



# Wondering about school: Children's investigations





# Our school community

When you enrol your child in a Queensland state school, you become part of our community:

- we see you as partners and will encourage your involvement
- we see all children as successful learners
- we will value your child's strengths, motivations and interests
- we will value your child's prior-to-school experiences
- we invite your family to participate in school activities
- we will be ready for your family.

# Acknowledgment of Country

The Department of Education and Training acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands from across Queensland. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

A better understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures develops an enriched appreciation of Australia's cultural heritage and can lead to reconciliation. This is essential to the maturity of Australia as a nation and fundamental to the development of an Australian identity.





# Principal's welcome

Starting school for the first time is an important event in the lives of children and their families. While some things will stay the same, like family and community connections, other things will change, like new daily routines, friends, feelings and places.

At this time, children's views offer important ideas that can help families be positive about the changes that come with starting school. A child's view helps us to think about things that adults may not otherwise consider. For our school community, children's voices show us what we can do to support children and families at this time.

The "Starting School" book is a welcome gift from our school community to you at this special time.

It captures, in their own voices, the thoughts, feelings and experiences of children as they started at our school. The pictures and words in this book are the important messages that current Prep children wanted other children to know about before starting school, to help them feel relaxed, safe and confident about their first weeks and months at 'big school'.

When you read this book together, we hope that their voices start conversations between you and your child to help you all make a positive start.

We look forward to welcoming you again in January to continue your life-long learning journey with us.

Tracey Clark, Principal  
Dutton Park State School



# Better together: Helping children enjoy a positive start to school

This booklet respects the voices of children in their transition to school. It contains pictures and messages about school from Prep children in response to kindergarten children's questions. Sharing this book with your child offers you the chance to talk about some of the new experiences they may have in their first year of school.

There are lots of other ways you can help your child enjoy a positive start to school. Some simple tips include:

- be ready to support your child
- listen to your child's thoughts about starting school
- make time to talk, read, play and relax with your child
- share your positive feelings about school
- practise new routines
- encourage your child to keep trying when something is hard
- assist your child to know how to get help
- meet new children and families before the first day
- celebrate starting school.

Your child may raise questions or wish to share their thoughts about what school might be like. Talking with them about these feelings is a good way to help them, and you, prepare for a positive transition to school.

Your child's language skills develop through the everyday conversations you have with them. At school we build on this language and the children's thinking skills by listening, watching and being responsive in our teaching.

For more information visit:

Transition to school

[www.qld.gov.au/transitiontoschool](http://www.qld.gov.au/transitiontoschool)

Age-appropriate pedagogies in Prep

[www.det.qld.gov.au/ageappropriatepedagogies](http://www.det.qld.gov.au/ageappropriatepedagogies)



## Tips for families

Here are some tips from families in our school community to new Prep families about what worked for them to support a positive start to school.

*“You can never have too many socks!” (Alis)*

*“Organise a play date or two if you know anyone starting school at the same time.”*

*(Rae, Rafia)*

*“Go to the YMCA (Outside School Hours Care Vacation Program) in the summer holidays to get to know new friends before school starts. Don’t forget your child is ‘starting school’ there as well. Practice visits are really important to show them what happens there. It is very different to a kindy or prep class. It can be daunting to mix with older children you don’t know, where it is often noisy and unfamiliar.”*

*(Yoshiko, Vokili)*

*“Don’t forget to ask your older children to help settle your Prep child into school and support them and the family to make it all run as smoothly as possible.”*

*(Stephanie)*

*“If you have a younger child, try to include them in something to do with starting school so they don’t feel left out. Explain that their older sibling won’t be at home or childcare anymore with them. Support them to understand the changes that are going on for them too.”*

*(Vokili)*

*“Before starting school I imagined a long conveyor-belt of Tupperware and a daily lunchbox burden. It was nonsense. Making lunches is fine.”*

*(Monica)*

*“Volunteering with the reading groups is a wonderful way to meet the other children. It helps me so much, when extracting information about what happened in the school day, to know who my child is talking about. Plus it gives you an appreciation of how amazing the teachers are!”*

*(Carla)*

*“Teach your child to open their lunchbox. Independence skills are important in prep.”*

*(Alis)*

*“Getting the kids ready always takes twice as much time as you think!”*

*(Richard)*

*“Kids start school with different abilities. The range is incredible! Volunteer to help in activity time to see for yourself. Don’t be too worried to see another child can do something that yours can’t - yet. They all get there in their own time.”*

*(Guy)*

*“Read the notes and newsletters that come home so you know when they need money or costumes etc.”*

*(Alis)*

*“Join the P&C Facebook Page to get updates and reminders about what’s going on at school. You can post questions as well.”*

*(Shellie)*

*“Doing drop offs and pick-ups whenever you can is a good way to get to know other parents.”*

*(Richard)*

*“Don't let that 3pm bell beat you to it. Being late for pick up sucks.”*

*(Monica)*

*“The DPSS buddy program is genuine and highly effective. Be prepared for your little one to develop strong affection for their buddy!”*

*(Monica)*

*“Prep is tiring! Everyone needs plenty of rest to cope with the new routines and changes going on.”*



What I like about school.

Sabrina 6  
I like when we do craft.



I like when we do craft. Sabrina, 6.

I am being a pirate  
Elysha I am 6



I am being a pirate. Elysha, 6.

What I like about school.

I am writing. Do you like writing? Marlowe, 6.

M) Marlowe 6

~~on the weekend~~  
I  
~~I am~~  
I am writing, too uoo I like  
it ig



I like to play on the oval because all my buddies are there. Stella, 5.

XOX Stella 5 PIF



What I like about school.

fun friday  
Ayliffe 5

Fun Friday! Ayliffe, 5.



On Fun Friday, I like dressing up. Astrid, 6.



What I like about school.

I feel happy to play on Fun Fridays. Ahmad, 5.



Ahmad  
yеr's old five

I feellly  
happy  
to play fun  
friday

I like the library. Andy, 6.

Andy I like the library.



What I like about school.



Playing on the monkey bars.  
Sierra, 5.

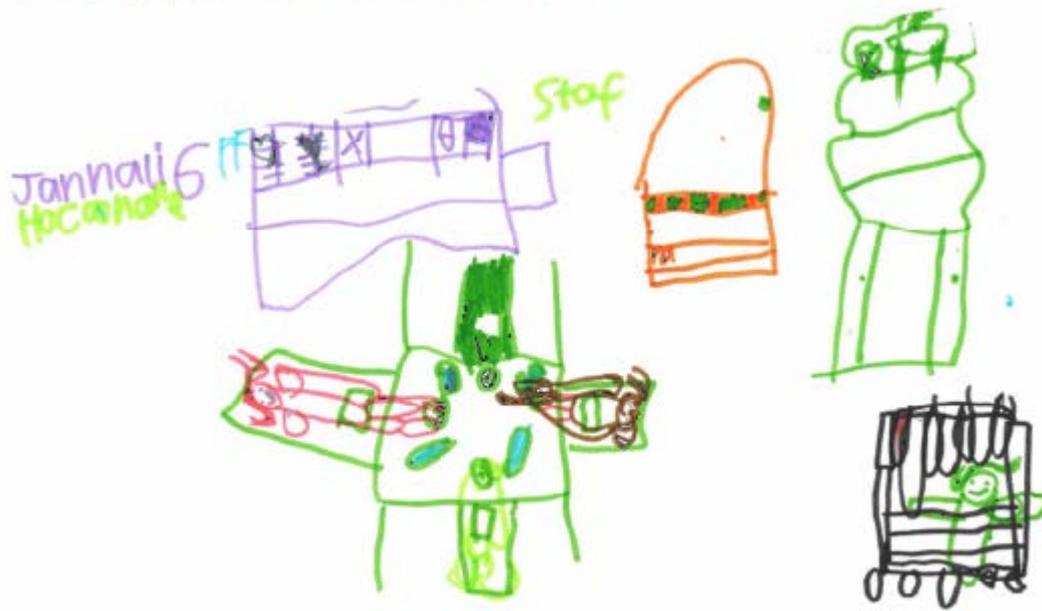


fun friday I am playing bats

Fun Friday. I am playing bats. Felix, 6.

What I like about school.

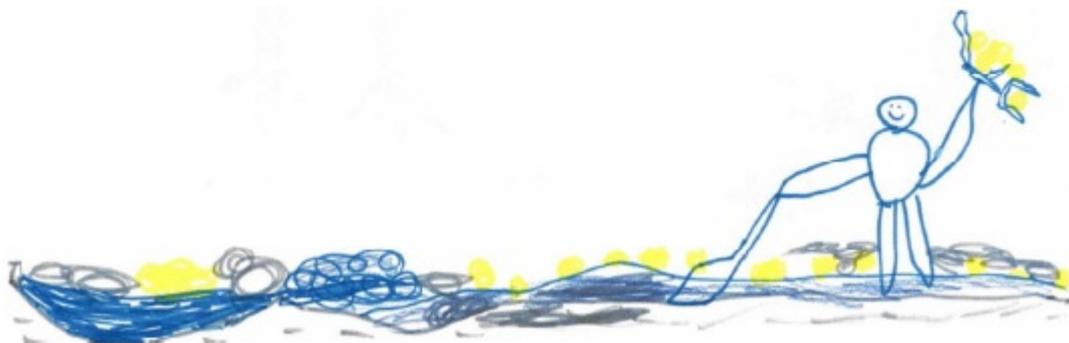
I like playing in the home corner. Jannali, 6.



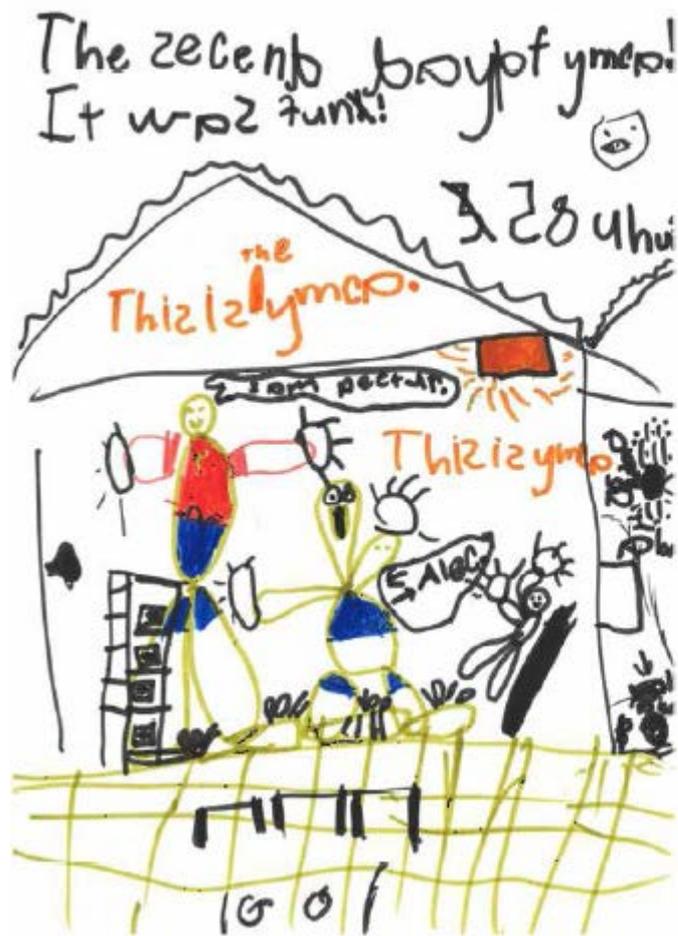
I am playing in the drain. Austin, 6.

Austin 6

I am playing in the grayn.



What I like about school.



The second day of YMCA!  
It was fun! Alec, 5.  
\*Outside School Hours Care



I like the home corner. May, 6.

What I like about school.

I like playing with the toys.  
Ming Xuan, 6.



Show me the oval. Mili, 6.

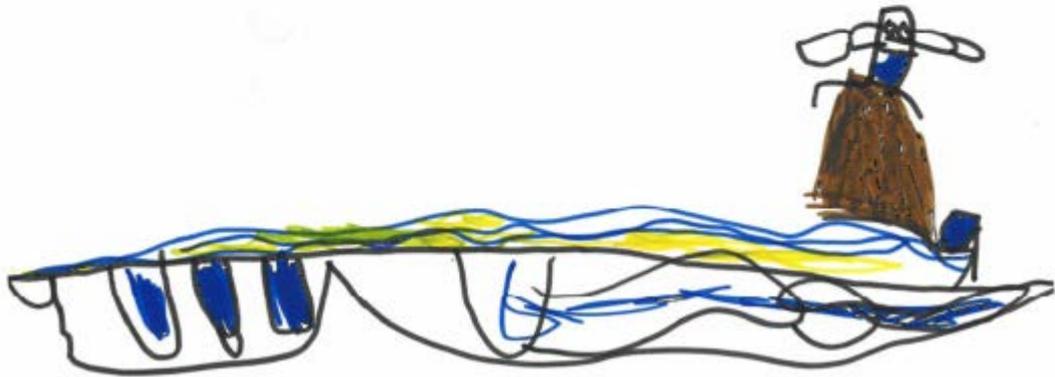


Shoamu  
Shevtae ~~ma~~ Mili 6 Prep

What I like about school.

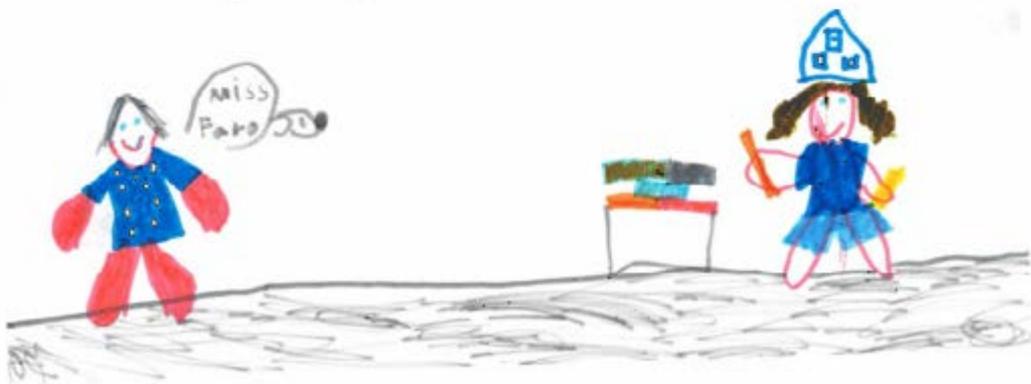
I like the drain. Innes, 5.

I am 5 Innes



Fun Friday is my favourite day. I like to play with the straws. Lily, 6.

Fun Friday <sup>Lily, 6</sup> is my favourite day. I like to play with the straws.



What I like about school.



You can play soccer on the oval. Julian, 5.

What it feels like to start school.

I was shy. (Then I made some friends). I was not shy anymore.

Athalia, 5.

Athalia.  
I am 5.



Nervous. You have to be brave.  
Faris, 6.

What it feels like to start school.

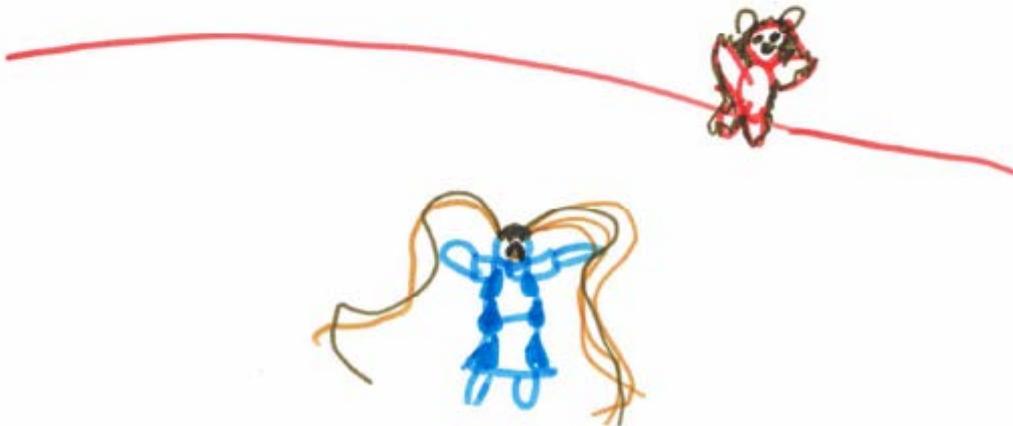
When it was the first day of school, I was happy. Sabrina, 6.

Sabrina 6  
Wen it was the foost.  
day of scool I  
was. Hape.



I am sad because I did not have many friends. Ayli, 5.

I am sad because  
I Din no halla mat  
fets.



What it feels like to start school.

On the first day of school. Excited. Nervous. Astrid, 6.



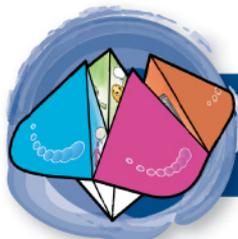
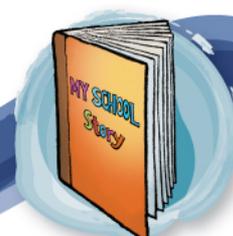
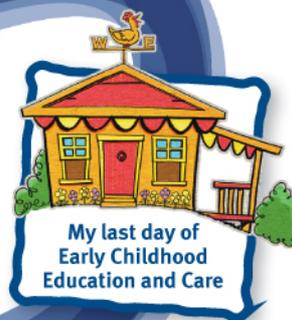
I am worried. Now I am not worried. You don't have to be worried. Marlowe, 6.

I am worib nao I am not worit  
y b ont haf  to b worirbe

Marlowe

# Wondering about school: What can we do together?

Families play a big role in supporting the transition to school. Here are some simple tips for supporting your child over the holidays.



Have you got your transition chatterbox?  
Ask your school about this free resource on enrolment.

# Our thanks

Thank you to all the 2015 Prep children at Dutton Park State School for their hard work writing, illustrating and publishing this booklet.

We would also like to acknowledge the Shiell family for their contributions to this project.



Better together  
Helping children enjoy a positive start to school  
[www.qld.gov.au/transitiontoschool](http://www.qld.gov.au/transitiontoschool)



**Queensland**  
Government