Welcome children and parents

We extend a warm welcome to the Holy Angels Early Years Centre. We look forward to working with you.

Mater Dei Primary School
53 Curzon Street Toowoomba

Phone Number - (07) 4637 6100
Fax Number - (07) 4632 8630
Web: www.mdpstwb.catholic.edu.au
Email: materdei@twb.catholic.edu.au
MATER DEI SCHOOL PRAYER

Christ has no body now but ours.
No hands, no feet
on earth but ours.
Ours are the eyes
through which Christ looks,
Ours are the feet with which
Christ walks to do good.
Ours are the hands with which
Christ blesses all the world.

So let nothing disturb you;
let nothing frighten you.
All things are passing.
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things.
God alone is enough.
Amen
MATER DEI VISION

The Mater Dei Primary School Vision: “Illuminating the RANGE of possibilities” is based on five core values:

- RIGHT RELATIONSHIP
- A LISTENING HEART
- NURTURING POTENTIAL
- GROUNDED
- EMPOWERED TO PARTICIPATE

Our school’s geographical location; at the top of the Great Dividing Range is the starting point for the development of our core values using the acronym RANGE as a focus. **Illuminating** and **Possibilities** were identified by staff as significant words for our context. The words chosen to encapsulate our values are reflective of the core competencies and dispositions staff identified as being essential for a future-oriented school to foster within its learners.

Our Vision “Illuminating the range of Possibilities” reflects the key concepts central to how we operate at Mater Dei.

- Our school is co-educational with the children at the centre of all that we do.
- The extended arms of the children represent for us the joy and celebration of learning by the whole school community.
- The outstretched arms of the children are reminiscent of the ‘tree of life’ symbol located in our church, acknowledging our relationship with the St Theresa’s Parish.
- The children stand on the Great Dividing Range – an analogy to our RANGE values that provide a strong and stable foundation to ground our learners.
- The five flames surrounding the children remind us of the gift of the Holy Spirit and represent for us our five Teaching and Learning Principles.
- The illuminating rays of sunlight represent the diversity of possibilities for holistic growth.
- Our Vision is encapsulated within the circle; a symbol that takes on increasing significance for us as it is life giving, unifying, inclusive, empowering and open to possibility.

Mater Dei staff members continue to be involved in an ongoing process of reflection, discussion and research to deepen our shared vision of ‘The Mater Dei Way’. We continue striving to develop our identity as a school prepared to meet the needs of lifelong learners in the 21st century – our students, our families and our teachers.
Our Early Years philosophy is framed by our Mater Dei School Vision:

“Illuminating the RANGE of Possibilities”

Underpinned by our five core values:

RIGHT RELATIONSHIP
A LISTENING HEART
NURTURING POTENTIAL
GROUNDED
EMPOWERED TO PARTICIPATE

Our philosophy focuses on supporting children to become lifelong learners and facilitating the development of a solid spiritual, social-emotional, physical and academic foundation in order to provide children with the best chance possible of reaching their individual potential.

We acknowledge parents as the primary educators of their children and believe that learning is enhanced when parents foster their children’s spiritual, social, emotional, physical and academic independence at home and at school.

RIGHT RELATIONSHIP
We believe that children’s perception of God is based on their experience of the world, by the way they are treated and observations of the values they see enacted by those around them.

We believe that when all members of the learning community including children, teachers, parents and parishioners work together to build supportive and respectful relationships, children’s learning is enhanced.

A LISTENING HEART
We believe that all people are created in the “image and likeness of God”; therefore we actively respond to others with compassion.

We believe that children are inherently spiritual beings with a contemplative nature and a sense of wonder about their world and their place within it.
**NURTURING POTENTIAL**
We believe that our role as educators is to guide, challenge and enable children to strive to reach their potential and inspire a love of learning.

We believe that children's motor, social and cognitive development is enhanced through active, physical learning experiences across a range of contexts, including structured and unstructured outside play. These opportunities also provide a meaningful context to practice and refine social skills.

We believe that establishing a firm foundation in oral language prior to formal schooling significantly enhances children's ongoing development and progress in their early years of schooling.

We believe that children need to be actively engaged in physical learning experiences that integrate and use equipment in order to develop and extend their spatial awareness, gross motor, physical and cognitive ability.

We believe that the development of fine motor skills through the manipulation of equipment, tools and objects, as well as participation in explicit, targeted fine motor activities is essential for early writers.

We believe that the Australian Curriculum can be delivered effectively, and deep learning can take place through a child negotiated, educational play-based program.

**GROUNDED**
We believe that in order for children to take risks and assume ownership of their learning it is important to establish safe and supportive learning environments.

We believe that nurturing social and emotional competencies is fundamental to developing an individual’s self and social awareness, self-management and interpersonal skills. These skills are necessary for the establishment and maintenance of positive relationships.

We believe it is essential to provide opportunities for children to build a strong foundation of social competencies such as confidence, resilience, independence, co-operation and collaboration to foster continued social and emotional growth and enhance academic learning.

**EMPOWERED TO PARTICIPATE**
We believe that children learn best when they develop positive dispositions to learning and to themselves as learners.

We believe that children learn best through sensory, hands-on experiences which stimulate rich learning across all areas of the curriculum.

We believe in the importance of offering teaching, learning and assessment opportunities across a range of recommended contexts to cater for the diverse needs, abilities and learning styles of children.

We engage with each parent on their child’s individual learning journey and while we do not promote comparison among students, there are times when as a school we are required to assign standards to student achievement.
SCHOOL ROUTINE

STARTING AND FINISHING TIMES

8.15 am  
Before school duty
8:30am  
School Commences
10:30am – 11:05am  
Morning Tea
1:05 pm - 1:40pm  
Lunch
2:50pm  
Dismissal

Note: All children who arrive late (after 8:30am) and depart early (before 2:50pm) must be signed in or out at the school office.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROCEDURES

- Children are not to be in the Early Years Centre before 8:15am.
- Between 8:15am-8:30am children are supervised in the undercover area.
- All playground equipment is out of bounds before and after school.
- Play is not permitted in the Early Years Centre out of school hours.
- In the afternoon children remain in the classroom until they are collected.
- At 2:50pm children should immediately make their way home or wait quietly with an adult or older sibling.
- Students who have not been collected by 3.05pm will be supervised in the P.J Doyle area.
- Children are not permitted in classrooms until a teacher is present.
- Please be on time when collecting children. If you are delayed please contact the office.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Children may wear sandals on non-sports days during warmer months. A reminder that a school hat is compulsory at all times for outdoor play.

GIRLS UNIFORM

Hat – Blue Slouch - Available at the school office
Shirt – Royal Blue with gold side stripe (short or long sleeves)
Skirt – Royal blue wrap-around
Shorts – Royal blue
Tracksuit – Royal blue with gold stripes
Socks – short blue, gold stripes
Shoes – predominately blue or black (white is acceptable)
Sandals – Black, navy or brown

BOYS UNIFORM

Hat – Blue Slouch – available at the school office
Shirt – Royal Blue with gold side stripe (short or long sleeves)
Shorts – Royal blue
Tracksuit – Royal blue with gold stripes
Socks – short blue, gold stripes
Shoes – predominately blue or black (white is acceptable)
Sandals – Black, navy or brown

SECOND HAND AND NEW UNIFORMS

Second hand uniforms are available at the clothing pool which operates at the school. Please contact the school office (07) 4637 6100 for more information. New uniforms are available from Hannas in Ruthven Street.
PARENTS IN THE EARLY YEARS

Parents play an important and valued role in the education of their children. We welcome your involvement and your input. Please share with us any special skills, interests, occupational or ethnic backgrounds, or resources your family may have.

COMMUNICATION
We keep you informed of what is going on and upcoming events through:
- Weekly School Newsletter – available on the website as per weekly email or via the Skoolbag app. Alerts and notices are sent out through the Skool Bag app which can be downloaded from the school website. We also communicate through SMS.
- Weekly Early Years Communication Note
- Notes, newsletters etc are sent home with children via their homework folder
- Daily messages and notices are displayed outside classrooms
- Parent Information Evening (early February)
- Supporting the Reading Journey Parent Information Session
- School Report cards issued at the end of terms 2 & 4
- Individual parent interviews in Terms 1 & 3

MEETINGS
We are happy to discuss your child’s progress with you, at an appropriate time. If you have any queries or information that will help us to understand and assist your child, please do not hesitate to make a mutually convenient time to see us. While we are available in the morning to make contact with you, more lengthy discussions require a scheduled appointment.
EATING AT MATER DEI

MORNING TEA AND LUNCH
Please pack a nutritious morning tea and lunch, such as sandwiches, fruit etc. A water bottle or a popper should also be packed. Water from the bubblers will be available at any time. Ensure that all lunch boxes, drink bottles and their lids are all named. We encourage healthy eating habits; so please avoid packing foods such as chips, lollies, chocolates and cordial. Please avoid peanuts (due to allergies) and canned goods (with ring pull tins, as these can be dangerous).

TUCKSHOP
Tuckshop operates every Tuesday and Thursday and orders are processed through the Flexischool app. It removes paper orders, cash and is convenient for parents. The app can be downloaded from the school website www.mdpstwb.catholic.edu.au

HEALTH AND SAFETY

SUNSMART POLICY
Mater Dei follows a Sunsmart Policy; enforcing the ‘No Hat, No Play’ rule. Children must wear a hat if they wish to play at break times and participate in outdoor activities. Please remind them to bring their hat every day.

SAFETY
The Mater Dei Early Years Centre is on the corner of a busy intersection and all precautions must be taken to ensure that the children are handed over to their teacher in the safest possible manner.
- Children must always be brought into and collected from the classroom by a responsible adult known by staff.
- Children must remain in the care of an adult until the Early Years supervision duty begins at 8.15am.
- Classroom doors open for the beginning of the school day at 8.30am.
- No child is to be on the school grounds before 8am.
- Notify teachers in advance if someone different is to collect your child.
- Be punctual bringing and collecting your child.

ILLNESS
Parents are requested to keep their children home when they have an infectious illness. An information sheet regarding common childhood diseases and recommended exclusion times is included at the back of this booklet for reference. Should your child become ill during the day, office staff will notify you so that you can collect your child and take him/her home. Please ring the school on 4637 6100 at the beginning of the day for all absentees. The school will contact you if you do not do so.

ADMINISTERING PRESCRIBED MEDICATIONS
- A medication form must be completed and lodged at the office for the administration of prescription medications.
- Medication must be provided in the pharmacist’s labeled container, with clear details for times and doses.
- All medications (except epipens) are stored and administered at the office.
- Please note that we are unable to administer non-prescribed medications (such as Panadol).
EARLY YEARS INFORMATION

BIRTHDAYS
Each child’s birthday is acknowledged and celebrated with a special birthday ritual. The children are welcome to bring patty cakes to share, even if their birthday does not fall on a school day. If your child has allergies they can still participate if you provide them with a supply of patty cakes that can be frozen and brought out for celebrations. Please be discreet when issuing invitations at school for birthday celebrations. Children’s feelings can be hurt when they perceive they are one of only a few who do not receive an invitation. We ask parents to arrange for the distribution of invitations in a considerate manner.

TREASURES FROM HOME
Toys, jewellery and other treasures from home can be lost, damaged or broken. We request that these be left at home. Special arrangements may be made to bring pets or items of particular interest.

SPECIALIST LESSONS
Throughout the year, children participate in lessons with specialist teachers including Physical Education and Music.

EXCURSIONS, PRESENTATIONS AND PERFORMANCES
These are held regularly throughout the year to suit the particular learning interests of the children. These excursions supplement class programs. Parents are welcome to attend when circumstances permit. The costs for excursions are incorporated into the school fees.

JUNK MATERIALS
Junk materials or recycled bits and pieces are always needed in the Early Years program. Children use these in their inquiry time to represent the ideas and understandings they have developed. We need endless supplies! Please bring in things such as: off-cuts of lace, ribbon, fabric, packaging materials, dress ups (hat, glasses, necklaces, clothes), small plastic bottles, boxes, beads, buttons and wool.
WHAT PARENT CAN DO TO ASSIST THEIR CHILD’S TRANSITION TO SCHOOL....

The success and happiness of your child’s first and subsequent days at school depends upon your support beforehand. Below are some suggestions of things that you can do with your child prior to starting school and throughout their time in the Early Years.

SPIRITUAL

- Talk with your child about God and nurture the spiritual dimension of your child’s life by encouraging wonder and awe of the beauty of creation.
- Consider taking your child to St Theresa’s to attend Mass on a regular basis.
- Read your child the story of the Good Samaritan from the Bible. Discuss with them the story and the qualities of being a ‘Good Samaritan’ to people in their life.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL

- Talk with your child about their feelings. Tell them that it is okay to have feelings but there are appropriate and inappropriate ways to display these feelings (for example, hitting and punching are inappropriate for any reason). Sometimes their feelings may be hurt by others, and sometimes they may hurt the feelings of others; what is important is making things right again, apologising and moving on.
- Practise turn taking and sharing skills by playing structured games (such as board games) and allowing them to have unstructured play with their siblings or other children.
- Help your child become more resilient by
  - Encouraging them to take responsibility for their actions and not blaming others.
  - Encouraging them to take responsibility for their belongings (for example; carrying their own school bag; making sure they put their hats, jumpers, etc., away).
  - Allowing them to follow classroom morning routine procedures on their own when they know how.
  - Encouraging them to have a go at new experiences (try not to pass your own fears onto your child - adopt a ‘you can do it’ attitude with your child).
  - Help your child put things that happen into perspective (try not to overdramatise small issues).
  - Praise your child when they have done something worthy of praise.

- Help your child to become more resilient by allowing them to participate in activities that will provide opportunities for them to learn to cope with:-
  - Winning and losing
  - Succeeding and failing
  - Persevering with tasks until they are finished, even when they may be difficult or ‘boring’
  - ‘Having a go’ at new and unfamiliar experiences
  - Taking turns
  - Sharing with others
  - Completing tasks that benefit the whole class/school, rather than the individual
  - Not always being the first to do or have something
  - Not always having what they want when they want it
  - Suffering logical consequences for their appropriate and inappropriate choices and behaviour
  - Not always receiving praise for everything they do
• Talk realistically about school:-
  o Discuss with your child the idea that school is not always about playing and just having fun. That there will be times throughout each day, that they will be required to sit still, listen to their teachers, concentrate, follow instructions and put effort into tasks that they might not necessarily consider ‘fun’.
  
o Explain to your child that it is likely they, like everyone else, will find some things that are easy and they are good at and other things that are more challenging. Impress upon them that they don’t have to be good at everything but improvement will come with increased motivation, focus and effort.
  
o Help them consider that by having a go at different things, they will discover what they are good at, what they enjoy, and other areas where they may need to build confidence and skills, or put in more effort in order to improve or enjoy.
  
o Help your child to understand that it may take time for them to develop friendships with others, and that some children prefer and are happy to play on their own sometimes. In the Early Years children have lots of friends, not usually just one or two special friends.

• Help them to develop a positive disposition towards learning by saying things such as “You can do it, but maybe not today. Keep trying”.

• Encourage them to persist and teach them strategies for self-management, such as taking some deep breaths, counting to 10 or doing a drawing when they are upset.

PHYSICAL
• Practise gross motor skills such as hopping, skipping without a rope, throwing, catching and bouncing a ball.

• Encourage your child to cut; showing them how to correctly hold their scissors and paper.

• Encourage correct pencil grip when they hold a pencil (refer to laminated sheet in package).

ACADEMIC
• Begin to work with your child on recognising the names (not sounds) of the letters of the alphabet in both upper and lowercase; beginning with the letters of their first name.

• Practise recognising the numbers to 10, rote counting to 10 and counting objects to 10.

• Read to them daily. Model reading by talking to them about what you’re reading and why.

• Develop their oral language skills by spending time each day having conversations with them and asking them questions. Incidentally model correct use of grammatical structures with your child such as past tense (I played not, I did play) and personal pronouns (using she instead of her, e.g. She got on her horse, not She got on she horse) when speaking with them.

• Provide opportunities for your child to develop the fine motor strength and dexterity necessary for writing by playing with puzzles; threading blocks; playdough and other construction materials.
SELF AWARENESS

- Encourage them to recognise both their name and nickname.

- **Allow them opportunities to become** responsible for regular household tasks such as setting the table, wiping up, folding clothes and tidying their own toys away, as this teaches them reliability and responsibility.

- Encourage your child to be more independently organised by:
  - Encouraging them to take responsibility for themselves and their belongings.
  - Help him/her learn to dress themselves (put on their own socks and shoes).
  - Remind them to wash their hands after going to the toilet.
  - Have him/her practise eating lunch from their lunchbox over the holidays, and helping them learn to open packets, unwrap glad wrap or put straws into poppers independently. Remember to show your child the difference between first and second break food items.
  - Show them their name on their clothing, lunchbox, etc., and help them to recognise it.
  - Give them the responsibility of carrying in their school bag and bringing their own homework folder into the classroom each day.

- Help them develop an awareness that there are many other children in the Early Years Centre who have wants and needs just like them

- Set consistent, clear boundaries and logical consequences for your child's choices and behaviour.
FIRST DAY CHECKLIST

- Cover and name all books (as per booklist).
- Provide a school bag that is large enough to fit a lunch box and a homework folder.
- Attach a tag or sticker to school bag for quick identification because some bags may look similar.
- Practise eating lunch.
- Have your child in the habit of wearing a hat outside as the school policy is NO hat, NO play.
- Ensure that all clothing is clearly named (jumpers, hats, socks).
- Ensure that there is a change of clothes in your child’s school bag.
- Discuss travel and pick up arrangements with your child.
- Discuss coming to school in a positive light

MEET YOUR TEACHER FOR 2015

Traditionally we open the classrooms for a period of time before the commencement of the school year. This gives you and your child the opportunity to meet your teacher for the coming school year.

On this day, we ask that you bring in all your books and requisites for the year. This will ease congestion in the classroom on the first day when all children and parents arrive at the same time. Having the requisites already organised before school begins allows an easier transition on the first day of school.

Next year, Meet Your Teacher will be held on Thursday 22nd January from 2.00pm-3.00pm. Please notify the school if you are unable to attend.

There will be a staggered start for Prep students in 2015 with the first full day being Thursday, 29th January.

There will be a modified program on Tuesday 27th and Wednesday 28th.

- Prep students of families new to Mater Dei begin with a half day program on Tuesday, 27th January from 8.30am to 11.30am.
- Prep students of current families begin with a half day program on Wednesday, 28th January from 8.30am to 11.30am.
- Individual parent/teacher interviews will be held between 11.45 to 3.00pm on both days with parents being notified of times.

Tuesday 27th January
8.30am to 11.30am: Prep students of new families attend class. At 11.30am students are to be collected from school by parents.
11.45am to 3.00pm: Individual parent/teacher interviews will be scheduled during this time. Parents will be notified of appointment times.

Wednesday, 28th January
8.30am to 11.30am: Prep students of current families attend class. At 11.30am students are to be collected from school by parents.
11.45am to 3.00pm: Individual parent/teacher interviews will be scheduled during this time. Parents will be notified of appointment times.
### Recommended Minimum Exclusion Periods for Infectious Diseases from Schools, Prep and Child Care Centres

Based on National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) January 1997, & draft guidelines on pertussis Control.

*Note these are minimum exclusion periods. Ill children should not be sent to school.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease Description</th>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Contacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chicken Pox including shingles which is caused by the same virus</td>
<td>Exclude for 5 days after eruption first appears. Note: some remaining scabs are not an indication for continued exclusion.</td>
<td>Children with immune deficiencies should be excluded for their own protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjunctivitis – acute infections</td>
<td>Exclude until discharge from eye(s) has ceased.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diarrhoea from unknown cause, or from rotavirus, giardia, salmonella, campylobacter, moebiasis</td>
<td>Exclude until diarrhoea has stopped.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diphtheria</td>
<td>Exclude until public health authorities all return.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand Foot and Mouth Disease</td>
<td>Exclude until blisters have dried.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herpes (Cold Sores)</td>
<td>Young children unable to comply with good hygiene should be excluded while the sores are weeping. Cover sores whenever possible.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hepatitis A was previously know as infectious hepatitis</td>
<td>Exclude for 7 days after jaundice begins, and a medical certificate of recovery is produced.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hib disease Haemophilus influenzae B infection – causes meningitis, epiglottitis and other diseases.</td>
<td>Exclude until blisters have dried.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impetigo (school sores)</td>
<td>Exclude until treatment has commenced and exposed sores are covered with a dressing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenza and influenza like illnesses</td>
<td>Exclude until well.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leprosy</td>
<td>Exclude until public health authorities allow return.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>Exclude for at least 4 days after the rash comes out.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meningococcal Disease</td>
<td>Exclude until an antibiotic to eliminate the bacteria from the nose and throat has been taken.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Ill children should not be sent to school.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Contacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mumps</strong></td>
<td>Exclude for 9 days after symptom start, or until swelling goes down; whichever is sooner.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Polio</strong></td>
<td>Exclude for at least 14 days. Readmit on advice from public health authorities.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ringworm, Scabies, Lice (pediculosis), Trachoma</strong></td>
<td>Exclude until the day after treatment starts.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rubella German Measles</strong></td>
<td>Exclude until fully recovered and for at least 4 days after the onset of the rash.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Streptococcal infection</strong></td>
<td>Exclude for 24 hours after starting antibiotics.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuberculosis</strong></td>
<td>Exclude until public health authorities allow return.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Typhoid paratyphoid fever</strong></td>
<td>Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is produced.</td>
<td>Not excluded.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Whooping Cough also called Pertussis</strong></td>
<td>Exclude for 21 days after illness begins, or for 5 days after the start of a 10 day course with an effective antibiotic.</td>
<td>Contacts under 7 who are not fully immunised should be excluded for 5 days after starting a 10 day course of antibiotics should be excluded for 14 days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other diseases not requiring exclusion periods are:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Glandular Fever (Infectious mononucleosis)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Hepatitis B &amp; C</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>HIV/AIDS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Hook worm</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Molluscum contagiosum</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Cytomegalovirus</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Parvovirus, also called 5th disease or slapped cheeks syndrome</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This list should be read in conjunction with the NHMRC’s publication, Staying Healthy in Child Care, 2nd edition available from the Australian Government Printing Service. However, the above list contains more up to date information.

Neil Parker, Darling Downs Public Health Unit, Feb 1998