‘Music can help to create a particular mood…’

Young children love music and respond positively to it. Attend any open-air music concert and you’ll usually see a group of toddlers dancing near the stage!

Music can help to create a particular mood - put on a busy pop song if you want to dance and jump around, some gentle ballet music for quiet concentration, or a relaxing piano piece if you want to calm things down at the end of the day.

As well as using music to accompany activities, spend some time listening to music and focusing on it completely. Introduce your child to all different sorts of music such as instrumental, vocal, jazz, blues, classical, ballet and folk. Listen in short stretches and if your child becomes fidgety encourage them to close their eyes, or try lying on the sofa with their head in your lap while you stroke their hair.

If your child needs something specific to focus on, suggest they listen for a particular instrument, such as a flute, piano or drums, and wave their hands in the air when they hear it. Or ask if they can spot when the music is getting faster or slower (tempo), or louder or quieter (dynamics). You could also ask them how the music makes them feel, and what sort of things it makes them think of.

Taking your child to a concert can make for an exciting day out too.

The best ones for young children are free events held in open spaces, indoors or outside, here your child has plenty of room to move around and you can leave whenever their interest flags.

Keep a look out for preschool music classes in your area as well. These are usually great fun for all and enable your child to participate in singing and dancing with other children, as well as trying out some musical instruments, such as shakers and triangles.

God bless

Mrs Cornelie Johnson
Pre-Prep Director
Prep Readiness
Ms Kathy Walker, Melbourne Education Consultant and Early Childhood expert at Early Life Foundations has spent so much time talking about school readiness with parents that she’s written a book about it called, ‘Ready, Set, Go’.

‘When to start your child at school is a major decision for parents,’ she says. ‘And understandably because parents, and the school, want their children to thrive and to flourish and not struggle to keep up and on top of things. What I tell parents is that there’s no need to rush – children are going to be at school for a long time, so let’s ensure they are great years.’

To take the pressure off parents she is calling on the Federal Government to introduce a national starting age – and she is pushing for it to be at the older end of the scale rather than the younger.

‘Australia has one of the youngest starting ages in the world, yet there is no evidence or data to suggest that starting school early is better,’ she says.

School readiness:
How can a parent know?
Kathy says parents can’t be expected to make a completely independent decision on whether their child is ready to start the school journey.

‘The best person to assess school readiness is the child’s Preschool teacher,’ she says. ‘And it’s important parents listen to the advice given because this person has been trained in early childhood development.’

She stresses that school readiness is not about being able to read or write, know colours or count.

‘These skills will be taught at school so they are not a priority for starting school,’ she says.

Housekeeping
Are you spring cleaning? Remember Pre - Prep and feel free to donate lost treasures: Handbags, hats, scarves, wallets, shoes, Tupperware, cooking utensils, pots, pans, etc.

Please put sunscreen on your child before coming to Pre-Prep.

Must haves in your child’s bag: water bottle, hat, sheets, spare clothes.

If for any reason you want to withdraw from Pre-Prep you will need to complete a College Withdrawal Form and 4 weeks notice must be given. A Withdrawal Form can be obtained from the College Office or Junior School Reception. You will continue to be billed until 4 weeks notice is received in writing.

Drop Off: 8.20am - 8.30am
Pick Up: 2.40pm - 3.00pm

Celebration Afternoon
Yippee, we have started to practice for our Celebration Afternoon! Each class will be preforming a song or two so make sure you save the date:

When: Monday 23rd November
Time: 4:00 pm
Where: Powerhouse (Providence Junior School Campus)
What to bring: A plate to share.

Please dress your child in the correct plain colour red, yellow, green or white shirt/shorts/dress.

After the formal events we ask that all our parents and children join us in the Pre-Prep Learning Centre for afternoon tea where we will have a chance to catch up and say farewell.

To enter school ready to thrive, flourish and enjoy the challenges – rather than merely just coping – we are taking the issue of school readiness more seriously and carefully.

‘Readiness is really mostly about emotional and social maturity – aspects of development that we cannot fast-track. We cannot make a child who lacks the necessary maturity become mature.’
How to assess school readiness

‘The key areas of maturity and development are the social and emotional areas,’ says Kathy.

While she is reluctant to have parents tick off a checklist, here are some of the questions she asks when assessing school readiness:

- Can they make an independent decision and follow through on this?
- Do they have ideas of their own?
- Can they follow two or three instructions at the same time?
- Can they move on to new activities easily?
- Do they separate well from their carer?
- Do they show interest in other children?
- Do they interact with other children?
- Can they recognise and express their feelings and needs?
- Can they concentrate on a task?
- How do they deal with frustration?

Does it matter if children repeat their first year?

There is a feeling that repeating their first year at school is no big deal. Kathy Walker disagrees.

‘Why would you start your child at school knowing that there is a good chance they will need to repeat that year?’ she asks. ‘Once you are on the conveyer belt of the school system, it becomes much harder for everyone to make the decision for the child to repeat. Don’t send a child to school already thinking they can repeat if they have to. You want the first year of school to be exciting and successful, not just one where the child attempts to cope and then has to do it all again.’

How can parents help with school readiness?

There are many activities that parents undertake with young children that have a positive effect on their development and promote school readiness.

These include:

- Reading with your child
- Teaching them songs and nursery rhymes
- Playing with letters and numbers
- Taking children on excursions
- Creating regular opportunities for them to play with their friends and other children.
What a great morning we had at the Agricultural Department! Our children were well behaved and engaged in the learning opportunities.

We split into 4 groups - cattle, veggie and herb gardens, chickens and tractor. We rotated from one activity to the next.

We enjoyed feeding the cattle, picking some herbs, sitting on the tractor, holding some chickens and having some morning tea to refuel for the big walk back to Pre-Prep.

During inside time we played shops and painted about our experience at the Ag Centre. We made some delicious scrambled eggs with parsley (donated by the Ag Centre).

Thank you so much to the parents who generously donated their time on this day - we loved having you along!
Koala Room

October saw the return from school holidays and straight into our very first trip outside the Pre-Prep and Junior School as we walked to the King’s Park Senior Campus to visit the Agricultural Centre of Excellence.

We saw cows and chickens, picked some herbs to take home and got our photo taken on a big tractor! We loved our Ag Centre visit so much that we did many learning experiences in our Koala room to follow up, such as milking a cow and making French toast with the eggs we collected. We researched all the different things that can be made from cow’s milk too.

The next week we had a visit from Fiona from the Mackay City Council who taught us all about recycling and worm farming. We now know what we can put in our recycling bins and how to find the recycling numbers on our containers.

This month we have been learning all about going to Prep next year and have been practising our numbers, letters, names and trying new things like going to Chapel with the big children. We are all very excited to move up to big school.

To end the month we became scientists and built a big volcano from paper mâché and exploded it using vinegar, food dye and bicarb soda. It was lots of bubbly fun!
**Wombat Room**

We were busy as bees! Having loads of fun splashing in the water. Some of our favourite things to do were sliding down the water slide and getting all the teachers wet.

All the water fun made us very hungry and we gulped down our healthy morning tea. We were inspired by Miss Fiona after her talk about recycling and started to wash out our empty yogurt containers so that we can reuse them.

Mrs Fanning took us over to ‘The Space’ and taught us 3 new dances. We especially enjoyed singing ‘Rock-my-Bear.’ We also had our very first Chapel visit in Powerhouse.

We were in awe of all the kids and the loud music. We ended our day with an educational movie - The Magic School Bus - looking at our digestive system.

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**Save the Date - Term 4**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 18th November</td>
<td>Wet Play Day (PP2B)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday 19th November</td>
<td>Celebration Practice (PP2B)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 23rd November</td>
<td>Pre-Prep Celebration Afternoon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 25th November</td>
<td>Wet Play Day (PP1A &amp; PP2A)</td>
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