

# STARTING SCHOOL

An introduction to Prep

2018



 school  
**Silkwood**

Be inspiring... get connected... make a difference.

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## 2018 FACTS

### PREP HOURS

Monday to Friday 8.45am – 2.55pm

### PREP TEAM

**Moonlight Room**      **Teacher: Olivia Gray**  
Email                      [olivia.gray@silkwood.qld.edu.au](mailto:olivia.gray@silkwood.qld.edu.au)  
Assistant                 Louise Lucock

**Starbright Room**      **Teacher: Melanie Basile**  
Email                      [melanie.basile@silkwood.qld.edu.au](mailto:melanie.basile@silkwood.qld.edu.au)  
Assistant                 Michelle Parker

**Learning Manager**    **Lauren Weston**  
Email                      [lauren.weston@silkwood.qld.edu.au](mailto:lauren.weston@silkwood.qld.edu.au)

### SCHOOL DETAILS

Street Address            39 Shepherd Hill Lane, Mount Nathan Qld 4211  
Postal Address            PO Box 760, Nerang Qld 4211  
Phone Number            07 5655 0300

### EMAIL CONTACTS

General Enquiries        [reception@silkwood.qld.edu.au](mailto:reception@silkwood.qld.edu.au)  
School Facilitator        [facilitator@silkwood.qld.edu.au](mailto:facilitator@silkwood.qld.edu.au)  
Finance Manager         [finance@silkwood.qld.edu.au](mailto:finance@silkwood.qld.edu.au)  
Account Enquiries       [schoolfees@silkwood.qld.edu.au](mailto:schoolfees@silkwood.qld.edu.au)

Website Address         [www.silkwood.qld.edu.au](http://www.silkwood.qld.edu.au)

### TERM DATES

2018	START DATE	FINISH DATE
Term 1	Tuesday 30 January *	Thursday 29 March
Term 2	Monday 16 April	Thursday 21 June
Term 3	Monday 16 July	Thursday 20 September
Term 4	Monday 8 October	Thursday 6 December

\* *To promote a calm and more confident transition into school, children will only attend **TWO** days of school in their first week – one day with a third of their classmates and a second day with all their classmates. Week 1 information is emailed separately to families.*

### PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Australia Day Holiday	26 January
Good Friday	30 March
Easter Monday	2 April
Anzac Day	25 April
Queensland Labour Day	7 May
Gold Coast Show Day	31 August
Queen's Birthday Holiday	1 October

*Refer to School Newsletter for school festivals and other event dates.*

### OFFICE HOURS

8.00am – 4.00pm Monday to Friday  
9.00am – 3.00pm School Holidays (limited days)

## **OUR VISION**

A community supporting young people to realise their potential; forever learning, forever teaching, in the service of humanity.

## **OUR MISSION**

To provide a unique, learning-centred environment that progresses young people through an integrated and developmental approach to education.

Through meaningful student engagement in learning, we aspire to develop interpersonal, intrapersonal, physical and cognitive competencies, empowering young people to lead purposeful, fulfilling lives.

## **THE SILKWOOD GRADUATE VISION**

- To use creative, innovative, and critical thinking to make a difference.
- To use their passions, talents, and skill to create a future that excites them and contributes positively to our world.
- To see the adventure, opportunity, connections, and possibilities in life.
- To act with respect towards themselves, others, and our world.
- To create their own financial independence in win/win ways.
- To turn dreams and ideas into reality.
- To accept life's challenges with a resilient and flexible attitude.
- To create a happy and healthy life balance.
- To communicate with maturity, openness, and integrity.
- To embrace fun and live with curiosity.

## **OUR GOALS**

To be an educational institution that is world respected, offering learning programs that are contemporary, practical, flexible and evolving.

To provide high quality learning programs that support the development of well-rounded individuals who are able to contribute to society in meaningful and productive ways.

To maximise learning opportunities to their full potential through curriculum development, high quality amenities, high quality resources and on-going teacher training.

To support the uniqueness of each student so they are able to strive towards their highest potential in a safe, supported and inclusive learning environment.

## **THROUGH OUR CURRICULUM WE STRIVE TO:**

- Develop social responsibility in our students and awareness and respect for the natural environment.
- Ensure that students have an understanding of Australia's Indigenous and European history and methods of government and civic life.
- Offer learning opportunities which develop problem solving, collaboration, communication skills and analysis.
- Offer a social skills, values and leadership program to develop self-esteem, resiliency and personal responsibility.
- Support students in developing purposeful pathways toward career choices in their adult working life.
- Present technology through a historical and cross-curricular approach and implement skills where needed to equip them for success and greater opportunities.

## **STARTING SCHOOL**

Starting school is one of the many adventures your child will experience throughout life. They are moving away from the world of parent and family and into the world of children. It is a big step on the journey towards growing up.

Your child's relationship with you will be more important than ever as they begin this new journey. Parents are the safe base from which children can move out to explore the world, to learn and grow and become socially confident, responsible young people.

Your child will want to share with you their new friendships and things they have learnt. At times, they will also need your understanding and comfort – it's like that for all of us throughout life. We want to tell the people we are close to about the exciting and good things that happen, and we depend on them to listen and reassure us when something goes wrong.

Having a safe place to come back to, where people understand and support them, gives children the confidence to try new things and the courage to have another go if they don't at first succeed. Providing a relaxing time after school and being ready to listen and support without asking too many questions will help children to grow strong, emotionally.

## **PREP ENVIRONMENT**

At Silkwood, the Prep environment is developmental and child-centred in its educational approach. Imagination is nurtured through activities such as oral storytelling, watercolour painting, creative play, music and games.

A sense of reverence is imparted as they learn how to care for each other, earth's creatures and our environment. The singing and simple daily ceremonies bring rhythm to each day making it easy for children to gain confidence in what they do at Prep. Most importantly, children are allowed to discover their own purpose, learn to make decisions, follow instructions and gain new friendships in their world of play.

The following pages will help you to understand how you can help your child settle in smoothly to the Prep environment. Many of the things mentioned are only an introduction, relevant for Prep.

Please refer to the Silkwood Parent Handbook for full information (available on school website or request a hardcopy from the school office – updated each December).

## **HOME LIFE**

### **FAMILY LIFESTYLE**

Enrolling your child at Silkwood is a decision that is not only an educational choice but a lifestyle choice. We have found that success for children at Silkwood is enhanced by a home life that encourages children to have;

- clear boundaries and expectations for behaviour
- a respect for our environment, animals, and people
- family meal times with healthy, wholesome home cooked food
- more time given to art, craft, games, creative play, and outdoor activity, and less time for passive entertainment activities (TV, movies, and computer games)
- family age-appropriate games and entertainment
- a love of books, music, art, physical activity, and craft
- a resilient nature by allowing them to make mistakes and learn

We ask that our families choose lifestyles that cherish the developmental stages of childhood as they are short-lived and require nurturing.

## **SCREEN TIME**

This issue is one of importance when considering a Silkwood education. **The Silkwood Way** aspires to support the individual to develop physically, emotionally, and cognitively. To do this well, brain development is an important consideration.

It can now be shown that brain wave patterns, when exposed to watching a screen for a length of time, change from a pattern that is alert to a passive and receptive state. That means the content being watched is taken into the child's brain with little filter, and because of the receptiveness, can quickly become the dominant images for their play and thoughts. For this reason, we ask our families to apply caution as to what children watch and consider carefully the amount of time they spend in this passive state.

Selecting age-appropriate content and minimising time in front of a TV or computer screen is an expected commitment and we actively request that families offer and encourage positive alternatives as part of their family lifestyle.

## **COMPUTER GAMES**

There is now significant research with respect to the healthy development of the child. Violent video games, in particular, cause the brain to react as if the person has suffered trauma. The brain begins to shut down and work from areas of lower functioning. This is a form of self-preservation from a traumatic experience. Exposure to violent and action based games can lead to hostility, fear, anxiety, depression, nightmares, sleep disturbances, restlessness, and difficulties with concentration and behaviour.

If computer games have to form part of your family culture, they should be kept to a minimum and not viewed during the school week. A short time on the weekends of TV watching or video game playing, encouraging children to discipline themselves and turn it off after the show is finished, may prove to be a worthwhile exercise in self-control for your child.

## **ROUTINE AND AGE APPROPRIATE BOUNDARIES**

To assist development, children need to have regularity in their lives. Healthy routines can be established at home by having regular times for meals, bathing, sleeping, etc. These routines support children in feeling relaxed and secure in their world.

To aid to this sense of security children need to know where they stand in terms of the rules and expectations for them. Leaving a child to their own devices to work out parental expectations brings a sense of insecurity. We have noticed over the years that children who do not have clear routines and boundaries often experience more anxiety. We encourage every family to work on these two things in their family life as it enhances a child's ability to learn at school.

## **FRIENDSHIPS AND SOCIAL SKILLS**

Through talking, laughing, playing and mixing with people of different cultures, children learn social skills.

Children learn best by watching the people around them. They learn positive communication and about feelings by observing family members and trusted people who are good role models. Being friendly, against being bossy. Having a go, when it seems difficult. Continuing with a task until it is finished. Taking turns in games. Not interrupting but waiting for their turn to talk.

By watching those around them children learn how to be friends, often mimicking how family members speak to one another and how they solve problems and disagreements between each other. Respecting each other's feelings teaches children to respect others, not to barge in on games, but to ask to join in or wait to be invited. Our upbringing colours the way we view the world and deal with situations and children need to understand that others may not agree with the way a game is being played or something being done. Teach them that we can all learn from the many differences and gain tolerance of others. Treat others as you want to be treated.

## **PARENT EDUCATION**

We offer opportunities for parent and adult education. We also offer guest speakers and short courses on various topics relating to home and family life, art, craft, storytelling, creative discipline, etc. Please make the most of these opportunities offered to support you on your journey as parents.

## **HOME TOYS**

Our Prep rooms are filled with great toys and play equipment for your children to use.

We request that children do not bring home-toys to school. This can cause conflict with other children and it can be distressing for the child if their special treasures are lost or broken. Occasionally, a young Prep child may need a special comfort item from home to help them settle in when they are new. On these occasions, the child is able to keep their home-toy safely in their cubby-hole during the day. Check with your class teacher first if you wish to bring something from home.

## **SUN CARE**

Silkwood recognises the need for children and staff to be safe whilst in the sun. The Sun Care policy applies during all seasons and temperatures, during sunny and cloudy weather.

Therefore:

- All children must wear hats whilst playing outside.
- Students without hats will not be permitted to play outside – NO HAT, NO PLAY policy.
- We ask that each parent puts sunscreen on their child before school.
- Sunscreen will be available in each classroom and at the office for use by students at any time.
- Teachers will apply sunscreen on students in Prep on written request from the parents.
- In all other classes, parents are to make their children aware of where the sunscreen is kept and how to apply it themselves when necessary.

## **MEDICATION**

If a child is receiving medication and is well enough to attend School, medication will be administered by the Prep teacher. You must complete a Request to Administer Medication at School form. This will be stored with the medication, clearly labelled, and stored safely away. The school does not keep a supply of painkillers (Panadol or other medication) for student use.

Without a completed Request to Administer Medication at School form, the school staff are not permitted to administer medication.

A medication record book is kept for parents to set out dosages and times. You are required to sign the medicine register in the classroom.

Medicines need to be dropped off and collected from the classroom.

## **TOILETS**

When children begin Prep, because they are in a new environment and out of their comfort zone, they can become anxious and embarrassed over going to the toilet when they need to. Discomfort and wet pants can be upsetting. Arrange a time, preferably on Orientation Day, to practise finding the toilet and also, turning on and off the tap for hand washing, and drying their hands. Easy to manage elastic topped pants or shorts are ideal for both boys and girls.



## **FOOD AND NUTRITION**

As part of certain units of work, the children may be involved in cooking activities. These cooking times provide children with a taste of foods from a variety of cultures. We aim to provide wholesome and healthy ingredients for the children and only use vegetarian recipes. If your child cannot eat certain foods or has an allergy, please inform the school office.

We strive to compost all our food scraps at Prep, and have a vegetable/herb garden to supplement our cooking supplies.

### **LUNCH CONTAINERS AND WATER**

Research is clear that nutrition plays a key role in the quality of a young person's physical and neural development. For this reason, for optimum success with a student's learning program, we believe that students should be fed the best quality nutrition possible. It is also important that students are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for the quality of food they eat themselves.

Specifically, we ask Silkwood families to:

- Provide lunches that are nutritious, wholesome and free of artificial chemicals/additives/colours, made up of fresh fruit, salads, vegetables, grains, nuts, eggs, meats, dairy, pasta or any other healthy, fresh, whole foods.
- Empower students to make good choices about their own food by involving them in making their own healthy lunches.
- Choosing foods that avoid or reduce packaging and have a positive impact on our environment.

Please note: All food packaging, waste and leftover food in lunch boxes is returned home with the students.

There are some food items that are well researched enough that we know have an adverse effect on children's health or simply add no nutritional value to a lunch tin. These foods are the ones that we need co-operation with in excluding them from school lunch containers: lollies, sweet treats i.e. biscuits, cakes, ice creams, ice blocks, foods containing chocolate, sugary spreads, chips, drinks (other than water).

All children are required to bring a water bottle, containing only water, juices and cordials are not permitted. Water bottles can be refilled during the day. Water is available in the classroom should your child forget their water bottle.

## **BEFORE SCHOOL**

The most important focus for a calm, relaxed household is rhythm and routine.

Make a Monday to Friday chart showing the colour of the school T-shirt to be worn each day and display it on the fridge or in your child's bedroom.

Have your child familiar with the contents of their pack by practising to pack and unpack it with you (refer to the "What to Bring Checklist" on page 9).

Teach your child to recognise their name that you write in or on all their belongings they wear or take to Prep. Also, to recognise the symbol, eg a butterfly, your child will be issued with, as this will be used on items throughout the Prep year.

Have a substantial, relaxed, family breakfast.

Apply sunscreen to your child's exposed areas.

Get your child help you pack their school bag. The spare clothing will remain in the pack unless used, therefore it would be removed, washed and replaced especially swimmers and rashie. If it is an excursion day, (check emails or notes from teacher), add their red school jumper (if cold) and remember your child will have to wear their red T-shirt even if it isn't a "red day".



## WHAT TO BRING CHECKLIST

**School Uniform** – in accordance with Dress Code (see page 12).

**Spare clothes** – please provide your child with a spare set of plain clothing, including socks and underwear, in case of accidents or mishaps. To be kept in a sealed plastic bag in your child's school bag.

**School Hat** – to stay at school during term time.

**Swimmers and Rashie** – for creek play.

### **ALL ITEMS MUST BE NAMED.**

**Healthy morning tea and lunch** – (see page 8), left over dinner is ideal, also healthy home cooking/baking. Please use an insulated cooler bag with an ice brick to store your child's food. Lunch bags/containers must have a tag or label that the children can recognise themselves.

**Suitable footwear for outside play** – these must also cover the whole foot for safety reasons. Cross Trainers are recommended, they must be suitable for play and walking down to the creek. Velcro fasteners, at this age, are an advantage.

## ILLNESS AND INJURIES

In the event of a child becoming ill or injured at Prep, a parent or guardian will be contacted promptly. It is important to always keep the teacher and the office informed of changes to telephone, address, email and emergency contact. An incident register is kept at Prep, which complies with Workplace Health and Safety Regulations.

In the event that a parent is not available, your child's teacher will take whatever steps are considered necessary to ensure the child's well-being.

## SICKNESS

It is best for your child to remain at home if they are unwell in the morning.

We are concerned for each student's total well-being. When they are not 100% well, it is difficult for students to cope with the demands of an active school day. Many childhood illnesses are contagious. Please keep your children home until they are 100% well.

You need to expect some 'sick days' and plan who will mind your child, or if they can go to your work with you, with some quiet things to do; children who are unwell often like to be near a parent.

If your child is unwell, please inform the school office [attendance@silkwood.qld.edu.au](mailto:attendance@silkwood.qld.edu.au) or phone 5655 0300.

It is important for the health of the school community that children are kept away from school whilst they have a communicable disease, such as chickenpox. We ask you to immediately notify the school and to keep your children at home for the required exclusion whilst they have any of the infections listed on page 14 in 'Conditions Requiring Exclusion'.

## ABSENCES

When a child is to be absent for the day, parents are asked to contact the office before 8.30am so the teacher can be informed. Email [attendance@silkwood.qld.edu.au](mailto:attendance@silkwood.qld.edu.au) or phone 5655 0300.

If your child is absent for an extended period, due to illness or another reason, talk to the teacher about what they can be doing, so they don't feel they are falling behind the other children in the class. This is especially important if your child's medical condition causes them to miss a lot of school.

Refer to the Silkwood Parent Handbook for detailed information regarding absences.

## SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is very important. Going every day and getting there on time reinforces for children that school is a significant experience, not to be missed.

When children attend regularly the teacher is able to build a sequence of learning for each child and children develop a sense of increasing success. Attending school regularly also supports children's sense of belonging to that group and that place and helps them to maintain friendships.

However, at the beginning of their first year at school, some children get very tired and it may be necessary to keep them home to rest for a day. Ask your child's teacher or family doctor if you're unsure what is in their best interests.

## ARRIVING AT SCHOOL

In Term 1, all Prep children must be brought to the Prep area by an adult. The Prep playground is supervised from 8.30am onwards and the bell rings at 8.45am for class to start. Please let the morning duty teacher know if you are leaving your child before 8.45am for them to supervise. After first term Prep children can be dropped off at the set-down area outside of Prep from 8.30. The gate will be open from this time.

Children must be ready to start class at 8.45am with bags away.

Please help us to keep all children safe and calm by assisting with this before-school routine.

There are puzzles, books and games on the veranda for your child's use. The playground, sandpit and obstacle course are out of bounds before school.

The Prep area is a child-centred space. While you are waiting outside with your child, please keep adult conversations to a minimum. Be mindful of the content of your conversation and ensure it is appropriate for children's ears.

The teacher will come out onto the veranda to give a morning greeting at 8.45am and welcome the children into the classroom.

If you wish to drop your Prep child off at school before 8.30am, you must take them personally to the OSHC worker and sign them in. Charges will apply.

Teachers are not available to meet for discussions in the morning as they are focussed on preparing for the day unless you have a prior appointment. Please be respectful of this request and email to make an appointment should you need to talk to your teacher.

## ARRIVING LATE AND PUNCTUALITY

When children arrive late to school it is disruptive to the class. We ask, out of respect for the teacher and the other students, that you make every effort to arrive at school on time.

If you are not able to arrive at school on time, the following procedure is in place to ensure minimum disruption to your child's class and teacher.

All student arrivals **after 8.45am** must go the school office for a **Late Pass** before entering class.

All late arrivals will be logged onto the child's attendance record and reported on the semester school report.

In instances when lateness will be unavoidable due to appointments, emergencies or unforeseen events, please telephone the school office to inform them. The school office will inform your child's teacher.

## AFTER SCHOOL

Parent's co-operation is asked for in keeping to the Prep finishing time. If you are not at the classroom by 2.50pm your child will be taken to the Pick-Up area for collection. Prep children not collected by 3.00pm (unless they have an older sibling) will be taken to OSHC by the teacher and booked in, fees will apply.

## SCHOOL DEPARTURE SYSTEM – AFTERNOON PICK UP

The school needs to move a lot of traffic in a short space of time. To eliminate car park congestion, particularly at the end of the day, we request that parents **do not arrive** earlier than the times below for pick-up.

If you arrive early we ask that you park in the overflow car park (paddock) and come and pick-up your child from their class.

If you arrive on time, please use the drive through pick-up system and refrain from parking. Thank you in advance for your support.

Families with siblings, please use your ELDEST child's pick-up time.		
	Pick-up time from the set-down zone – times are between	Children not picked up after this time (unless they have an older sibling) are taken to OSHC by the rostered teacher
Prep	3.00pm – 3.05pm	3.20pm
Years 1 to 2	3.10pm – 3.20pm	3.20pm
Years 3 to 4	3.15pm – 3.25pm	3.30pm
Years 5 to 6	3.20pm – 3.30pm	3.30pm
Years 7 to 11	3.25pm – 3.30pm	3.30pm Year 7-11 students are permitted to wait in the Year 9 room between 3.30-4.30pm and work quietly until their parents to arrive.

## OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE PROGRAM (OSHC)

We have Before School Care, After School Care and Vacation Care programs for parents who are in need of extended hours care for their children.

Helping Hands Network works in partnership with the School to manage and operate the Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Program.

**Children can only attend the OSHC service if a Helping Hands Network enrolment form has been completed;** this is a licensing requirement. If you need to use the service only in absolute emergencies, enrolling provides your family with an extra safeguard.

Helping Hands are committed to building stronger, happier and healthier school communities through the provision of quality childcare in partnership with children, parents and schools, and are very excited to be able to work with the Silkwood community. They are flexible in providing their service and tailor their programs to meet the local community needs. Programming and routines are developed to reflect the individual schools, and consider staff skills, resources and children's interests. Programs are play based, promoting leadership and life skills across all age groups. Children are encouraged to participate in the development of the programs and menus.

All bookings or enquiries for this service must be made through the Helping Hands Network by contacting the co-ordinator, via email at [silkwood@helpinghandsnetwork.com.au](mailto:silkwood@helpinghandsnetwork.com.au) or by calling 0475 824 342. You must complete an enrolment application prior to your child using this service. Enrolment forms are available from the School Office or you can **enrol online** at <http://www.helpinghandsnetwork.com.au/our-schools/silkwood-school>. Bookings are essential, 48 hours' notice prior to permanent bookings and 24 hours' notice for casual bookings must be given. Families are eligible to apply for CCB rebates for this service from Centrelink.

## DRESS CODE

At Silkwood we provide an environment that is child centred. Student clothes need to be simple, comfortable and practical. To support this, Silkwood has a clear dress code.

We ask that parents show respect for our guidelines by supporting their children to dress themselves per the school's expectations. We see this as a wonderful step in learning to be independent whilst understanding that at times life has guidelines we need to co-operate with. **Please name all clothing items.**

### SCHOOL UNIFORM – COMPULSORY

- Silkwood T-shirts, one colour for each day:
  - Monday Purple
  - Tuesday Red
  - Wednesday Yellow
  - Thursday Orange
  - Friday Green
- Red School Jacket
- School Hat
- Plain navy blue shorts; not too tight or too short, no obvious logo or print. Must allow movement. *Denim shorts and leggings are not acceptable.*



### SPARE CLOTHING

Please provide your child with a spare set of plain clothing in their bag for wet play or mishaps.

### SHOES

Properly fitting sports shoes, such as cross-trainers; must provide support for the student's ankles and cushioning while running and playing sport.

Indoor shoes or slippers are optional for students (recommended for colder months). They should fit snugly, be non-slip and flexible for movement in morning circles.

### EXCURSIONS

All students must wear a red school T-shirt, school hat and a red school jacket (if needed) on excursions.

### HATS

School hats are to be worn when outdoors at first break and lunchtime, and during outdoor sports.

### GROOMING

- Hair must be neatly and conventionally styled and remain within natural colour variations. Hair should not be noticeably or outrageously coloured or bleached.
- Hair below shoulder length is to be tied up neatly and securely.
- Fringes no longer than eyebrow level.
- Fancy bows, clips or combs are not permitted.

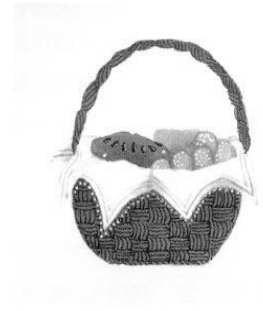
### JEWELLERY

- Minimal jewellery is permitted. Any student may wear earrings, provided they are small studs or sleepers (no pendant earrings).
- Necklaces with strong sentimental value, religious meaning or health benefits may be worn – parents must provide a request in writing to the school office.
- Students who wear jewellery do so at their own risk.

Please see visit the School Website to view the Parent Handbook for full Dress Code information.

## DAILY RHYTHM

Young children require a balanced and predictable daily rhythm. The rhythms in Prep are designed to anticipate and meet children's needs for particular periods of the day. It is important in our daily lives to have times for exercise, work, individual expression, as well as times for relaxing, creativity and togetherness. This provides a much needed balance to our busy day.



## WEEKLY RHYTHM

Weekly rhythms are a predictable pattern of activities by which children can mark time and look forward to particular jobs.

As well as set daily activities we also do craft activities such as sewing, finger knitting, felting, weaving, paper making and nature craft. Domestic activities include crayon polishing, gardening, rolling beeswax, sweeping, washing dishes, cleaning tables, painting boards and windows. Other activities include drawing, bead threading, felt pictures, origami and woodwork.

The developmental pedagogy at Silkwood begins in Prep with Integrated Units across the year. These lessons cover upper and lower case writing, lines and writing numbers, as well as simple sentence structure, in a gentle and age appropriate way.

## REST TIME

Establishing a pattern of rest and relaxation, like good eating habits, are benefits which a child can carry into later life.

Children are not necessarily expected to sleep (although some do), but rather it is a time for quietness and rest and the teacher will read a story. As the year progresses and children mature, rest times decrease in number and afternoon activities begin.

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The class teacher will conduct a very simple but beautiful ceremony on your child's birthday.

You will be invited to share in this special event and a personal invitation will be issued. A suitable date will be arranged for the ceremony so parents/guardians are able to attend.

This is a very special time and an opportunity to honour the child with a special ceremony. Please note, Prep birthday ceremonies are for parents to attend. To minimise disruption, older siblings are required to stay in their classes during this time.

## FESTIVALS

A special emphasis is given to celebrating our seasons – the rhythm of the year. As the seasons change, they are reflected in our songs, games and craft. At the end of every school term we mark the close of term with a school festival.

The celebration of these festivals brings a sense of enrichment to school life by uniting our school community and nurturing the sense of reverence that is often lacking in our fast paced modern lives.

Please see the newsletter for dates and times. Attendance at festivals is mandatory for all students.

## PLAY AND CREATIVITY

Highly creative people have had a huge influence on our world. Inventors, explorers, designers and scientists have all taken a leap outside of what is known to create something new, or a new way of looking at an old question. Children's play sets the scene for adult creativity.

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

It is important for the health of the school community that children are kept away from school whilst they have a communicable disease. We ask you to immediately notify the school and to keep your children at home whilst they have any of the following infections during the period of their infection.

Infection	Exclusion of person with infection	Exclusion of contacts (those exposed to the person with the infection)
<a href="#">Chickenpox (varicella)</a>	Exclude until all blisters have dried. For non-immunised children, this is usually at least five days after the rash first appears.	Exclude susceptible pregnant women and any child with an immune deficiency (eg. leukaemia) or receiving chemotherapy
<a href="#">Cold Sores (herpes simplex)</a>	Not excluded if person can cover sores with a dressing and maintain hygiene practices to minimise risk of transmission. Otherwise, exclude until sores are dry.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Conjunctivitis</a>	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased unless non-infectious conjunctivitis.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Diarrhoea</a> and/or vomiting (including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• amoebiasis</li> <li>• campylobacter</li> <li>• cryptosporidium</li> <li>• giardia</li> <li>• rotavirus</li> <li>• salmonella</li> <li>• viral gastroenteritis but not norovirus or shigella – see separate section)</li> </ul>	Exclude until there has not been a loose bowel motion for 24 hours.  Exclude staff who handle food until they have not had any diarrhoea or vomiting for 48 hours.  If there are more than two cases with loose bowel motions in the same location, or a single case in a food handler, notify your nearest public health unit.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Diphtheria</a>	Exclude according to public health unit requirements.	Exclude according to public health unit requirements.
<a href="#">Enterovirus 71 (EV71) neurological disease</a>	Exclude until written medical clearance confirming the virus is no longer present in the child's bowel motions is received.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib)</a>	Exclude until the person has received appropriate antibiotic treatment for at least four days.	Not excluded unless considered necessary by public health unit.
<a href="#">Hand, foot and mouth disease</a>	Exclude until all blisters have dried.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Influenza and influenza like illness</a>	Exclude until well.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Head Lice</a>	Exclude until hair has been effectively treated and hair is completely cleared of nits and lice. Remove all eggs.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Measles</a>	Exclude for four days after the onset of the rash.  Written medical clearance confirming child is not infectious from doctor or public health unit is required to return to school.	Immunised/immune contacts are not excluded. Exclude immunocompromised children until 18 days after the appearance of the rash in the last case. For non-immunised contacts, seek advice from your local public health unit.
<a href="#">Meningitis (bacterial)</a>	Exclude until well and has received appropriate antibiotics.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Meningitis (viral)</a>	Exclude until well.	Not excluded

Infection	Exclusion of person with infection	Exclusion of contacts (those exposed to the person with the infection)
<a href="#">Meningococcal Infection</a>	Exclude until appropriate treatment has been completed.	Not excluded. Seek advice from your local public health unit about antibiotics and/or vaccination for people who were in the same location as the case.
<a href="#">Mumps</a>	Exclude for nine days after onset of swelling. The School requires written medical clearance confirming child is not infectious from doctor or public health unit to return to school.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Norovirus</a>	Exclude until the person has not had any diarrhoea or vomiting for 48 hours.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Pertussis (whooping cough)</a>	Exclude until five days after starting appropriate antibiotic treatment, or for 21 days from onset of coughing.	Seek advice from your local public health unit about excluding unvaccinated and incompletely vaccinated contacts.
<a href="#">Poliomyelitis</a>	Exclude for at least 14 days from onset of symptoms. Written medical clearance confirming child is not infectious from doctor or public health unit is required to return to school.	Not excluded unless considered necessary by public health unit.
<a href="#">Ringworm, tinea, scabies</a>	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment has commenced.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Rubella (German measles)</a>	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least four days after the onset of rash.	Not excluded. Female staff of childbearing age should check their immunity with their doctor.
<a href="#">School Sores (Impetigo)</a>	Exclude until person has received appropriate antibiotics for at least 24 hours. Cover weeping or crusted sores on exposed areas with a watertight dressing until at least 24 hours after commencing antibiotics and for as long as practical. Sores are not contagious if covered, or after the child has taken antibiotics for 24 hours.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Shigellosis</a>	Exclude until diarrhoea has stopped and two samples, taken at least 24 hours apart, have tested negative.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Streptococcal sore throat (including Scarlet Fever)</a>	Exclude until well and has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Tuberculosis (TB)</a>	Exclude until written medical clearance confirming child is not infectious is received from Queensland Tuberculosis Control Centre.	Not excluded
<a href="#">Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fever</a>	Exclude until diarrhoea has stopped and two consecutive samples, taken at least one week apart, have tested negative.	Not excluded unless considered necessary by public health unit.
<a href="#">Worms</a>	Exclude if loose bowel motions present.	Not excluded

These periods are minimum exclusion periods. Where your child is still feeling weak, tired, or looking pale he/she may need longer resting at home to regain their strength. Where a child comes to school with any of these conditions suspected, they may be sent home.

*Please visit the School Website to view the Parent Handbook for full health information*



## PARENT PARTICIPATION

If you wish to be a **parent helper** you are very welcome. Please arrange this with your child's teacher.

If you choose to assist at Prep, either as a volunteer or craft helper, it would be lovely for you to blend in, in the same way that the teacher and assistant do. Please see page 18 'Code of Conduct' for more information.

If anyone in your family has **skills, interests or cultural celebrations and activities** to share, please discuss them with the teacher and make arrangements.

We especially like to have visits from **elderly family members or friends** as this is a wonderful opportunity for the children to spend time and learn from these important people in our community. There are never enough opportunities to pass on traditions and skills.

We offer **parent education talks** on various topics. If you would like the school to organise one on a particular topic we are happy to accommodate your needs.

## PARENT-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

It is of utmost importance that parents and teachers have the best possible communication.

As an environment and cost saving measure, teacher notices are emailed to parents. If you do not have an email address or would prefer a hardcopy, please inform your teacher.

## SCHOOL-TO-HOME COMMUNICATION

Communicating from school to home can take many forms:

- The teacher may send home a note or email about a child's success or a problem during the day.
- The teacher may invite parents in after school to talk about the learning program.
- Class newsletters that forecast forthcoming events and opportunities for parent participation, and class news.
- The school has a newsletter issued three times per term for parents, it is important that you take the time to read this as this is where all school information is presented to the parent body. You can register to receive this through the school website.
- Reports are issued every semester and Student Led Conferences are held at the start of Term 3.
- Our noticeboards have information on current events.
- Noticeboards around the school may carry information about school and community activities, school and individual successes, and incidents such as infectious diseases.

## YOUR ROLE IN THE PARTNERSHIP

You contribute to the home-school partnership when you:

- Tell the class teacher who the important members of your child's extended family are and who to contact in an emergency.
- Inform the teacher about significant events in your child's life, especially if the changes are likely to be distressing for the child.
- Let the school know when your child will be absent.
- Advise the school if your child will be collected during school hours, and by whom – as a courtesy, as well as a child protection measure.
- Ask questions, talk to staff, write an email and/or send a note about anything that's concerning or interesting to you.
- Check the school bag and email inbox daily for notes, forms and newsletters – and read and respond to them. Working parents may not be able to be actively involved in daily school life, but reading school newsletters and talking to your child about what is happening shows your interest.
- Make time to keep in touch with your child's class teacher, to keep informed about class activities and your child's growth and development.
- Where possible, attend school and class events. If you are unable to attend, could another family member or friend stand in to support your child and value the child's efforts?

- Join the school's parent group (Silkwood Community Care Association) – it's a good way to meet other parents as well as to contribute to the school.
- Participate in those school activities – craft lessons, working bees, fundraising, etc – that best suit your interests and time. Opportunities for parent involvement are regularly listed in the school newsletter.
- Attend parent-teacher interviews and talks, especially those concerning your child's learning progress (it's desirable, if possible, for both parents to attend such meetings).
- Connect your child's school learning to family activities and excursions.
- Display your child's work from school and talk about it with family members.

The important message is: 'communicate, communicate, communicate'.

Of course, you should quickly talk with your child's teacher if you feel your child is not happy at school. However, you need not wait until there is a problem before talking to staff. Teachers, of course, are busy teaching and, if you need a lengthy chat, it will be necessary to make an appointment at a time that suits both of you. True partnerships are where all parties work together for the best outcomes for children.

## **WORKING TOGETHER TO SOLVE PROBLEMS**

### **NOT WANTING TO GO TO SCHOOL**

Sometimes a child does not want to go to school, and this can be very upsetting for both parents and child. Not wanting to go to school can happen at any age but it may be connected to major changes such as starting school, family break-up or moving house.

Children might find separating from their home and family difficult when starting school and try to get their parent to stay with them, or to 'go shopping with Mum'. However, some children may just take longer to feel comfortable in new situations.

The school has resources available to help, please contact the School Facilitator for more information: [facilitator@silkwood.qld.edu.au](mailto:facilitator@silkwood.qld.edu.au)

### **CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS**

At Silkwood we view communication as an important aspect to creating a safe and harmonious space for children to learn and play. For this reason, everyone needs to be clear on their responsibilities, where they can go and what they can expect to happen if they have a concern or complaint. The school also recognises a need for concerns to be dealt with quickly and in a professional manner. To achieve this, we need the support of the community in following the most appropriate channels for addressing and responding to concerns.

Parents are responsible for communicating their concerns in an appropriate, respectful way. All concerns and complaints will be responded to within 48 hours.

It is extremely important to maintain confidentiality. While it might be tempting for a parent to gather opinions of other parents on a matter of concern, it is fair and courteous to raise the matter with the teacher and school.

Some concerns may be based on a misunderstanding and can be quickly resolved through respectful conversation.

### **PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS WHO HAVE CONCERNS**

For matters concerning the classroom, playground or education of your child you can either contact the Class Teacher or the P-2 Learning Manager of your child's class to organise a meeting time or to seek advice;

- Early Childhood – Year 2 Learning Manager – Lauren Weston [lauren.weston@silkwood.qld.edu.au](mailto:lauren.weston@silkwood.qld.edu.au)

In the time before school and during school the teacher's focus is with the children so he/she will be unable to help at this time. Unless it is urgent, in which case please go to the office for help, please email to make an appointment.

Consider the teacher's view and keep an open mind.

Many situations are complex, so it's important to not jump to conclusions.

Listen to all points of view and try to find a 'win-win' solution suitable for all parties.

If you do not feel satisfied with communication with the Class Teacher or P-2 Learning Manager, you can email [facilitator@silkwood.qld.edu.au](mailto:facilitator@silkwood.qld.edu.au), or make an appointment through the school office to see the Facilitator.

#### **FOR ANY OTHER MATTERS:**

Please contact either the School Facilitator for general matters or the Finance Manager for financial matters.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Silkwood School aims to provide an open, welcoming and safe environment for all. We believe that all parents/guardians, visitors and volunteers play a valuable role in the life of the school.

The school has a Code of Conduct for parents/guardians, visitors and volunteers which outlines the type of practice we require all adults working and volunteering in our school to follow. We hope it will assist in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of students, families and staff. The Code of Conduct is a broad outline of behavioural principles, expectations and ideals. This policy provides guidelines to promote desirable and appropriate behaviour to ensure that all interaction with students and adults is respectful, honest, courteous, sensitive, tactful and considerate.

Silkwood School has a legal and moral responsibility to provide a safe and happy environment for all students and staff.

Silkwood School needs to ensure all parents/guardians, volunteers, staff, students and any other persons involved in the school, adhere to clear guidelines regarding appropriate interaction and communication with one another, and with students and staff at the school.

#### **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTIONS**

Safety	Comply with all relevant policies and procedures of the school. Be aware of the emergency evacuation procedures.
Ethical Conduct	Always act in the best interests of students, their families, and staff members.
Support	Work in a cooperative and positive manner.
Communication	Use courteous and acceptable written and spoken language. Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language. Response to emails and telephone calls are not expected to be instantaneous or out of normal working hours, unless of an urgent nature. Normal service standards suggest that an acceptable response time for emails is within 48 hours.
Respect	Value the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals. Refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes harassment or discrimination.
Confidentiality	Comply with the school's Privacy Policy.
Children's program	If participating in a classroom program seek guidance and direction from staff. If unsure, ask staff for further information. Behaviour guidance of the students is the responsibility of staff. Immediately refer any issues or concerns related to managing student's behaviour to staff.

A full copy of the Code of Conduct Policy is available on request from the School Office.

## **SILKWOOD COMMUNITY CARE ASSOCIATION (SCCA)**

The school has an established parents and friends group called the Silkwood Community Care Association. This is a non-profit group that has the following purpose;

*“To direct the energies, skills and passions of the parents, children and community of Silkwood School into the areas that will create outcomes of the highest potential for the children, school community, and individuals contributing their time and skills.”*

This group has an executive committee who meet monthly. Currently the working group has the following teams:

- Bush and Land Care
- Class Carers
- Craft

Parents are encouraged to join one of the already established teams, or if you have an interest and passion in another area, meet with the SCCA to discuss how you would like to contribute. Contact the School Office for more information.

### **CLASS CARERS’**

Class Carers help support the emotional wellbeing of the Silkwood community by nurturing a sense of belonging and family within the school. Class Carers are responsible for:

- Welcoming new families to the class and arranging appropriate introductions with other parents of the class.
- Co-ordinating social events for parents/families outside of school.
- Supporting the class teacher when and if required, at the discretion of the teacher.
- Organising combined class gifts the class teacher/s.

Parents interested in taking on this role for Prep are welcomed and encouraged. Please speak with your Class Teacher if you are interested in this role. Class Carers (usually two) are selected by the Class Teacher in the first week or two of Term 1. To help settle volunteers into this role, a ‘buddy’ who has had more than one year’s experience in the role, is designated to assist the new Class Carer. The Class Carer’s team forms part of the SCCA. Please see your class contact list for your Class Carer’s details.

### **PARENT CRAFT GROUP – (HEART 2 HANDS)**

Every Monday, from 9.00am-11.00am, we run an adult craft class in our OSHC/Playgroup room. As well as teaching parents the skills they need to make things at home and to help their child with their handcraft program, this class makes things for the school. We encourage all parents attend this class as it is both rewarding and practical and will enhance parenting skills. Young children are welcome as we have a built-in verandah for them to play on safely while parents create and learn. Life-long friendships have been formed through this group and it is not limited just to Silkwood School parents.

## **AFTER SCHOOL SPORTS PROGRAM**

We encourage our students to be active and healthy. To support this, we offer an after school sports program that is age and philosophy appropriate and is free of charge to families. The school receives funding to run this program two afternoons a week (3.15pm-4.15pm) during term time, for three terms per year. Bookings are essential. A booking flyer is available at the school office.

## **STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Silkwood actively supports the ongoing professional development of all staff members through their attendance at courses, seminars, workshops, conferences and visits to other schools. From time to time we host student teachers who come to observe or gain work experience. They are under the supervision of our Prep team.

## GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START

It is important that you talk positively about the school and value what is happening there. This is a long-term experience for children; schooling encompasses a lot of years of living and learning.

Children are more likely to have faith in and commit to the school experience if their parents are supportive of them, their teacher and their school.

## HAPPY AT SCHOOL

Try not to expect too much from your children. We all want our children to do well, but sometimes expectations get in the way of progress.

Keep in mind that children need time just to be children – some time that is not programmed when they can just relax, play and enjoy whatever they want to do.

The key thing for your child in the first year of school is having a sense of wellbeing and engagement.

You will know if this is happening because your child will be:

- having fun
- making friends
- wanting to go to school
- enjoying new things
- talking positively about their teacher

If children are happy at school, it is a very good start to their learning lives.

Consultations with parents across Australia suggest that they have three priorities for the first years of school.

1. Their child is happy.
2. Their child gets on well with others.
3. Their child establishes sound foundations for later learning and achievement.

Starting school is one of the biggest events in your child's life and, with your encouragement and support, it can be the start of an exciting, happy journey into the future.

***We are delighted to welcome you to our Silkwood family.***

***We are sure that your family's time here will be enjoyed and we look forward to many happy years of association together.***

