



The Toowoomba Preparatory School

**Annual Report
2012**

SCHOOL DETAILS

School Sector: Independent Anglican Day and Boarding School

School's Address: 2 Campbell Street, Toowoomba, QLD 4350

P-7 Enrolment (2012): 428

Year Levels Offered: Kindergarten – Year 7

Co-educational

Introduction

The Toowoomba Preparatory School is Australia's premier coeducational day and boarding school for primary aged children. It seeks to provide an outstanding education for students through excellence in every area. Toowoomba Prep stands as one of Australia's finest schools and has a well established reputation for exceptional academic programs and wider curricular opportunities. Its school culture is built on Christian values and high moral standards.

At Prep we want the best for our students and are committed to ensuring learning activities excite, engage and capture the imagination. Our boarding life is unsurpassed in the nurture and care provided to students and we take great pride in watching each boarder flourish and grow in confidence and maturity.

Towards the end of 2012 the exciting announcement was made that Toowoomba Prep would be seeking accreditation from the Non State Schools Accreditation Board to extend into secondary year levels. This announcement was warmly received by the school community and we look forward to seeing this vision becoming a reality with the introduction of Year 8 in 2014 and the addition of an extra year level each year until 2018 when our first Year 12 classes will commence.

We have much to look forward to in the future and reflecting on the past reminds us of the excellent foundations that have been laid. In particular, 2012 will be recorded in the history of Prep as a period of great innovation, due to the introduction of a number of new initiatives:

- We established the Early Years Learning Centre for three and four year old children, providing Long Day Care, Kindergarten, Morning and Afternoon Care and Vacation Care programs.
- We established a partnership with Ritsumeikan Primary School, Kyoto Japan and welcomed nine Japanese students into our boarding community for a term, while another 34 joined us for a short-stay study tour in Term Three. A group of nine Toowoomba Prep students also travelled to Japan in early December to experience Ritsumeikan schooling. These international exchanges provide our students with a rich education and prepare them more fully for life in the world's global village.

- We were honoured to be granted scholarships through the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation (AIEF) and now have a partnership with this organisation to provide boarding and tuition scholarships, on an ongoing basis, to students with an indigenous heritage.
- We implemented wireless technology and introduced laptops and iPads. This initiative will continue to be extended in future years.
- We commenced a new Pastoral Care program called PrepConnect. Through this initiative teachers and children meet in small multi-aged groups once a week, with the older students taking on the role of leading the sessions and caring for the younger members of their PC class. This initiative along with the Peer mediators program in Year 6 has seen relationships across the year levels grow to become even more family-like, inclusive and supportive.
- Phase One of the new Australian Curriculum, including English, Mathematics, Science and History was fully implemented.

These new initiatives cover the important areas of academic excellence, relationships, cultural and global understanding, technological innovation and early childhood. It was an outstanding year for The Toowoomba Preparatory School and prepares the way for a very bright future.

Our commitments

We are committed to:

- Providing an holistic education for our students that encourages them to be;
 - Spiritually aware
 - Intellectually alert
 - Culturally enriched
 - Socially responsible
 - Physically active
 - Emotionally resilient
- Offering outstanding opportunities that provide challenge and rigor but are enjoyable and fun, and are remembered with thankfulness.
- Ensuring an exceptional boarding experience that allows the uniqueness of each individual to thrive in a supportive, family-like environment.
- Welcoming students from all faiths and backgrounds yet unashamedly promoting faith in Jesus Christ and an understanding of the Christian community in the Anglican way.

Exceptional Academic Opportunities

Our students are the focus of everything we do and we are passionate about providing them with the very best in academic opportunities. Our school structure is based on three sub schools, Lower Primary, Middle Primary and Upper School; each dedicated to the unique developmental stage of their students.

In Lower Primary, early childhood is celebrated and the first steps our children take towards independent learning are significant. We are committed to providing them with strong foundations in literacy and numeracy and to instilling creative thinking, inquiry and imaginative thought. Play and discovery through inquiry are essential components to our Lower Primary curriculum.

Whilst in Middle Primary, the foundations of the key learning areas are extended and enriched. It is also the time to reinforce concepts to ensure that the building blocks for all future learning are firmly in place. These building blocks are taught through engaging and vibrant learning experiences.

Prep's Upper School offers a carefully balanced program designed to enable each boy and girl to develop as well-rounded individuals who can move with confidence to the next phase of learning. In the Upper School, there is emphasis upon specialist subject teaching as in secondary schooling. Students thrive by having different teachers for separate subjects, whilst enjoying the security of their own home room.

When teachers plan, they recognise the variety of learning styles and academic abilities within their classes. As a result, they look to ways in which to tailor programs that best suit the children in their care. The Learning Enhancement Centre works in conjunction with class teachers and specialist teachers to diagnose particular learning problems and provide remedial programs and support. An enrichment and extension program is also available for those students who are achieving beyond the expected level.

In addition to the key learning areas of English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies, our children are taught Creative and Visual Arts, Christian Education, LOTE (Languages Other than English), Personal Development and Physical Education. Computer Technology is integrated into all subject areas.

While our school is blessed by a century of strong tradition, our focus is firmly on the future and on ensuring our academic programs are exceptional in every way. It is really important to us that our children believe their school is an inspiring and enriching place, where learning is enjoyable and worth talking about.

Culturally Enriched

The Arts are a critically important dimension to the school and are an avenue by which children gain inspiration to express their unique spirit and talents.

From painting, pottery and woodwork to collage, weaving and photography, the visual mediums are pursued at every age level and are showcased at our annual Exhibition of

Children's Art. Our students' creativity is nurtured through participation in specialist lessons, which are conducted in the purpose built Art Room and Manual Arts Workshop.

Performing Arts are also an integral part of our students' lives. Our Music program has an outstanding reputation. Not only is this noticeable through the successes at eisteddfods but also with the very high level of participation by our students. Our performance in the Toowoomba Eisteddfod this year was incredible. All our bands, choirs, ensembles and orchestra, were awarded places in numerous sections of the Eisteddfod.

Then, there is theatre. In this regard, the 2012 school musical, 'Night at the Library' was a real highlight.

Physically Active

We see sporting activities as an essential component of a healthy lifestyle and we encourage all students to discover the thrill of being part of a team; preparing for sporting competition, experiencing the joy of success and managing the disappointment of defeat. Sport is the perfect avenue for instilling co-operation and teamwork, for acknowledging excellence and building resilience.

Our excellent facilities include three sporting fields, a heated 25 metre swimming pool, four tennis courts and an indoor centre. We have over thirty teams representing our school in weekend competitions in football (soccer), netball and rugby, and we conduct numerous sporting fixtures throughout the year with other schools.

Sports available include athletics, basketball, cross country, football, hockey, softball, swimming, tennis, touch football and volleyball. Girls are also able to play netball, while boys have the extra choice of rugby, cricket and AFL. Through sport, our children develop commitment and dedication that enriches everything else in their lives.

Boarding – 'our home away from home'

The Toowoomba Preparatory School currently provides boarding for students from Year One to Year Seven. Not only do our boarder children receive an exceptional academic program, they also enjoy the experiences of living in a large family, enjoying outings together and establishing friendships that will last a lifetime.

Our experienced House Parents are passionate about their vocation in boarding and place great value on establishing trusting and caring relationships with each child. The weekend activity program ensures that the boarders have a most fulfilling life and many talk fondly of their times building cubbies in Queenies paddock, and exploring at St Athan's Farm.

Each of our boarding houses is a small family-style community and it doesn't take long for all our new boarders to feel a strong sense of belonging and acceptance. Prep becomes their 'home away from home' and a place of warm memories.

Wider-curricular

A Prep education is not confined to the classroom. We weave curricular and wider-curricular elements into a seamless learning structure that develops the student in his or her entirety. Because of this, Prepies are well-known for their exemplary social demeanour and robust self-confidence, as much as their academic achievements.

Camps and expeditions are a well-established tradition and these commence in Year Three with an overnight camp and extend in older year levels, to four day adventures and weekend trips. Afternoon clubs and activities such as Chess, Art Club, Cooking, Dance and Woodwork are just some of the wider curricular offerings available to our children.

Spiritual Awareness

We believe the exploration of the Christian faith is essential for a well-rounded education and as an Anglican school owned by the Diocese of Brisbane, Prep sees itself as an important component of the work of the Church.

At its essence, the school seeks to nurture students to be young people of good character. Therefore, the spiritual dimension of Prep and the development of ethical values form central elements in each child's growth.

Through active participation in the life of the School Chapel, students gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of such values as honesty, acceptance and compassion and are encouraged to integrate these into their everyday lives.

Service

Service is central to our Christian beliefs and we provide opportunities for our students to be active in community life, give of their time and energy to help others, care for the environment and develop a strong sense of social justice.

A range of activities such as visits to senior citizens' villages and fund raising for charities is designed to bring Prep students into contact with the wider community and to balance the strong school spirit with social responsibility, instilling within each student the desire to give of themselves to benefit others.

Within the school community students are encouraged to serve their peers through the PrepConnect Program where older students become mentors for younger students, and through the Upper School Leadership program.

Distinctive Curriculum Offerings

- Learning Enhancement Centre – Prep to 7
 - Learning difficulties
 - Enrichment
- English as a Second Language Program
- Performing Arts Program
 - Choirs (Years 1 – 7)
 - Chapel Choir
 - Year 2 String Program
 - Year 3 and 4 Band Program
 - Recorder Band
 - Concert Band
 - Stage Band
 - Orchestra
 - String Ensembles
 - Jazz Ensemble
 - String Out
 - Eisteddfod
 - Instrumental and Vocal Lessons
 - School Musical (Years 4 – 7)
 - Speech and Drama
- Educational Expos
- Performing Arts Concerts
- Exhibition of Children’s Art
- Visual Arts Program (Prep –Year 7) / Art Club
- Manual Arts Program (Years 5 – 7) / Woodwork Club
- Science Program
 - Includes laboratory
- French Program (P - 7)
- Chess Program (Year 3 and After School Club)

Wider Curricular Activities

- School Camps (Years 3 – 7)
- Weekend Adventure Camps (Years 6 and 7)
- Themed Socials (Years 4 – 7)
- Sport
 - AFL
 - Aquathon
 - Athletics
 - Ball Games
 - Basketball
 - Cricket
 - Cross Country
 - Equestrian
 - Football

- Hockey
- Netball
- Rugby League
- Rugby Union
- Softball
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Excursions
- Afterschool Clubs, such as Maths Circle, Cooking Club, Dance, Chess, Art, Woodwork

Pastoral Care

Toowoomba Prep is an Anglican School and is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment, where respect and values are at the forefront of everything we do. Our students grow in confidence, character, knowledge and skills through the care and support of their school community. They are encouraged to develop self-discipline and develop an awareness of their own spiritual growth.

With a culture based on Christian values and respect for others, our students learn to acknowledge and appreciate diversity and value others.

Weekly Chapel Services are held for each sub-school (Lower/Middle/Upper) and students are involved in presenting stories, singing, leading prayers and readings. Communion Services are generally held every third Saturday during the school term for boarders, school families and the wider community. Special Family Chapel Services are also held throughout the year.

Personal Development / Human Relationships Education Program

Our Human Relationships Education program aims to provide each student with effective strategies to assist them in their social interactions with others, personal development and awareness of the social norms and expectations of the school and local community. Through regular weekly lessons, via stories and messages at Assemblies and Chapel Services, students are given opportunities to develop empathy, resilience and other life-long qualities.

We have a strong commitment to child protection through the appointment of Child Protection Officers, as well as specific policies on child welfare, behaviour management and anti-bullying programs.

Staff Development Priorities for 2012

The Toowoomba Preparatory School has a strong commitment to ensuring that all teachers are given sound and relevant professional development opportunities that assist them in providing the best possible learning experiences for their students. During 2012 the major focus was on improving student learning in literacy. All teachers completed the 'How

Language Works' program to develop their skills and understanding in this area. Collaborative discussions amongst staff led to deeper understandings of literacy, for example, different genre, their associated grammatical conventions and how these can be taught effectively.

Teachers were also provided with professional learning opportunities and planning days for implementing the Australian Curriculum. This enabled the full implementation of the new History curriculum across the year levels following the successful implementation of English, Mathematics and Science last year.

Parental Involvement

The Toowoomba Preparatory School believes that the education of children is a partnership between home and school and sees the involvement of parents as integral to the holistic development of each child. Many avenues are provided for parents to become involved in the work of the school. Our parents were regularly involved in classroom reading programs, school excursions and outings, they were heavily involved in the organisation and running of the School Fete, Uniform Shop, the annual Exhibition of Children's Art and School Tuckshop.

Throughout 2012 the Parents and Friends Association worked closely in conjunction with the Head of School and the School Council to organise functions for the school community and provide financial support for the purchase of school resources. These resources benefit different areas of the school, including the Academic, Music, Sport and Boarding Departments.

Significant support is also received from parent involvement in the School Foundation. In 2012 a number of successful Business Breakfasts were conducted by the Foundation and these strengthened ties between the School and the wider community.

The Toowoomba Preparatory School greatly appreciates the dedicated and passionate involvement of the parent body.

ACADEMIC RESULTS**National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy Results - 2012**

READING			
Year Level	School Mean	State Mean	% above benchmark
Year 3	447	408	100%
Year 5	530	480	97.9%
Year 7	554	532	98.3%

WRITING			
Year Level	School Mean	State Mean	% above benchmark
Year 3	432	403	100%
Year 5	494	457	93.6%
Year 7	529	512	98.3%

SPELLING			
Year Level	School Mean	State Mean	% above benchmark
Year 3	404	398	97.5%
Year 5	529	479	100%
Year 7	541	534	91.5%

GRAMMAR AND PUNCTUATION			
Year Level	School Mean	State Mean	% above benchmark
Year 3	453	411	95%
Year 5	537	477	95.6%
Year 7	561	540	100%

NUMERACY			
Year Level	School Mean	State Mean	% above benchmark
Year 3	405	381	97.5%
Year 5	522	476	100%
Year 7	563	532	95.8%