WELCOME TO ST. BRENDAN’S

Foundation Information Booklet for 2015
Welcome to St Brendan’s Primary School

Beginning school is a major step and it should be a positive and exciting time in your child’s life. As parents (and your child’s first teacher!) you are an important and essential link in the educational chain.

The best education for your child will be achieved when the link between home and school is strong and parents and teachers work in partnership together.

St Brendan’s is first and foremost a Catholic Parish School. Because of this, the religious and faith development of your child can benefit through the partnership of parent, school and parish. Before reading any further, I would ask that you reflect on our Vision and Mission Statement. This statement is the basis of our educational philosophy and gives vision to those who participate in the life of the school.

Included in this book is a great deal of information which will help you and your child to make the very best of the years you spend associated with our school and ensuring a smooth transition for your child (and you!) into school life. If you have any concerns or questions regarding enrolment please feel free to contact us on 5977 7277.

People you need to know:

Parish Priest: Father Michael Miles
Principal: Mrs Sue Carr
Deputy Principal: Mrs Wendy Sullivan

Office Administration: Mrs Karyn Dickson
Mrs Cheryl O’Sullivan

School Hours: 8.45am – 3.15pm
- The playground is supervised by staff members from 8.15am – 3.30pm
- Children must be at school by 8.40am so that they are ready when lessons start at 8.45am
- Morning Recess: 10.50am – 11.30am
- Lunch Play: 1.40pm – 2.20 pm
- Dismissal is at: 3.15pm

Term Dates 2015:

Term 1 (for the children) Thursday, 29th January – Friday, 27th March
Easter 3 - 5 April
Term 2 Monday, 13th April – Friday 26th June
Term 3 Monday 13th July – Friday 18th September
Term 4 Monday 5th October – Friday 18th December

- All Foundation students start Thursday, 29th January
Vision & Mission Statement

St Brendan’s is a Catholic Parish Primary School. We aim to teach the beliefs and traditions of the Catholic Church to integrate our faith with daily life experiences. The Gospel values are central to the life of our school.

We are a welcoming community who believes that parents, staff and students form a vital partnership to achieve the best possible outcomes for all.

We aim to promote a spirit of co-operation, mutual respect, a willingness to contribute and responsibility for self and the world in which we live.

We are a learning community who strives to provide skills, knowledge, values and attitudes that empower all to become independent and life long learners in an ever changing global society. We aim to provide a stimulating curriculum that is inclusive, challenging and well balanced.
Preparing your Child at Home – Transition from Home to School

When children begin school they are, in some ways, moving away from the world of parent and family and into the world of children. It is a big step on the pathway towards growing up and most children look forward to it. They are keen to make new friends, learn new things and feel like a ‘grown-up school person.’ In the process, there will be many wonderful experiences for children to enjoy and share with their parents. At the same time, all of this can be stressful for both children and parents, if they are not sufficiently prepared for the changes or if the real experience is a ‘bit of a let down’.

Some children, for example, expect to be able to read and write and ‘do sums’ by the end of the first day. Some expect all children to like them and to make lots of new friends straight away. Parents will need to focus on the positive things and to explain to their children that all this will take time.

Before going to school children may have been at preschool, in child care or at home, but primary school is a very different place. There are more children and your child will be amongst the youngest and smallest. The first year at school is often a new step for a parent as well. Education has changed a lot since your own school experience. If you had unhappy memories of school, please put them behind you, so parents and the school can give your child a positive start.

We look forward to developing your child physically, mentally, socially and emotionally in partnership with you. So far you have been your child’s main teacher from watching him or her speak their first words to taking their first wobbly steps. But sending your child to school is not about giving up your teaching role.

Think about when your children learned to walk. They progressed in bursts, reaching milestones in their own good time. Perhaps they crawled and then pulled themselves up on the furniture, trying hard to stand. Then they tried taking their first steps.

Likewise, at school, children progress in their own way. Some children pick up some things quickly, but need more time for other things. When learning new skills children need the conditions to be right, and they have to be ready. In each classroom, teachers will be creating a safe and happy environment where children are valued, praised and encouraged to ‘have a go’.

Learning at schools is related to real-life learning. Children are encouraged to make sense of the world around them through real-life experiences. In classrooms in the early years of schooling, play is an important part of the curriculum.

You can support your child by getting to know the teachers, becoming involved with parents’ meetings and school activities, standing for School Advisory Council, joining the fundraising committee and keeping in contact with the school.

(Source: Your Child’s First Year at School by J Connor and P.Linke)
10 WAYS PARENTS CAN WORK WITH TEACHERS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN’S LEARNING

1. **KNOW** what your teacher is trying to achieve

2. Keep your **EXPECTATIONS** reasonable and positive

3. **SUPPORT** your teacher’s expectations and activities at home

4. Send kids to school **READY TO LEARN** and on time each day

5. **INFORM** us early of your child’s challenges and changes

6. Skill your child to work with **OTHERS**

7. Respectfully **SEEK JOINT SOLUTIONS** to problems and difficulties

8. **PARTICIPATE** fully in class and school activities

9. **TRUST** your teacher’s knowledge, professionalism and experience

10. **TALK UP** what happens at school
The following are some areas in which you can help their development.

**RESPONSIBILITY**
Encourage your child to:
- Care for personal property.
- Care for school property.
- Do up own shoes.
- Dress and undress unaided.
- Do up buttons.
- Put away toys.
- Manage in the toilet.
- Wash hands after going to the toilet.
- Listen carefully.
- Obey promptly.
- Speak up.
- Help and participate in all activities at home.

Children enjoy assuming responsibilities within their capabilities. They become confident and reliable if given the opportunity to attempt simple tasks.
**Arrangements for Foundation students – 2015**

**Term 1** commences on Thursday, 29th January for students at St Brendan’s. The first two days will be testing days for all students from Year One to Year Six. The Foundation students will come to school for half days on Thursday 29th January and Friday 30th January of the first week from 8:45am until 12:00pm. During the month of February the Foundation students will not attend school on Wednesdays to give them a break. However the teacher will meet with parents and children by appointment on Wednesdays to complete some simple assessment tasks. This will also be an opportunity for you to talk to your teacher about your child. Your Foundation child will start full time on **Monday, 2nd March**.

**The First Day: Thursday, 29th January.**
A name tag for your child and yourselves, will be waiting for you. It would be very helpful if your child could wear this tag every day for the first few weeks. It allows everyone to get to know your child’s name.

All Foundation children and their parents may go to their classrooms from 8.30am, then we will gather in the Multi-Purpose Room for a welcome and photos. When the children have returned to their classrooms, all parents are invited to join us in the staffroom for a cuppa and a chat.

- Please take your child to the Foundation area of the school at 8.40am
- Please collect your child from their classroom at 12.00pm

**The timetable for the first two days:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.45am</td>
<td>Session 1 Please pack fresh fruit snack</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.45am</td>
<td>11.15am Play Lunch/Recess</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.15am</td>
<td>12.00pm Session 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.00pm</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
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**Basic Requirements**
Your child will receive all their books and materials from the class teacher. In addition, your child will need:

- A smock or old shirt. Please have this fastened in a way that your child can manage.
- A colouring book for wet days.
- A library bag.
- A spare pair of undies in a plastic bag (for accidents).
- Roll-on sunscreen stick.

Please make sure that every article is clearly marked with your child’s name.
Enquiries
Foundation parents are always welcome to visit and chat with the teachers when they are not engaged in teaching. However, if you need to hold a long and detailed discussion, please make a prior arrangement to do so. The first few days are extremely busy and it would be appreciated if you could allow a little settling in time before requesting any long discussions.

The following are a few observations which may answer any concerns you have during the early days.

- Some children do get very tired and irritable. (They have usually behaved perfectly at school all day.)
- Some need extra affection and understanding from parents at this time.
- Some eat very little during the day.
- Some refuse to discuss the school day happenings – don’t keep asking, they will begin to tell you things later on.

All these things usually resolve themselves after a week or two, when children have developed a secure relationship with their teacher and have made friendships with the grade and with their buddies.

Daily Readiness
Is your child:
1. well rested?
2. suitably clothed according to the weather forecast?

Has your child:
1. eaten a balanced, unhurried breakfast?
2. brought a nourishing morning snack and lunch?
3. attempted to wash, dress and prepare for school unaided?
4. been able to get ready in a leisurely fashion?
5. arrived in time but not too early – about 8.35am

Supervision
Children are supervised by their class teacher while eating play lunch and lunch in the classroom. When playing outside, they may play in any area of the school ground that is supervised, except the Senior Adventure Playground.

In addition, the Preps are well looked after by their Year Six buddies who they meet during the orientation phase.

Please encourage older brothers and sisters to allow their little brothers and sisters some “breathing space” to get to know their Year Six buddies and the general routine. They can be, occasionally, just a little over protective.
Belongings - PLEASE NAME EVERYTHING

A quick look at our lost property tub will show why this is essential. We cannot follow up on unnamed articles and children frequently have difficulty recognising their own clothes.

Toys brought to school are the child’s own responsibility. Please ensure that expensive toys are not brought to school. Money or other valuables brought to school should be given to the teacher for safe keeping. No responsibility can be accepted for valuables left in coats, pockets, bags or trays. On a more serious note, toys that encourage fighting or that could be deemed dangerous, e.g. plastic swords or guns are not permitted at St Brendan’s and will be confiscated immediately.

Car Parking

We are fortunate to have car parking available in the school grounds. Car parks and children are never a good mix and because of this we ask that you take particular care when using the car park.

- At all times keep an eye out for not only your child but other children who use the car park.
- Do not exceed a 5kph speed limit in the school grounds.
- Either park in the designated spaces or use the pick up lane. If the car park is full you must wait at the front gate until the pick up lane or a car park is available.
- Do not allow your child to wander to your car unaccompanied if you are parked in a car space.
- Please show courtesy and consideration for other drivers and be cautious and alert.
- As a further safety precaution, parents are asked to reverse into the car parking spaces to ensure the best possible view of the car park and children as they are leaving.
**Conveyance Allowance**
If the State Government Conveyance Allowance is still in effect, to be eligible a student must live more than 4.8 km by the shortest practicable route from the nearest catholic school attended. Once again please speak with Administration if you think you may qualify.

**BUDDIES (Foundation & Year 6)**
The Foundation students will meet their Year 6 buddies in their first week in 2015.