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This document contains information relevant to Prep students entering the College. All general information is included in the College Handbook which you would have received on enrolment. Both the College and the Prep handbooks are accessible via the College website.

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College Contacts

College Principal

Mr. Michael Hayes

Assistant Principals

- Education Leadership Prep – Year 4 Mrs. Robyn Fincher
- Teaching and Learning Prep – Year 4 Mrs Marg Holness
- Education Leadership Year 5 – Year 9 Mr. Frank Vetere
- Teaching and Learning Year 5 – Year 9 Ms. Bernadette Cronin
- Specialists – Teaching and Learning Mrs Jenny Hayes

College Business Manager

Mrs Janette Carey

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Key Dates 2014

	Commences	Finishes
Term 1	<p><i>Begins: 8:50 am Thursday 30th January (Years Prep - Year 9)</i></p> <p><u>Non attendance days for Preps :</u></p> <p>Friday 7th, 14th, 21st 28th February</p> <p>These dates are designated Prep interview days – see notes on following pages</p>	Friday 4 th April
Term 2	Tuesday 22 nd April	Friday 27 th June
Term 3	Monday 14 th July	Friday 19 th September
Term 4	Monday 6 th October	Friday 19 th December

Public Holidays 2014

Australia Day	Monday 27 th January
Labour Day	Monday 10 th March
Good Friday	Friday 18 th April
Easter Monday	Monday 21 st April
Anzac Day	Friday 25 th April
Queens Birthday	Monday 9 th June
Melbourne Cup Day	Tuesday 4 th November

College Times

Start	8.50am
First Session	8.50am – 10.50am (doors open at 8.45am)
Morning Recess	10.50am – 11.20am
Second Session	11.20am – 1.20pm
Supervised Lunch	1.20pm – 1.30pm
Lunch Break	1.30pm – 2.00pm
Third Session	2.00pm – 3.00pm
Dismissal	3.00pm

Children are supervised in the yard before school from 8.40am and should not arrive before this time. After school the yard is supervised until 3.10pm.

Transition Dates 2014

The commencement date for the 2014 Preps is **Thursday 30th January at 8:50am**. All Preps attend full school days from 8:50am until 3:00pm on Mondays to Fridays with the exception of all Fridays during February. The following Fridays are designated Prep Student Interview days: February 7th, February 14th and February 21st. February 28th is designated for Prep – Parent. You will be asked to bring your child along for assessment as outlined below.

Prep Student Interview Dates

In order to gain a better understanding of your child as they begin school you will be asked to bring them along to a short meeting with their home room teacher. During this time teachers will conduct an interview with your child where students will be asked to carry out a few short tasks. This enables teachers to become familiar with your child and their needs in an individual environment and to plan programs accordingly. The assessment is conducted in a relaxed atmosphere and the whole session will take approx. one hour. Parents are not expected to stay for the assessment.

You will need to bring your child to school on **one** of the Fridays allocated for Prep assessment.

Friday 7th February

Friday 21st February

Friday 14th February

Your child's home room will have a booking sheet on display for you to select an appropriate time for your appointment. If you are unable to find a suitable time please see your child's teacher.

Parent Teacher Interviews

Friday 28th February is the last of the pupil free days. This day has been scheduled for Prep Parent Teacher Interviews. During this time you will be able to discuss with the home teacher how your child has settled into school. All Prep Parent Teacher interviews will be held during the day.

Prep Information Evening

The Prep Information Evening and College Tour will be held on 3rd December 2013. Further information was included in the Transition to School letter. Early in Term 1 you will be given an opportunity to visit your child's room to learn more about the homeroom expectations and routines. The date and time for the afternoon will be confirmed in the first few weeks of school.

Preparing for School

There are many things you can do to assist your child in preparing for school, both socially and academically. Many of these are probably taking place already and require little or no organization.

The behaviours and skills we believe will provide your child with the strongest foundation for learning include: independence, cooperation, sharing, caring for belongings, respecting property and the rights of others listening and speaking and having a go.

There are a few things you can have your child practise at home to support the development of their level of independence.

These include;

- putting jumpers on and taking them off
- working fasteners correctly; buttons, zips, shoelaces (if possible)
- opening and closing food and drink containers and packaging.
- blowing nose correctly.
- practising appropriate toileting routines, including for boys; using a urinal correctly.

Much of the preparation for school that you can engage your child in will take place through conversations and modeling and the sharing of everyday experiences.

This list of suggestions is far from comprehensive, but gives you an indication of the type of activities that will provide your child with a solid learning foundation;

- provide ample time for developmental play; construction blocks, role play,
- play games involving taking turns, including board games
- encourage sharing and the appropriate use of manners
- engage them in purposeful conversations by practicing the art of good speaking and listening
- visit friends and family often and encourage them to interact with different people
- involve them in daily activities; helping with shopping, walking the dog, cooking
- dinner, hanging the washing
- take them to new places; day trips, library, swimming pool, beach
- give them new experiences; BBQs, picnics, kite flying, cooking, gardening, bike riding
- give them small responsibilities; setting the table, feeding pets, cleaning up belongings, putting away groceries
- share stories and discuss place, characters and events in relation to their own experiences
- get them to help with special tasks; signing cards, wrapping presents, choosing shopping items
- provide a range of manipulative materials for them to use; crayons, pencils, play dough, box construction
- encourage them to experiment with the contents of their Prep show bag including practising to write their name.

Beginning School

Starting school is a very exciting time for children and parents. It is important to make the experience as enjoyable and positive as possible. We welcome our new children and families and strive to build a strong partnership with you.

We encourage you to become involved in your child's education in any way you can. This involvement is one way of showing your child that you value the home-school partnership and his/her education. Research has shown that this attitude results in children making the most of their educational opportunities.

The First Week

Your attitude to school is vital as children believe what their parents believe. You can make a significant difference to how effective your child's time at school will be, particularly during the first week. This is a time for developing new relationships and positive attitudes. Feel free to pop in before school and say 'hello' to your child's teacher. We enjoy getting to know you.

Be encouraging and assure your child that they will enjoy school; they are ready to go, they will have friends and you will see them at the end of the day. Try and find a balance between getting your child excited about starting school without being overly enthusiastic, as this can sometimes have the opposite effect.

Your child will be interested and excited about what is going to happen at school but be realistic. It is not a magical place, your child won't learn to read on the first day, BUT lots of great things will happen and there will also be days when you 'just have to go'.

Be familiar with the day's routine at school, so you can reassure your child about what will be happening. A specialist timetable will be distributed to parents early in the term once routines have been established.

Some children find the demands of the classroom quite tiring and are somewhat worn out by the end of the day, as a new environment and new routines can be quite daunting. Tears, crankiness and uncharacteristic behavior can occur without warning. Don't be surprised if they don't want to talk about everything that happens. It is important to ensure your child gets plenty of rest and a full night's sleep. In the beginning it may be a good idea to keep after school activities to a minimum. Remember, every child is different and no one knows your child better than you.

Over the first few weeks there will be notes that come home containing detailed information about arrangements and events specific to your child's classroom as well as paperwork we need signed by you. Please keep your eye out for these notes as they will help to relieve any uncertainty your child may be experiencing.

A Team Approach

Students are supported in their transition from Kindergarten / Childcare to primary school by a team of dedicated staff and the Prep – 4 Assistant Principals. The transition sessions have enabled staff to get to know your child and their needs as they begin school. In Year Prep the students will have a home room teacher who teaches them for the majority of time each week. They also attend specialist teaching sessions with additional staff. Refer to the College handbook for an outline of these programs. Your child's home room teacher will work closely with all staff within the learning neighbourhood to ensure all students get to know each other and the staff within the team. This allows them to meet and form relationships with a broader range of people.

Home Room Groups

Home Room groupings will be finalized prior to the commencement of the school year.

Parents are provided with the opportunity to request that their child is placed with a familiar face; a friend or pre-school buddy who they have positive interactions with.

You will be advised of your child's teacher and home room location before the end of the year.

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The First Day of School

The first day of school will be **Thursday 30th January**. Parents and children should arrive between 8:40am and 8:50am and proceed to the appropriate home room. If your child's home room is located in the main building entry is via the external glass sliding doors that lead into individual rooms. When you arrive at school allow your child to place their bag in the locker with their name on it. Upon entering the classroom, your child will be invited to join in some of the activities.

At 8:50am the first bell of the day will ring at which time parents are encouraged to say their goodbyes and leave their child in the teachers' care. While many children are more than happy to say farewell (don't take it personally, they are just excited) there may be some who seem distressed at first. These children however, usually settle into the classroom activities quite quickly (particularly after mum or dad are out of sight!) If you are overly concerned about your child, you may like to leave a contact number so that we can ring and let you know that your child is OK.

At 3:00pm children will be dismissed from their classrooms. Please wait outside the room until the teacher places your child back into your care. Your child may be eager to tell you about their very exciting first day of school but others may require time to unwind after a hectic day before wanting to tell you about their experiences.

School Attendance

Plan to arrive at school each day between 8.40 and 8.45 allowing sufficient time for your child to hang up their school bag and familiarise themselves with the morning routine. Children enjoy meeting friends for a quick play prior to the bell.

Children need to be at school **prior** to the school bell at 8.50am. You will need to allow enough time to have breakfast and prepare for school without a rush. Routines commence as soon as the bell rings with notes being collected, daily reminders being given and the morning's learning focus being introduced. A late child can impact on the learning of all students.

Attendance at school is compulsory. It is expected that all children will attend on a daily basis as this provides every opportunity for students to maximise their potential by engaging in new learning and consolidating understandings.

In Victoria the average student is absent about one in every 13 days.

That means that by the end of their schooling the average student has missed an entire year.

If your child has a genuine reason for absence(illness, unforeseen family commitments, etc) we ask that you call the College absence line on 8348-7117 before 8.30am and leave a message explaining the absence. If a message is not received, you are required to send a written note explaining the absence within 3 days of your child's return to school. A absence letter will be sent home after a period of two weeks if an explanation has not been received. The College Attendance Policy is also available on the website and we ask that you familiarise yourself with the guidelines.

There may be occasions where your child is late to school or needs to be collected prior to the end of the day, due to medical appointments or other unavoidable circumstances. In these instances you will need to fill out the appropriate slip at the front office PRIOR to collecting your child from their home room and handed to the teacher.

Personal Belongings

It can be extremely difficult for children to identify personal belongings particularly when many of these items are identical. All clothing needs to be labeled with your child's name and home group, to ensure misplaced items are returned promptly. Please make sure your child recognizes the positioning and print of the label. If you have new school shoes, it is wise to 'break them in' prior to school beginning.

NB: Please supply a change of underclothing in your child's bag in case of an 'accident' during Term 1 – remember busy children sometimes 'forget'.

School Bag

Can your child recognize their own school bag? Remember they will all be the same. Attaching a key ring or some identifying symbol will help, along with writing their name in permanent marker inside the bag.

Lunch Box

This needs to be clearly labelled with your child's name. Lunch boxes take a fair beating at school. Children need to have a separate snack from their lunch and a suitable drink container. (Water please – no fizzy or flavoured drinks). **Please note:** Children eat both snack and lunch in their home room under teacher supervision. Recess takes place at 10.50am and it is important that a substantial snack is provided (eg ½ a sandwich and a piece of fruit) as lunchtime is at 1:20pm and busy, excited children do get hungry! It is essential that children eat a healthy breakfast to start the day..

Hat

All children will need a school hat in terms one and four (either a wide brimmed or bucket style). Point Cook College is a Sun Smart school. There is a NO HAT, PLAY IN THE SHADE policy in place. Please ensure your child's hat is clearly labeled.

Take Home Book Bag

All Prep students will require a school “take home book bag.” These are waterproof and an appropriate size for sending home take home reading materials and notes to parents. All Prep families will be invoiced for the school book bag during Term 1 at a cost of approx. \$15-00

Art Smock

All children will require a long sleeve art smock for visual arts classes. No plastic smocks please as children tend to overheat, particularly on warmer days.

Lost Property

Items that have been misplaced will be kept in the central lost property collection located just inside the door leading from the agora to the administration office. Clear labelling all of your child’s belongings will make identification easier and allow us to ensure that items are returned to their rightful owners.

Health and Well Being

Primary School Nursing Program

A free health assessment is offered by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to all students in their first year of school. This assessment addresses any concerns you may have regarding your child’s health and well being and offers advice, information and support as appropriate. You will receive a consent form and questionnaire prior to the confirmed date of the nurse visit, which will need to be returned to the College before the assessment can take place.

It is recommended that all children have a basic health check prior to starting school, in particular hearing and eyesight checks.

College Uniform

All information regarding the uniform policy can be found in the College handbook. Available uniform items are also listed below.

JUNIOR SCHOOL UNIFORM

GIRLS

Dress: Blue check with white contrast collar and cuffs - with initials
Skorts: Blue check, same fabric as summer dress
Pale Blue Pin Stripe Blouse: long sleeve with school logo - with initials
Skivvy: Light Blue - with Initials
Pinafore: Navy Blue check with bib top -detachable to convert into a skirt if required
Slacks: Charcoal grey or navy girls style

BOYS

Trousers: Charcoal grey or navy blue with elastic waist

Unisex Items

½ Zip Windcheater: Navy with stripes/panelling with school logo in Bonded Polar Fleece with ½ Zip with logo
Polo Shirt: Navy blue polo with stripes in collar (long sleeve or short sleeve*) with initials
Shorts: Grey melange shorts
Pullover: Blue wool blend pullover with taupe stripe with initials **OR**
Vest: Blue wool blend vest with taupe stripe with initials

Sports Uniform

½ Zip Windcheater: Navy with stripes/panelling with school logo in Bonded Polar Fleece with logo
Polo Shirt: Navy blue polo with stripes in collar (long sleeve or short sleeve*) with initials
Sports shorts: Navy microfibre with striping/panelling.
Sports Trackpants: Navy fleece track pants with striping/panelling
Shoes: runners / sports shoes. (Any colour)

Accessories

Socks: white anklet or knee high

Winter Tights: Navy cotton nylon/Navy Microfibre **Hat:** Navy bucket style hat with initials

Bag: School backpack with logo

Shoes: black leather OR black runners with black laces / velcro / buckles

Scarf: Navy and Grey

A note from Robyn Fincher – Assistant Principal

We hope the 'starting school' experience is an enjoyable one for both you and your child. We look forward to being a part of this exciting and important journey and to the development of a rewarding and successful learning partnership.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if there are any matters you need to clarify or discuss.

Robyn Fincher

Prep – 4 Assistant Principal

