reading or reading the story to the child. Valuable learning could then be had by discussing the story briefly.
- Children will also have access to decodable and levelled texts on the Sunshine Online program. Students will be given login details in 2025.
- SMART approach to Phonics and Spelling: Words and sentences will be sent home each week to reinforce letter and sound knowledge. More information about this program will be sent out in 2025.
- Maths should be practised in real life settings, for example, counting out the forks when setting the table, looking for shapes around the house, measuring the length of their bed.

Let's work together

We would appreciate your help by encouraging your child and supporting our Prep program in the following ways:

- Ensure your child has a clearly named school hat to wear **each day** in Terms 1 and 4 as our policy is ***No Hat, No Play.***
- Ensure belongings are **clearly named** (please check regularly).
- Practise independent toileting and hygiene practices, for example flushing the toilet, washing hands.
- Teach your child to tie his/her shoelaces.
- Keep up to date with school communication from Dojo, newsletters and the parent calendar.
- Reply promptly to notices and requests.
- Carefully monitor your **child's health** so we can prevent the spread of sickness.
- If you are late to school please, take your child to the school office to collect a late pass.
- If you need to collect your child from school early, pick up times are 10.50 and 1.40.
- Notify the office of changes of address, phone numbers, emails and emergency contacts.

Uniform

<https://www.psw.com.au/schools/galilee-regional-catholic-primary-school.html>

Please see information about the school uniform by following the link.

FAQs

What are the class sizes?

There will be 18 children in each class. In Grade 1 they will be combined into 2 classes.

Is there homework for preps?

To support their learning at school Preps are given take home readers and lists of commonly used words.

Do you have a buddy program?

Every new Prep child is partnered up with a Year 6 student. The big buddies keep a watch out for their prep buddies, especially at recess and lunchtimes to make sure that they are okay. This makes the preps feel more secure and happier at school.

Do you provide After School Care?

We have an After School Care program, called GOSH. Children can attend before school from 7.15am and after school until 6pm. You must enrol your child into GOSH.

Do the children learn through play and do you teach this?

Our Prep teachers use creative play sessions regularly which are less structured than normal lessons. These are used to improve the child's oral language development, thinking and problem solving skills, fine motor skills and social skills.

When do children start homework?

At the beginning of the year your child will get a pencil case with the letter sounds they are learning.

From the beginning of the year your child will need to bring in their book bag so they can take home their work. This also develops independence and routine for students. A more detailed guide for homework will be sent out at the beginning of next year.

How many days do children attend when they start school?

During the month of February Preps have Wednesdays off school to participate in English & Mathematics testing. After that preps attend school full time.

What do eating times look like?

At the beginning of the year we will have 3 eating times: one small fruit break, snack time and lunch time.

Am I allowed into the classroom?

For the first 5 weeks of school you can bring your child into the classroom. To develop independence, by week 6 we encourage you to say goodbye at the door OR the gate and let them organise their own belonging.

Tips from past Prep parents

'It's great to go along to the social events so that you can meet other parents.'

'It's handy to have your Working With Children Check so that you can be involved with the children whenever suits.'

'Trust that your child is stronger than you know!'

'Enjoy watching your child develop a new sense of independence, you will be so proud (and perhaps a little happy/sad!).'

'Trust the amazing teachers and enjoy watching a beautiful relationship form between your child and their class teacher.'

'Place a key ring on your child's school bag so they can recognise it.'

'On the first day, it is quite overwhelming for the children. Don't make it harder by taking a million photos and staying in the classroom for an extended period of time.'

'Your child WILL learn everything they need to and the teachers will make sure of this, don't stress if you think it's not happening fast enough.... it absolutely will happen when they are ready.'

'School is so different to child care and kindergarten'

'Enjoy making new friends yourself and remember you all feel as 'new' as each other!'

'LABEL EVERYTHING!'

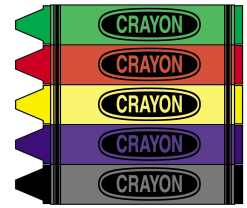
All I really need to know I learnt in Prep

Adapted from Robert Fulghum short essay called *All I really need to know I learnt in Kindergarten, 1988*

Share everything.

Play fair.

Don't hit people.



Put things back where you found them.

Clean up your own mess.

Don't take things that aren't yours.

Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.

Wash your hands before you eat.

Flush.

Live a balanced life – learn some and think some and draw and

paint and sing and

dance and play and work every day some.

When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic,

hold hands and stick together.

Be aware and wonder.

