

UNITY COLLEGE

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What is Prep?

5 Context of Learning

Reading in Prep

Getting ready for Prep

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What is Prep?

Prep is a five day a week early years' educational program. It is a very interesting and exciting time for your child and it establishes the foundational building blocks of your child's future academic success.

In the early years of schooling, children have a natural curiosity about their world and their desire to make sense of it provides a platform to construct and review their learning through interactions with others, experimentation, scaffolding, explicit teaching, practice and play in the classroom and beyond.

This helps them make sense of a world that is outside their immediate experience, as they connect new knowledge with what they already know or believe. This also provides an opportunity to challenge prior understanding and knowledge as they grow in their learning.

Unity College Prep children will be nurtured and supported by our Catholic and Uniting Church faiths, traditions and values, while they actively construct knowledge about their world. Prep uses an inquiry, structured play based curriculum and focusses on the children's needs and interests.

Prep provides a foundation for successful, lifelong learning and participation in the Australian community.



The Curriculum

At Unity College we use the Australian Curriculum to plan for and implement student learning. The Australian Curriculum describes a learning entitlement for each Australian student that provides a foundation for successful, lifelong learning and participation in the Australian community. It acknowledges that the needs and interests of students will vary, and that schools and teachers will plan from the curriculum in ways that respond to those needs and interests.

In the early years of schooling, priority is given to literacy and numeracy development because these are the foundations on which further learning is built. The foundation for literacy is built primarily in English and the foundation for numeracy primarily in Mathematics.

However, both literacy and numeracy are reinforced and strengthened through learning in other contexts including Science, the Humanities and Religious Education.

Priority is also given to motor skills development, physical activity and the development of safe and healthy personal practices through the teaching of Health and Physical Education. Equally, all students in these early years will have the opportunity to develop their sensory, cognitive and affective appreciation of the world around them through exploratory and creative learning in the Arts and in Technologies.



5 Contexts of Learning

PLAY

In the early phase of schooling the purpose of play is to support children's learning and development. Play extends children's learning. Play occurs in both indoor and outdoor environments. It provides a powerful context in which children learn as they actively engage socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually with people, objects and representations.

REAL LIFE SITUATIONS

Real-life learning situations enable children to build connections between their home, community and classroom experiences. Real-life situations are particularly important as they provide opportunities for teachers to make explicit how, where and why people use spoken language, literacy and numeracy in their everyday lives.

ROUTINES AND TRANSITIONS

Routines and transitions provide important opportunities for meaningful spontaneous and planned learning. Children are able to be supported when gaining familiarity with classroom cultures and practices.

FOCUSED LEARNING AND TEACHING

In focused learning and teaching situations, children actively co-construct understandings through interacting with people, objects and representations. Whether planned, child- or adult-initiated or occurring spontaneously, focused learning and teaching provides opportunities in which teachers purposefully and skillfully make learning explicit.

INVESTIGATIONS

Investigations generally involve children in interacting with people, objects and representations, as they inquire, explore relationships and test ideas. Investigations in the early phase of learning provide opportunities to explore ways to communicate; investigate social, natural and built environments; and experiment with artistic, scientific, technological and mathematical ideas and processes.



21ST century skills in Primary

Unity College is set for dramatic growth with the introduction of STEM, an innovative and engaging integration of science, technology, engineering and math that introduces 21st century skills to its students.

With skills such as computational thinking, collaboration, communication and creativity imperative in today's world, Unity College students now have access to the newest educational technologies available with the recent purchase of Virtual Reality kits, Blue Bot robots, LEGO® WeDo 2.0 kits, Dash robots and EV3 LEGO® robotics, as well as an augmented reality topographic sand box. Students also learn how to code, design and create digital solutions, as well as program robotics across various applications learning to apply a variety of sophisticated algorithms as their skills develop.

21ST CENTURY SKILLS START IN PREP

Prep to Year 3 students has in-class access to one to one Apple iPads which they use to create a range of digital solutions through guided play and scaffolder learning opportunities. From Year 4 onwards, students have individual iPads and are able to take their iPads home for further educational purposes and digital citizenship development. Students learn how to apply a multitude of skills as they incorporate digital technologies into everyday learning through engaging activities, such as navigating maps using robotics, digitally recording scientific experiments and analysing results through mathematical graphing software applications. Students are also taught correct typing techniques on one to one full-sized keyboards, ensuring the optimum development of this life skill.

Students in the early Junior Years now enjoy engaging lessons using the new LEGO® kits. Over the course of their lessons, they use bricks, gears and axels to build moving models of monkeys that swing and funny owls with moving eyes. These learning opportunities encourage collaboration with peers, effective communication strategies, as well as working on fine motor skills and creativity.

These cohorts also use Blue Bots, an exciting programmable floor robot. Its child friendly design, funny sounds and colorful lights make it the perfect starting device for young coders. Teaching control, directional language, programming and algorithms, it is not only a wonderful device for Digital Technologies, but further promotes literacy, numeracy and other cross-curricular connections too.

Building on these skills learned in the early years, Junior students then develop their engineering skills and robotic coding with Dash Robots. Students use their knowledge of push and pull to create a LEGO® attachment for their Dash robot to navigate marbles around a course. Learners build on their coding language skills with the use of Tynker and Blockly coding apps.



STEM IN HIGHER PRIMARY

STEM integrations continue in Year 3 when students explore the moon and the mystery of outer space and discuss what they would need to incorporate to create their very own moon rover. Students work in collaborative teams to design, build and test their lunar creation. Using knowledge of the moon's surface and environment, students consider what their robots might require for a successful mission and then build their moon rover using the LEGO® WeDo 2.0 kits. Learners apply their coding skills to drive their moon rovers over a lunar surface to the base. The use of the robot allows students to make links between mathematical concepts and the real world.

Coding activities also allow students to develop computational thinking skills while exploring content in other learning areas. In Year 4 HASS, students learn about the First Fleet. Integrating Digital Technologies, the coding app Tynker is used to map the voyage taken by these first ships. Students then create their own quiz, based on the knowledge of key dates and facts.

Students also use the LEGO® WeDo 2.0 kits to create a robot to investigate the effects of balanced and unbalanced forces of the movement of an object. Pupils build their robots and measure the outcomes using different wheels and weights. They engage in discussions about the investigation, explain the concepts of forces and friction, and use this information to create a final project. The Numbers app is then used to enter the data and create graphs to adequately proved evidence to justify their fingers.

Digital technologies are integrated throughout the College, seamlessly transitioning students from Prep to Year 12, with the introduction of one to one Apple laptops in Year 7. All devices from Prep to Year 12 have access to the school's WiFi system, ensuring online safety through safeguarded internet controls, personalized BCE email accounts as well as protected online storage and digital educational resources.

Dedicated to providing students with the highest level of learning opportunities available on the Sunshine Coast, Unity College's exciting STEM program aims to ensure that all students can learn these critical 21st century skills and grow with STEM at the College.



Reading in Prep

Supporting reading development at home is a wonderful way to elevate your child's learning at school. Not only does reading enhance a child's vocabulary and help them to understand how to read and write; reading aloud to children also helps them to understand different topics about the world and everyday life.

One tip, is to pause during reading to talk about the story and what interests your child. This provides them with lots of opportunities to think and discuss what is happening in the story. During discussion, talk about the important parts of the story - e.g. the characters, setting, problem, actions and resolution.

This makes it easier for children to make sense of the story and it prepares them for understanding the stories they will read later on.

To be prepared to read, children must understand that words can be broken down into smaller sounds and that letters correspond to certain words. For this reason we encourage you to talk about and practice the sounds that different letters make.

Other reading strategies to build with your child include; going back and re-reading pages, pointing out pictures, sounding words out letter by letter and highlighting the mouth movement used for each word. But most of all, have fun! Home Learning should be enjoyable for both the child and the parent as this is where a lifelong love of reading has the potential to begin!



Getting ready for Prep!

Full time Prep is a big step for many children. There are things that you can do to help your child feel confident and comfortable from day one!

Encourage your child to explore numbers, colours and shapes, explore patterns in the environment and sort, match and classify everyday objects during play.

Develop your child's early literacy skills and a love of books through reading to your child every day! Develop your child's oral language by talking about stories, songs and nursery rhymes.

Establish a consistent night time routine. A well-rested child will cope better with the changes that occur during the Prep day.

Develop a morning routine to include the eating of a healthy breakfast and time to talk with your child about drop off and pick up arrangements, after school activities etc. This will help your child feel informed and prepared.

Encourage healthy eating practices by packing your child a healthy lunch and teach your child to open a lunch box and any other storage containers so that he/she feels independent and capable.

Ensure your child can manage his/her own clothing and encourage them to attempt to put on his/her own shoes and socks.

Assist your child with personal hygiene eg. brushing teeth, combing hair and washing hands. Ensure they can manage toileting, safely and cleanly.

Encourage your child to develop gross motor skills. Provide experiences for rolling, jumping, throwing, catching, kicking, running, balancing and skipping.

Take time to develop fine motor skills by practising scissor grip and cutting, name writing, colouring and threading.

Take time to play games and share quality time with your child. These experiences provide your child with many learning opportunities such as taking turns, using his/her oral language, being a 'good sport' etc.



How to Apply

For Prep to Year 12 Applications, please visit www.uc.qld.edu.au and click the enrol now link.

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Key Dates

Applications for Prep 2022

Applications now open

Enrolment Interviews for Prep 2022

Term 1 2021



teaching • challenging • transforming