Welcome to Girls Grammar School Prep 2016

An education is the greatest gift any child can receive.

At Girls Grammar our Prep students work with specialist teachers in Drama, Music, Japanese and Physical Education every week of the year. Our girls extend their literacy and numeracy capacity within dynamic classroom programs which are aligned to the National curriculum. Our campus is wirelessly connected and we provide learning areas designed to nurture play and creativity.

The Girls Grammar Early Years precinct, nestled in the heart of the School, includes a purpose-built playground and facilities used exclusively by our youngest Girls Grammar girls. We also have Out of School Hours Care and Holiday Program for those who book early!

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the Girls Grammar family.

Warm regards,

Sheldon Olive (Prep Classroom Teacher)  
Naomi Beacom (Director of Primary Learning)
PREP CLASS OF 2016

Welcome to Girls Grammar School Rockhampton. What an exciting year 2016 will be for you and your daughter as she commences her schooling. Her teacher, Sheldon Olive, will ensure that your daughter enjoys learning in an environment where children, teachers, parents and other caregivers will come together to provide the best possible learning experiences for each girl. Your daughter will have many opportunities to enjoy a fun-filled first year of schooling where she will make new friends and share experiences with adults who understand and care about her.

During school hours the Prep Teacher can be contacted on 4930 0956.

THE PREP SCHOOL DAY

Prep runs Monday to Friday. The school day begins at 8.20am and finishes at 3.00pm for the whole School. Parents are welcome to stay with their Prep daughters until 9.00am in Term 1 if you have the opportunity to do so.

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<td><strong>Morning Tea</strong></td>
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<td>Middle Session</td>
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<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
<td>12.35-1.20</td>
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<td>Afternoon session</td>
<td>1.20-3.00</td>
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<td>School finishes</td>
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GETTING STARTED – ESTABLISHING Routines

As the girls are learning the school and classroom routines, there may be some delays in getting started.

Please be patient and allow your daughter to unpack her bag. It is a very important part of the day where the girls learn to think for themselves and not to rely on others, remember a sequence and follow routine. You may need to resist the urge to assist your daughter, and although it may be quicker, it is nowhere near as beneficial for the girls if adults intervene to ‘help’.

Starting school is a big step for every child. Some children embrace the experience without hesitation, whereas others may take time to settle happily. Although it may be traumatic for parents, don’t be too concerned if your daughter cries when you leave her in the morning. School is strange and new at first and when she knows you are preparing to leave your child may become unsettled.

The best way to handle this situation is for you to hand your child over to the teacher and leave – don’t linger. When you hesitate, your daughter may become distressed because she sees that she may be able to influence you to stay by crying. You are always welcome to ring during the day to see how she is doing (4930 0956).

Most often, once you have left (with the reassurance that you will return) your child will become interested in the activities and settle quickly.
FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL FOR 2016 PREP STUDENTS

When       Wednesday 27 January 2016 at 8.20am
Where      Girls Grammar Early Learning Centre (ELC)
Directions Little Athelstane Street (off Denham Street) accesses the ELC
What to Bring Fruit for Fruit Break, a packed morning tea and lunch and a water bottle.
Home Time  3.00pm

WHAT TO WEAR

The School Uniform, School bags, swimwear, tracksuits etc can be purchased from the Parents and Friends Uniform Shop on site. Prep students wear the following school uniform:

Formal Uniform
- Tartan dress with white collar
- School tie with school and house badges
- White fold down socks
- The Clarks Ingrid T Bar shoe is worn as uniform. These are available through the P&F Uniform Shop.
- Broad brimmed sun hat with embroidered gold school emblem
- Navy, gold, white or school tartan scrunchies or ribbons
- Winter: Navy stockings (optional) and school jumper.

Sports Uniform
- Girls Grammar sports polo shirt
- House coloured polo shirt - sporting events only
- Girls Grammar navy blue sports shorts
- Mainly white sports shoes (athletic shoes, not canvas)
- White RGGS sports socks
- Winter: School tracksuit jacket and pants (optional)
MAKING THE FIRST DAY A SUCCESS

There are some simple steps you can take to make your daughter’s first day at school more enjoyable and relaxed. Be prepared. The best thing you can do is to make the first day as stress-free and calm as possible.

On the day

- Leave plenty of time to get ready
- Make a nutritious breakfast - this is essential for sustained energy and concentration
- Talk through the daily routine - start, morning tea, lunch and finish times
- Talk through a few simple self-help ideas - for example, to ask teachers for help or directions
- Be positive and encouraging about your daughter’s attendance and school
- Be flexible and supportive in the early days of school, children may take a little while to settle in

Packing school lunch

Being at school is hard work, so by lunchtime your daughter will be hungry and thirsty. She will need a nutritious lunch.

When packing your daughter’s lunch:

- provide healthy food and drink in realistic quantities for both morning tea and lunch
- ensure that your daughter can open and unwrap her lunch
- provide a variety of smaller items rather than one or two large items
- provide a water bottle every day and encourage your daughter to drink regularly
- keeps sweets, chips and other party food for special occasions

Token for a Boarders lunch may also be purchased from Student Services in the morning. For Prep students these are delivered to the classroom.

AFTERNOON PICK UP

In the afternoon we request that you collect your daughter from the undercover area near the classroom. This is a safety policy so that we know where the girls are and can monitor who has been collected.
AFTER SCHOOL CARE

‘After School Hours Care’ operates in the Early Learning Centre. Girls Grammar also offers supervised play in the morning from 7.15am and Vacation Care during the holidays. Students must be registered to attend After Care or Vacation Care.

Out of School Hours Care (OSHC):
- Provides meaningful programs, which incorporate elements of play with elements of daily real-life experiences
- Recognises freedom of choice in experiences, balanced with age-appropriate programming and opportunity for support child-initiated planning
- Treats children, parents, staff and relevant community members with respect
- Recognises parents as having the primary responsibility for the upbringing, protection and development of their children. The Girls Grammar OSHC aims to support parents in that role
- Encourages and welcomes open discussion on all issues relevant to the Girls Grammar OSHC operation

Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) is available for students from Prep to Year 9. Before students attend OSHC all forms must be submitted. Children cannot attend this facility prior to completing an application form (even under emergency situations). Application forms are available at Reception.

THE PREP LEARNING PROGRAM

The Prep year provides an important bridge between home and school and a learning environment aimed at managing the challenges associated with starting full-day schooling during the crucial first year of literacy and numeracy learning.

Prep year at Girls Grammar gives students the best possible opportunities to excel in a small, caring environment where individual potential can be nurtured. The curriculum is stimulating and exciting, promotes emergent literacy and numeracy skills. It supports the establishment and strengthening of well-being, emotional maturity, language development, thinking skills, creativity and social and physical development. It promotes the development of initiative, responsibility, cooperation, confidence and increasing independence.
The National Curriculum is fully implemented at Girls Grammar. Your daughter’s teacher will ensure that the curriculum takes into consideration each child’s individual needs and differences in a flexible learning environment. She will work alongside children as a facilitator and co-constructor of their learning, providing a stimulating, balanced and dynamic curriculum, which develops and maintains a positive attitude towards learning and the desire to learn. It is an objective of Prep to ensure that students regard learning and school as a fun, exciting and rewarding experience.

An important feature of the Prep year is to build continuities between each child’s prior experiences and her future learning in schooling contexts. In preparatory settings it is particularly important to recognize and build on children’s prior learning at home, in the community and in other educational settings.

**BEING READY FOR SCHOOL**

The following indicators of preparedness for school have been identified:

- Social and emotional competence with a focus on social learning and independence
- Health and physical wellbeing, particularly in making healthy choices
- Gross and fine-motor development
- Language development and communication focusing on oral language and early literacy
- Early mathematical understandings with emphasis on early numeracy learning
- Active learning processes with a focus on thinking, investigating, imagining and responding
- Positive dispositions to learning

These indicators have been used in developing the Early Years Learning Areas, which comprise the curriculum for the Prep year. The areas are:

- Communicating
- Creating and designing
- Investigating and understanding environments
- Sense of self and others
- Social living and learning

The Early Years Learning Areas are used to develop a balanced, integrated curriculum for young children which broadens their learning experiences.

**EXPLORATORY 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.

Through play, children use and extend oral language capabilities, improve literacies and numeracy, explore a range of ways to symbolize experiences and develop imagination, creativity and the skills of problem solving.

In the Prep year it is important for children to engage in a variety of play types both indoors and outdoors including:

- make-believe play
- exploratory play
- directed play
- extended free play
- physical play
- games with rules
- constructive play
- manipulative play
- play with information and communication technologies.

Play contexts provide meaningful opportunities for children to explore learning across a range of learning areas and the skills to transfer learning from one situation to another.
PLAY IS LEARNING

Through play children develop competencies. Through play a Prep student:

- Increases her vocabulary
- Learns to take turns and share
- Learns safety and caution
- Experiences pleasure and enjoyment
- Makes choices
- Learns about doing things for others
- Learns to make choices and decisions
- Learns to enjoy books and reading
- Learns to value and apply her imagination
- Learns to follow directions
- Exercises her body
- Learns to appreciate music
- Has fun
- Relaxes
- Learns to listen
- Learns to express ideas through technology
- Learns about different concepts, people and places
- Experiences the satisfaction of being able to make something
- Extends her understanding of the feelings of others
- Learns to play with others
- Develops a knowledge of the world
- Extends her creativity, flexibility in thinking and problem solving
- Practises communication and social abilities.

*Just to name a few!*

HOMEWORK

Prep students receive homework starting in Term 2. Homework consists of small activities including sight word practice and consolidation of other skills learnt in class.

Just 10-20 minutes of showing an interest in your daughter’s activities at School will encourage reflective practise and reinforcement of learning. We urge every parent to regularly read *with* their daughter, and *to* their daughter. If you have any concerns regarding homework, please contact the teacher.
SHOW AND TELL SHARING

All the girls will be given the opportunity to bring along something for ‘Show and Tell’ or just to share an exciting story or incident. Each student will be given a scheduled time. Your assistance would be appreciated in ensuring that your daughter only brings something on her scheduled day.

Toys are understandably discouraged. Something of personal importance (e.g. items from sport, dancing, photos, etc.) or something of educational value (e.g. books, artefacts, etc.) are particularly encouraged.

EXCURSIONS

Excursions and performances will be arranged from time to time as part of your daughter’s experience at school. Parents are encouraged to attend at any time and will be informed in advance of upcoming excursions/performances. Permission for your daughter’s attendance will be requested.

NUTRITION

Each day children require a piece of fruit for our 9am Fruit Break. This helps the girls get a nutritious snack in between breakfast and morning tea, as well as to keep their energy up. The girls also require a healthy morning tea, lunch and a water bottle. Please carefully consider the foods included in your daughter’s lunch box as we encourage children to eat healthy choices foods. Ensure your daughter knows what food has been packed and when to eat it. Supplying lunch in labelled, easy to open packages and containers will help encourage your daughter’s independence.

Fridges are available for your daughter to ensure lunches are kept cool and fresh. Please choose the smallest sized hard plastic lunchbox to accommodate your daughter’s lunch to assist with fitting lunchboxes in the fridges. Children can store their lunchboxes in the fridge at the beginning of the day.

Suitable healthy food choices include:
- Cut fruit or vegetables, dried fruit, sandwiches/wraps/rolls/cruskis, cheese, cold meats, savoury biscuits, yoghurt, boiled eggs or muesli bars.

Unsuitable food choices include:
- Chips, lollies, processed snack foods like roll-ups, soft drink and foods in containers children cannot open.

We also explicitly teach children not to share, swap, give away or take other students’ food to prevent any issues related to allergies. We appreciate your support and care with this matter.
BIRTHDAYS
Birthdays are special times for children and we love to celebrate these special days with them. You may like to provide cupcakes on your daughter’s birthday or the closest day to it, to share with the other girls. Please arrange with us a time prior to the day that is suitable for you to be able to join us.

If your daughter has any special dietary requirements or restrictions, please inform the teacher to ensure your daughter does not eat anything she should not.

ACCIDENT PACK
Each child needs an ‘accident pack’ stored in their school bag. This pack should contain:

- 2 pairs of underwear - underpants and socks
- 1 plastic bag for soiled items

Please check this regularly to ensure the contents are clean and still fit your daughter.

HEALTH POLICY
Parents are requested to keep your daughter at home if she is feeling unwell or has an infectious illness. If you are in any doubt at all regarding your child’s health and unsure whether to bring her to school, please err on the side of caution. The school must be notified of all infectious illnesses.

If your child becomes ill during the day, you will be notified so that she can be taken home. Please ensure your contact details (and the contact details of an alternative contact person) are kept up-to-date.

EMERGENCIES
The school has a Health Centre with a full-time Registered Nurse, Health Care Coordinator. In an emergency, an Ambulance will be called and contact with parents/guardians will be made as soon as practicable.

MEDICINES
All medication must be clearly marked with the child’s name and the dosage clearly printed on the pharmacist’s dispensing label. Please do not leave medication of any nature in your child’s bag. Medication must be handed into the Health Centre upon arrival at school, from where it will be administered by the school nurse as required. Prescribed medications will only be administered if the pharmaceutical label is current and intact. Please advise us in relation to any medical conditions or needs your daughter may have.

PARENT CONCERNS
Parents are requested to raise any concerns with the teacher. She will be pleased to discuss any aspect of your daughter’s care and education and consider appropriate action. All concerns are dealt with in a confidential manner.
COMMUNICATION FOLDERS AND KIT BOOKS

Each child has her own Communication Folder which she takes home and returns daily. Inside this folder students keep their School Diary book. The diary provides the opportunity for parents to write any notes to the teacher and for the teacher to communicate with parents. Notes are regularly pasted into the diary, so daily checking is required.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Prep room classroom has an ‘Open Door’ policy, where parents and family members are welcome in the classroom. Parent participation sends strong positive messages to your child that you support her and are part of the child’s care environment. There are many levels of parent participation and teachers appreciate that time is of a premium for all parents. We can accommodate any form of involvement you may desire in order to assist you and your child to be happy and to feel welcomed at Girls Grammar.

A three-way relationship needs to be nurtured between parents, teachers and each child. Communication is a vital ingredient to the success of this partnership. Parents will always be the first and the most important teachers of each child and can share their understanding, hopes and concerns openly with the classroom teacher.

Parent involvement in the classroom can be accommodated to meet your availability and commitments. This might include:

- Participating in excursions
- Attending special activities and functions
- Volunteering time to spend in the classroom

Please be aware that parent involvement although encouraged is neither essential nor expected. Parents will be invited to join in classroom activities throughout the year. Siblings are always welcome in the classroom when children are being dropped off or picked up, however, parents need to supervise.
PERSONAL PROPERTY

Please ensure that all your daughter’s personal items including clothing, hat, lunch box, drink bottle, school bag and even the insides of shoes are all clearly named.

I dreamed I stood in a studio
And watched two sculptors there.
The clay they used was a young child’s mind
And they fashioned it with care.
One was the teacher, the tools she used
Were books and music and art,
One was the parent with a guiding hand
And a gentle loving heart.
Day after day the teacher toiled
With touch that was deft and sure,
The parent laboured by her side
And polished and smoothed it over,
And when at last the task was done,
They were proud of what they had wrought
For the things they had moulded into the child
Could neither be sold nor bought.
And each agreed she would have failed
If she had worked alone,
For behind the parent stood the school,
And behind the teacher the home.