

August/September

2024 NEWSLETTER

Important Dates...

- **Bush Preschool** program starts in week 4, Term 3 – from Monday 12th August for Possums & Tuesday 13th August for Wombats, **see emails for details & dates.**
- **Tuesday 20th & Thursday 22nd August – Steps Vision Screening** from 9:30am.
- School photos 10th & 12th Sept from 8:30am
- **Seniors visit Friday 23rd Aug** from 10:30-11:30am.
- ***Please note:** From **23rd Aug to 27th Sept** our Office Admin Kellie is on Long Service Leave - please email any questions and we will reply promptly.



AUG/SEPT 2024

'Like' us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/springwoodpreschool

Visit our Website

for information & events:

www.springwoodpreschool.org.au

A few reminders;

Parking

We have been made aware that some cars are being parked too far from the kerb on either side of our small carpark. When this happens it can make it very difficult for through traffic to drive between cars when leaving.

We have had the gardeners cut back the bushes on either side of the carpark to enable cars to be parked as close to the gutter as possible so we'd like to take this opportunity to ask families to please be mindful of parking within the marked spaces and leave as much room for through traffic as possible, thank you.

Please direct emails regarding enrolment, administration and illness to the Office

Just a friendly reminder that all enrolment, admin and illness related emails need to come via the admin email please. It is important that all of this information such as immunisation, adding authorised people to collect your child, enquiries about enrolment, as well as if your child is ill or absent from preschool should be emailed to;

admin@springwoodpreschool.org.au

The admin email is checked very regularly and we can ensure that information is confidential and all in one central place to be processed by the Admin Officer or the Director.

Please feel free to communicate with the rooms regarding wombat weekly/possum press or when responding to emails direct from the rooms. Thanks for your assistance.

Our service follows the National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children

Ask us about our child safe practices



- 1** We use service-issued devices
- 2** We only carry or use personal devices for authorised essential purposes
- 3** Authorised essential purposes include emergencies, health and family needs
- 4** We have strict controls for storage and retention of images of children

Our preschool's 2024 Quality Improvement Plan-Update for Term 3:

Every year all Early Childhood Services work on a [Quality Improvement Plans \(QIP\)](#) to ensure progress within all Early Childhood service types across Australia. Input for the QIP & Goals arise from a variety of sources like: - feedback from 1) families; 2) our community, 3) our staff, and 4) the Preschools Management Committee who over time also draw on and alter Preschools Business Plan.

Decisions and actions that have occurred in 2023 helped to formulate this year's goals and we would like to share how they are continuing to progress.

2024 Our Plans are progressing as we enter term 3:

6 Goals were identified we wanted to work on this year and since the beginning of this year we have **completed 2** and well on the way to **completing 3 by the end of this preschool year** and 1 we have made the decision to move onto 2025.

Goal 1 Staff Handbook- many of our educators have been at our preschool for several years up to 30 years. However, last year we identified that to help new employees transition smoothly into our team we would develop a booklet somewhat like a 'parent handbook' new families receive upon starting at preschool. Currently, we have developed a draft and hope to complete this goal by the end of 2024.

Goal 2 Staff Professional Development.

This goal is really on going. It is about identifying all staff's professional educational journey and mentoring our team interests and needs. To achieve this we needed to ensure that a focus is maintained through mentoring strategies and allocating funds to support this goal. Great & Successful Quality Preschool Experience is closely linked with highly trained Early Childhood Teams.

Goal 3 Digital Hub.

Our preschool was selected to take part in a pilot project with the Department of Education. Essentially in 2025 the department plan that all preschools to interface with them to help promote a streamline of information and payment transfers. We thought it was a good idea to accept this offer as it will be mandatory and it's better to be part of the project so we can shape and give input to the program. Since the beginning of 2024 we have had several live zoom sessions with the department to explain their new computer program and receive information from us regarding what information we receive would be most useful. By the end of July, we will be trialling their system to see how it works.

Goal 4 New Roof

Completed. We have a lovely new roof replaced by we are so happy with this 18-month project and now this enables us to get solar.



Goal 5 RAP

A Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is a formal commitment to reconciliation. We plan to write a document for our preschool to help strengthen relationships, respect and opportunities within our preschool & community. We have begun researching and realised to give it the time and focus it needs we have transferred to begin in 2025.



Goal 6 Electronic Sign In

Completed. We introduced this goal in the early part of this year, and it is wonderful that there have been limited issues with the implementation of this goal. Families transitioned into electronically signing in without issues and the staff also began signing this way at the same time. The one thing we did identify was we found our internet was spotty, so we had to invest in a hub to help the internet, thanks to Hess from Blue Mountains Computers helping us as always. One of the contributing success factors was learning from the initial problems the Glenbrook Preschool had when they first set it up a couple of years ago.

We would greatly appreciate any thoughts or feedback that you might be able to provide us for the ongoing success to meet our goals. Please feel free to email or talk with one of our team members.

All Early Childhood Preschools & Child Care Centres within Australia adhere

The National Quality Framework (NQS) is the framework we use to develop our 2024 goals. These are based on the following Quality Areas:

- *Educational program and practice (QA1)*
- *Children's Health and Safety (QA2)*
- *The Physical Environment (QA3)*
- *Staffing Arrangements (QA4)*
- *Relationships with Children (QA5)*
- *Collaborative Partnerships with families and communities (QA6)*
- *Governance & Leadership (QA7)*

Office Admin on Long Service Leave

Kellie will be away from the office from **23rd Aug to 27th Sept** on Long Service Leave.

It would be really helpful where possible if families could please email any correspondence or questions to the office instead of phoning to lighten the load on Educators in her absence.

Of course in an emergency please call us or if you need to get a message to us quickly there will still be a staff member answering the phone.

The email will continue to be checked every day. Thank you for your assistance.



Steps Vision Screening

On Tuesday 20th & Thursday 22nd August from 9:30am, the team from Steps Vision Screening will be at Preschool.

Children who are eligible for screening should have already received a permission form. Please complete it and return it by the day of screening. This includes if your child has had the screening elsewhere.

The youngest of our 4 year olds who will return to preschool in 2025 may not have received an envelope but if your child has turned 4 by these dates and you don't want to wait until next year then please see the office and collect a permission form.

What is StEPS?

The StEPS program is an initiative of NSW Health and offers all 4 year old children free vision screening.

Why would my child need their vision screened?

- Children rarely complain of eye problems
- Children may not realise they can't see well
- Some children can see well with one eye but have very poor vision in the other eye
- Children's eyes may look OK and parents/carers might think that their child can see well but some children might still have a vision problem
- The only way to tell if a child has a vision problem is to have the child's vision tested one eye at a time.



Did you know?

- If a child has a 'lazy eye' it may lead to severe vision loss or blindness in that eye if not treated
- If a child has a vision problem, the earlier the problem is detected and treated the better the vision outcome
- If parents wear glasses or had vision problems as a child their children are more likely to have vision problems too
- After eight years of age some childhood vision problems cannot be treated and the child will have poor vision for the rest of their life - glasses won't help
- Low birth weight babies and children with neurological problems are at a greater risk of developing eye problems.

Does my child need their vision screened?

NSW Health advises all children to have their vision screened before they start school and strongly recommends that all 4 year old children participate in the vision screening program.

How can my child access the StEPS program?

Your local Area Health Service will target preschools and child care centres to offer all four year old children a free vision screening. To have your child's vision screened you will need to complete a consent form and return it to your child's preschool/childcare centre. You can also have your four year old child's vision screened for free through your local Child & Family Health Service. Contact details for your local Child & Family Health Service are on the back of this pamphlet.



How will I know if my child has a vision problem?

Every parent/carer of children who have a vision screening will be informed of the results of their child's vision screening assessment. Should a vision problem be detected you will be contacted by your local Area Health Service and asked to have your child's eyes fully tested by an eye health professional. As children's eyes continue to develop until approximately 8 years of age it is important to ensure every child's vision develops normally throughout these formative years. The StEPS program is a vision screening program and does not offer a full diagnostic assessment. If you have any concerns about your child's vision you are recommended to have your child's vision tested fully by an eye health professional.



New Roof at Preschool



We would like to take this opportunity to thank FRIAS ROOFING for the outstanding work done on our new roof. It looks fabulous and was completed ahead of time!!





2025 Kindy @ Ellison Public School

Ellison Road, Springwood NSW 2777 | (02) 4751 5099 | ellison-p.schools.nsw.gov.au



Kindergarten Transition for 2025

Parent Information Night: Wednesday 20th November 5:15pm

Kindergarten Orientation Visits:

Join us for FOUR fabulous visits which include a School Tour & Treasure Hunt, Teddy Bear's Picnic and more

Maroon Group: Friday 18/10, 25/10, 1/11 and 8/11 @ 1:30-3pm

Blue Group: Friday 15/11, 22/11, 29/11 and 6/12 @ 1:30-3pm



Policies currently under review.....

develop positive and accepting attitudes in children, and to help them gain a better understanding of their environment, community, country, and the world.

Access, Anti-Bias & Inclusion Policy

Quality Area 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

Rationale:

- All children have the right to access a high quality Preschool program. Springwood Preschool Kindergarten supports the four interrelated principles of equity, access, participation and rights. We also believe that no family or staff member should be denied access to the preschool by reason of race, ethnicity, culture, religious beliefs, diverse spirituality, gender, ability, lifestyle, perceptions of normality or diversity.
- We recognise that we serve the community and that we must engage all stakeholders in sensitive and respectful relationships. We also recognise that children learn bias and prejudices from an early age and that by promoting inclusive practices children can learn to value difference and diversity.
- Anti bias is the practice of inclusion and underpins our philosophy. It is the acceptance that all children are valued and respected. We believe in the statement of inclusion as advocated by Early Childhood Australia (ECA) that 'Inclusion means every child has access to, participates meaningfully in, and experiences positive outcomes from early childhood education and care programs.' (2016).
- Our preschool believes that children have the right to be treated equally and our goal is to develop children's identity and self-esteem in a trusting and supportive environment. We embrace diversity in all its forms to help

Aim:

- To honour the rights of child as a citizen at all times and that children have a 'Right' to:
 - A name that is used by adults.
 - [Right to basic needs](#) met by the adults of the service.
 - [Right to participate](#) in all aspects of the curriculum and routines of the preschool and where possible decision making processes.
 - [Right to protection](#) in a safe, responsive, healthy and caring environment.
- To respect the parent's right to make decisions about their child.
- To respect the knowledge and skills of early childhood professionals.
- To provide an educational, mentoring and guiding role to families, staff, children and the wider community.
- To be an advocate for inclusion and the rights of children.
- To challenge and break down stereotypical images.
- To provide a culture of acceptance, respect and fairness.

Procedure:

Springwood Preschool Kindergarten Priority of Access

- Our preschool embeds the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and promotes a culture of safety and wellbeing to minimise the risk of child abuse or harm to children whilst promoting children's sense of security and belonging.

"Being culturally responsive includes a genuine commitment to take action against discrimination in any form, embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of the curriculum and working"



collaboratively with culturally and linguistically diverse children and families.” (EYLF, V2.02, 2022, p.65)

- Enrolment is open to all children aged 3 years up to 6 years of age regardless of race, religion or disability.
- Children’s services must not exclude children nor be exclusive to particular groups of children, with the exception of age groups specified in the licensing conditions of the service or to population groups within the meaning of the Anti Discrimination Act 1977.
- Children’s Services must respond to the demographics and needs of children, families and communities within the local community.

Creating Inclusion

Inclusion supports children’s rights, fosters diversity and overcomes bias and barriers that may exist preventing children to participate in experiences within our Service. Inclusion is consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international conventions, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Inclusion involves taking into account all children’s social, cultural and linguistic diversity (including learning styles, abilities, disabilities, gender, family circumstances and geographic location) in curriculum decision-making processes. (EYLF.V2.0, 2022. p.66)

We will ensure children are provided with equitable access to resources, activities and environments, meaningful participation to foster a sense of belonging and opportunities to experience positive learning outcomes.

Diversity In Family Composition

educators will:

- create an environment that is welcoming to all families
- respect each family, and work in partnership to support the child’s emergent identity as an individual, member of their family, our Service, and the community
- engage in simple discussions about families that focus on fact rather than values e.g. “some children live with their mum or dad, some children live with their mum and dad, some with grandparents, and some with two mums or two dads”.
- be encouraged to seek awareness and reflect on his/her own feelings, beliefs and background and evaluate the effect these may have on their attitudes and interactions with families
- respect family lifestyle choices
- treat all families respectfully regardless of socioeconomic background
- discuss how members of the community can support one another and less fortunate people through the provision of resources, donations of goods or time etc.

Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander Perspectives

educators will:

- show respect and a commitment to reconciliation by investigating how to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)
- reflect on the current level of cultural responsiveness of our staff
- promote the inclusion of children’s voices in all decisions that affect them
- build and strengthen our knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and contributions

embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of the curriculum

- attend professional development to support our understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and perspectives
- provide opportunities for professional reflection
- create a culturally safe environment to ensure children have the ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights [Child Safe Standards]
- identify and challenge our own cultural assumptions, beliefs and commitments to cultural competency
- engage with local Aboriginal families and communities through Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups
- invite Elders and Traditional Owners to speak to children, staff and families about the histories and cultures of the local area

- develop an Acknowledgement of Country in collaboration with Elders, community members, children and families which will be displayed and given during special events and incorporated into the program on a regular basis
- develop awareness and meaningful understanding about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as part of the cultural heritage of all Australians
- encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities access children services
- show sensitivity and respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages by incorporating verbal and visual languages into the Service environment.

Promoting Inclusion and Diversity into The Curriculum educators will:

- promote positive influences, modelling appropriate communication, non-bias or gender specific language and attitudes
- develop appropriate expectations for each child based on their individual strengths, developmental needs, and interests
- assist educators with the development of required skills and knowledge for working with all children and families.
- work with Inclusion Support Professionals to assist in the inclusion of children with additional needs (see *Additional Needs Policy*)
- explore the values and uniqueness of the diversity within the Service. These opportunities will form part of the curriculum.
- treat children with respect by answering their questions honestly
- adapt activities, interactions, communication, the environment, and documentation to ensure all children and families are actively included and supported to participate in the curriculum
- provide children with a range of resources, equipment and opportunities to enhance their awareness of diversity
- reflect on the curriculum ensuring inclusive practice and goals set for children are realistic and being met
- involve families in the planning of learning opportunities reflective of their culture.

Priority of Access at Springwood Preschool Kindergarten

Priority 3. Children’s Services must give priority of access to children and families who:

- Are at risk of harm,
- Are of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent,
- Are from diverse cultural backgrounds,
- Have a disability,
- Are on a low income,
- Are living in isolated circumstances

Priority 2. Priority is given to existing children for enrolments in January.

Priority 3. Four year olds from the waiting list in order of date of receipt of waiting list application (with priority given to four year olds residing in the local area).

Priority 4. Three year olds from the waiting list in order of date of receipt of waiting list application (with priority given to three year olds residing in the local area).

In regard to Children

- Incorporation of the Early Years Learning Framework Principles, Practices and Learning Outcomes into the curriculum.
- Inclusion of all children regardless of ability, health, race, religion or culture.
- Participation of children in the decision making process in regards to routines and experiences engaged in by them, planned for them and participated in.
- Recognition that children deserve a healthy and safe environment and providing policies and procedures to ensure this occurs.



- Provision of premises and programs that are easily accessible to a wheelchair or mobility aid.
- Provision of rooms that are set out with enough space to negotiate the curriculum.
- Providing play areas that are accessible to all children.
- Table height is adjusted to suit wheelchairs.
- Providing a curriculum that reflects difference and diversity.
- Experiences, books, photos, posters, discussions, group and language times, songs, poems, art work.
- Programs are relevant and engaging rather than stereotypical and 'touristy' or 'tokenistic'.
- Use of equipment and resources that do not lead to stereotypical play.
- Ensuring that all children are promoted, made visible and represented in all aspects of their development.
- Challenging and discussing stereotypes and bias in everyday teaching.
- Challenging media and popular held beliefs and assumptions within the community at teachable moments or in set curriculum.
- Enriching the role playing areas of the curriculum, allowing access and promoting play by all children in these areas.
- By having more than one culture represented in dramatic play areas, in pictures, books and other materials throughout the curriculum.
- Using language and literacy aids such as song, books and other media to promote the inclusion of diversity, difference and abilities and challenge or exclude stereotyping materials.
- Providing choice of materials and provisions.
- Providing an induction process that allows all parties input prior to enrolment.
- Encouraging curiosity and exploration of different family types, sexuality choices, cultural groups, religious and spiritual differences.
- Through projects and discussions.
- Intentional teaching.
- Challenging norms and normality.
- By recognising differing family expectations, daily life and cultural routines and providing a supplementary form on enrolment to help with this.
- Allowing for differing learning styles and personality types.
- Accepting different responses.

In regard to families

- Providing support for parents and children from CALD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) families.
- Providing written materials in other languages to support non-English speaking families.
- Providing a gradual and tailored enrolment and induction with personal interviews offered to families on enrolment.
- Providing the Preschool Parent Information Book to all parents.

In regard to staff

- Treating families, children and staff with fairness and equity at all times.
- At all times maintain a professional outlook and respectful communications with all parties; children, parents, families, staff and management.
- Upholding the principles, philosophy and policies of Springwood Preschool Kindergarten.
- Challenging any Rights based or Social Justice Inequities within the preschool and the wider social community.
- Through equal employment opportunities.
- Discussion at staff and management meetings of the preschool's philosophy, values, aims and ideals.

- Ensuring educators follow policies, procedure and legislation in regards to the Right of a child to a healthy, safe and responsive environment.
- Acting in accordance to protect the Rights of the Child.

In regard to Management

- In partnership with other professional and support agencies to bring information and services to families and children.
- Promotion within the community that Springwood Preschool Kindergarten is a place for all preschool children and their families.
- Ensuring that policies and procedures promote an environment that protects children by being healthy, safe and caring.
- Ensuring that all adults act in and promote the Rights of the Child.
- Challenging stereotypes within the preschool and the broader community through open discussions, casual conversations, parent information nights, newsletters, daily curriculum and programs and as it occurs.
- Viewing children as an integral and important part of the community and reflecting this in the curriculum, preschool philosophy and policies.
- Ensuring that resources and equipment support difference and diversity.
- Providing in-service and training of staff in aspects of multiculturalism, access and equity, diversity and difference, bias and stereotypes, differing abilities, learning styles, personalities, behaviours and sexuality choices.
- Provide a venue at staff and room meetings to engage in critical reflection to break down assumptions and discuss issues.
- Through newsletters and events planned for parents, children and families of the preschool.
- Ensuring the preschool promotes itself in culturally and meaningful ways.
- In challenging media and popular held beliefs and assumptions within the community through written documentation, policies, newsletters, parent and staff resources, at staff meetings.
- In the development of policies and procedures.

In regard to gender

- Not limit, proscribe or describe gendered activity with the exception of breaking down stereotypes and challenging bias.

In regard to race and culture

- Not limit, proscribe or describe racial or cultural activity with the exception of breaking down stereotypes and challenging bias on the grounds of race or culture.

In regard to religion and spirituality

- Not limit, proscribe or describe spiritual or religious activity with the exception of breaking down stereotypes and challenging bias on the grounds of spirituality and religion.

In regard to special rights, differing child needs and inclusion:

- Providing an induction process that allows all parties input prior to enrolment.
- Providing educators with all possible knowledge of the child and their unique qualities.
- Providing a slow enrolment where the family comes for play days may be advised to help assist the smooth introduction and transition to the service.
- Providing in-service and training to educators and parents relating to additional needs and inclusion.
- Discussing and make known terminology and issues relating to any diagnosis.
- Liaising with other agencies for the benefit of the child, parents and staff.



- Providing support for parents with referrals and in transitions to and from other services.
- Enrolment will be tailored to individual needs and requirements.

Non-compliance of this policy is viewed when:

- A child is denied access due to the nature of their physical, cultural, linguistic, racial, spiritual, gendered parents, personality or abilities.
- A child is restricted in their dramatic and pretend play to traditional stereotyped roles.
- Sexual harassment, physical abuse, verbal abuse, visual materials, inappropriate body language, sexist comments or visual materials, sexualisation of children.
- A child or family feels unwelcome due to their choices in sexuality, religion or parent practice, child behaviour, diagnosis or spirituality.
- Where a child, family or parent feels unwelcome due to the colour of their skin, their culture, race or country of origin.
- Where a child, parent or family feels unwelcome due to lifestyle choices, health status or wellbeing.
- Where a child, parent or family feels unwelcome due to the child's personality, behaviour or identified need.
- Practical jokes or teasing that diminishes a person's feelings of self-worth, is critical of their life choices, sexuality, cultural beliefs, ethnicity or gender.

Non compliance of the policy by staff that results in the above named situations may be subject to disciplinary action.



WHS Policy

Quality Area 2: Children's Health & Safety

PURPOSE

Our objective is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of children, families, educators, and visitors within the Preschool adheres to moral and legal obligations outlined in Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws. We aim to go beyond compliance with all relevant legislation and work towards best practice to ensure a safe work environment. Our Preschool is committed to continuous improvement in all areas of workplace health, safety, and wellbeing.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, the approved provider, nominated supervisor, students and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

We believe that the provision of a safe working and learning environment for children, families, staff, and visitors are an integral and essential responsibility during the Preschool operation. Work Health and Safety regulations require the Approved Provider to eliminate risks in the workplace or if that is not reasonably practicable, minimise the risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

Our Preschool has a duty to consult with staff, visitors and families about work health and safety requirements and develop comprehensive policies and procedures to manage physical and psychosocial risks and hazards appropriately and effectively. All employees have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and to not adversely affect the health and safety of others.

LEGISLATION

Each state and territory government have its own Work Health and Safety (WHS) laws and a regulator to enforce them. In NSW the we are legislated by [Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Work Health (NSW)] and regulated by [SafeWork NSW].

WORKERS COMPENSATION OBLIGATIONS

Approved Providers will ensure the following to facilitate compliance of WH&S Laws and regulations relating to Workers Compensation obligations:

1. Hold workers compensation insurance
Provide information relating to how employees can make a claim.
Provide information to employees regarding a return-to-work program - [NSW Return to work program](#)
2. Ensure staff incident reports are completed for all near-miss injuries or injuries, complete an injury register to record near-miss injuries and injuries. This is documented in the staff injuries folder and then the Administrative officer reports all injuries to ICARE
3. Ensure staff injuries are reported to workers compensation insurer and state/territory WorkSafe within 48 hours. See each state or territory for information about injuries or serious incidents which are reportable to WorkSafe
 - a. [SafeWork NSW 13 10 50](#)
4. Support the employee with the following
 - a. Assist with Doctor appointment and certificate of capacity
 - b. Identify suitable duties based on certificate of capacity
 - c. Consider modification of existing duties
 - d. Consider modify of the workplace
5. Assist with participation of workers injury management plan upon return to work in consultation with insurer and medical practitioner, including providing suitable work conditions and alternative suitable employment if pre-injury role is unsuitable.

The Management Are Committed To:

- providing all employees with a safe and healthy work and learning environment so far as reasonably practicable
- ensuring the health and safety of children in attendance at the Preschool so far as reasonably practicable
- ensuring the health and safety of visitors, including contract workers and volunteers, whilst at the Preschool so far as reasonably practicable
- providing and maintaining an environment free of risks or hazards to health and safety so far as reasonably practicable
- providing and maintaining an environment that is tobacco, alcohol and drug free
- ensuring the provision of adequate facilities to protect all persons from risks to their health and safety including access to adult toilets, provision of hand hygiene resources (soap and water, alcohol-based hand sanitiser, paper towel) and personal protection equipment (PPE) (disposable gloves, masks, glasses)
- implementing a proactive process of risk management facilitating continuous improvement
- ongoing consultation, collaboration and communication with all staff throughout the risk assessment process
- implementing a strategic approach to health and safety by using measurable objectives to monitor performance
- meaningful consultation with employees regarding work, health and safety issues
- providing an effective and accessible safety management procedure for all employees to guide safe working and learning throughout the workplace
- ensuring Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are provided for all hazardous chemicals used at the Service
- supporting and promoting the health and wellbeing of all employees
- promoting dignity and respect within the Preschool and taking action to prevent and respond to bullying in its workplace
- providing staff with appropriate information, training, and guidance to facilitate a safe and productive work and learning environment
- implementing a thorough induction and orientation program for new staff and employees
- notifying the regulatory authority within 24 hours of any incident, situation or event that has occurred and presented imminent or severe risk to the health, safety and/or wellbeing of any person present at the Preschool or if an ambulance was called in response to the incident/situation (not as a precaution)



- investigating and managing any incident or accident to prevent further reoccurrence
- providing return to work programs to facilitate safe and sustainable return to work for employees
- providing a program of continuous improvement through engaging with industry and new technology and reviewing and updating policies and procedures
- implementing safety management systems / procedures
- ensuring a clear process is in place regarding raising complaints and grievances related to bullying, discrimination and harassment
- ensuring complaints or grievances are treated seriously and immediate action is taken in a timely manner
- keep up to date about current health risks and implement risk minimisation measures to reduce the risk of transmission of viruses such as coronavirus (COVID-19)
- maintain accurate records of all WHS issues and maintenance.

EDUCATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Educators and other staff must ensure:

- the health and safety of children, families and visitors of the Preschool is paramount
- policies and procedures are being followed and adhered to at all times
- that they observe, implement and fulfil the responsibilities under the current Work Health and Safety Act and National Regulations
- they participate in the review of WHS policies
- they take practical steps and responsibility for their own health and safety and of others affected by their actions at work
- work, health, and safety audits are conducted frequently to ensure the Preschool is maintaining a safe environment for children, families, staff and visitors
- appropriate resources and processes are in place to identify hazards, eliminate or minimise risks and achieve work health and safety compliance
- they know the location of fire extinguishers, blankets or other safety devices and know how to use them
- identified risks are assessed and controlled
- that any potential and actual hazards in the workplace are reported to the Health and Safety Representative (HSR)
- management and/or the HSR is notified of any incidents and accidents in the workplace as soon as practicable
- workplace incidents are reported and investigated to ascertain the circumstances of the incident or accident and appropriate action is taken to prevent further incidents from occurring
- correct record keeping procedures for incidents and accidents in the WHS Reporting folder are followed
- compliance with any reasonable instruction or lawful direction, including wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) supplied by the employer as required
- areas identified for improvement are included in the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
- they participate in training and consultation with the support of management
- they follow the correct manual handling procedures
- that work areas are safe, and they will help reduce accidents to themselves and others
- all safety checklists are implemented as required on a regular basis
- children's equipment is regularly checked for safety
- that children are supervised at all times
- all dangerous chemicals are stored appropriately
- children are kept out of kitchen areas
- all power points have safety plugs
- no hot drinks are around children
- gates are closed and locked after entry/exit
- all spills are cleaned up immediately (to prevent slipping), following the correct cleaning procedure

- reports and/or concerns about work health and safety are reviewed and responded to
- current work health and safety knowledge is maintained

FAMILIES AND VISITORS ARE TO:

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety whilst visiting the preschool; including the safety and health of their own children not enrolled in the preschool
- report any health and safety issues to management
- participate in consultation in WHS issues affecting them
- take reasonable care to ensure they don't affect the health and safety of other people (e.g.: Health Declaration for infectious diseases)
- comply to Preschool policies and procedures in relation to WHS including actions to reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases or illnesses such as physical distancing (if recommended by Australian Government Department of Health) personal hygiene practices and exclusion if children and visitors if unwell
- comply to Preschool policies related to the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs at all times
- provide Working With Children Check details as required (visitors/contractors)
- ensure they are never left alone with children.

Health And Safety

Our educators and staff will elect a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) as per WHS legislation. If a request is made for a Health and Safety Representative, Nominated Supervisor will:

- initiate consultation with workers about the number of HSR required
- provide all educators and staff with the opportunity to nominate a HSR and contribute to the decision of who will hold this position if there is more than one contender
- notify staff of the outcome of the consultation as soon as possible

The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor must keep a current list of all Health and Safety Representatives and display a copy at the workplace in a prominent position.

A Health and Safety Representative (HSR) can:

- inspect the workplace as directed by management
- be present and represent a staff member at an interview (with their consent) with the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor or an inspector regarding health and safety issues
- monitor compliance measures by the Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor
- enquire into any risk to the health or safety of staff at the Service.

OUR PRESCHOOL WILL ENSURE HSR ARE:

- never prevented from carrying out any of their duties
- able to give people assisting them access to the workplace
- able to take paid leave to attend to their health and safety duties
- able to take paid leave to attend an initial work, health and safety course or annual refresher training approved by the regulator within 3 months of their request to attend. The Preschool will pay the course costs and reasonable expenses.
- able to access any resources, facilities and assistance that they reasonably require to undertake their duties.

Health and Safety Representatives are elected for 12 months unless they leave the Service, are disqualified or resign. They are not personally liable for anything done or not done in good faith whilst carrying out their role.

Duty Of Care And Positive Duty Obligations

A duty of care is the legal obligation to provide reasonable care while performing any acts or making any omissions that could foreseeably harm others.

The duty encompasses a wide range of matters, including (but not limited to):

- provision of adequate supervision
- the preschool offers ACCESS EAP to all staff



- ensuring grounds, premises and equipment are safe for children’s use
- implementing strategies to prevent bullying and
- providing medical assistance (if competent to do so) or seeking assistance from a medically trained person to aid a child who is injured or becomes ill at the Service.

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will ensure all practical steps are taken to ensure the health and safety of all educators, staff, volunteers, children, their families, and any other people impacted by the Preschool operations. This includes ascertaining and eliminating or minimising all realistically foreseeable hazards and providing suitable training and instruction for employees to ensure health and safety. Educators, staff, and volunteers will also take reasonable care for their own health and safety, ensuring their conduct does not adversely affect the health and safety of other people. Staff, educators, families and visitors are notified that smoking on or within our Service’s premises, including car parks, is prohibited. Educators and staff must not consume alcohol or be affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) so as to impair the educator’s capacity to supervise or provide education and care to children.

The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor will comply with Work Health and Safety ‘Positive Duty’ obligations, including Sexual Harassment and Psychosocial Hazards Code of Practices. We are committed to creating a workplace with vision and meaningful direction, adhering to our code of conduct and practicing ethical behaviour to ensure a productive work environment free from bullying, discrimination, and/or harassment. Sexual harassment has no place in our Service. We aim to identify, reduce and manage psychological and psychosocial hazards and risks within the work environment through risk assessments in line with WH&S legislation.

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION

A hazard is a source of potential harm or a situation that could cause or lead to harm to people or property. Workplace hazards can be physical, chemical, biological, mechanical or psychological.

POTENTIAL HAZARD	WHAT DOES THIS INCLUDE?	EXAMPLE	POTENTIAL ACCIDENT
Physical	Floors, stairs, steps, ladders, fire, falling objects, slippery surfaces, manual handling (lifting, pulling, pushing), noise, heat and cold, radiation, poor lighting, ventilation	Children’s beds placed in an open area, wet bathroom floors, lifting children for nappy changes.	Trips, slips and falls, Manual handling injury (soft tissue/back injury)
Mechanical and/or Electrical	Electricity, machinery, equipment, washers and dryers, kitchen appliances, motor vehicles.	Lint accumulation in dryers can be a combustion hazard. Frayed power cords or unplugged power points are an electrical hazard.	Fire, electric shock, electrocution

Chemical	Includes substances such as acids or poisons, cleaning agents, dusts and fumes.	Cleaning chemicals, Medication	Fire, explosion, poisoning
Biological	Includes bacteria, viruses, mould, mildew, insects, vermin and animals.	Sick staff or children attending the Service, Contaminated food, mice infestation.	Cross-infection, food poisoning.
Psychological and Psychosocial	Workplace stressors	Bullying, children’s needs exceed skill or confidence of educators, insufficient management support.	High stress levels (staff and children), compromised care practices, failure to be inclusive.

Source: ACECQA: *How to- Work Health and Safety in Education and Care Services*

Risk Management

Risk Management is part of our Service’s commitment to Work Health and Safety (WHS) to ensure that clear processes are in place for the identification of hazards, assessment of risks and implementation of control measures so far as reasonably practicable. Risk management plans include risk identification and risk assessment. Plans are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are effective in controlling risks.

Our Preschool will comply with WHS legislation and ensure all staff and visitors are aware of the potential hazards and risks and are provided with the necessary information and strategies to undertake to help keep them safe and healthy.

Risk Management is a systematic and methodical examination of potential risks and hazards within our working and learning environment. The process of risk assessment assist to:

- identify hazards
- assess who or what might be harmed and how
- evaluate the risks and deciding on appropriate control measures
- record findings
- review the effectiveness of existing control measures regularly and update when necessary, assessments regularly
- consult and communicate with all stakeholders- staff, families, visitors and community members.

Risks assessments are routinely conducted for emergencies including evacuation, lockdown, excursions and management of natural disasters such as bush fire, flood, cyclone and earthquake. (See *relevant policies for specific risk assessments*)

Additionally, risk assessments can be undertaken when presented with a hazard such as the potential health risk associated with exposure to coronavirus- COVID-19 and implement control measures to manage those risks. Risk Assessments can be effectively used to meet WH&S obligations to identify and reduce hazards within the workplace, including, but not limited to, sexual harassment and psychosocial hazards.

Hazard Reduction



Educators and staff have responsibilities to take a risk management approach to all activities and plan for the safety of themselves and children. This may include:

- always work with safety in mind
- be aware of any hazards and report them immediately
- keep hallways and doors completely clear as an object could become a hazard in an emergency evacuation situation
- using resources appropriately
- open doors slowly
- do not stand on furniture (chairs or tables)
- walk, not run within the Preschool (particularly up and down stairs)
- adhere to sun protection guidelines
- ensure personal safety by wearing PPE, implementing hand hygiene procedures
- follow behaviour guidance plans to ensure personal safety and that of other children

Hazardous Materials

We strive to minimise the health and safety risks associated with the handling and storage of hazardous materials. We adopt a risk management strategy that enables practices that minimise the risk of harm, injury, or illness caused by any hazardous material.

As far as is reasonably practical, our Preschool will:

- provide the least hazardous chemical, product, or equipment for the task without jeopardising hygiene
- ensure that staff, contractors, students, and visitors are protected from both short- and long-term health effects of hazardous substances and processes
- ensure all staff, contractors, visitors, and students have access to Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and adequate training on the safe use and storage of all hazardous substances prior to any exposure to those substances.
- ensure that non-toxic plants are planted within the workplace and regular garden and grounds maintenance will be undertaken to minimise the risk of toxic plants within the grounds and premises.

Cleaning

Educators and staff must:

- adhere to the cleaning schedules and procedures within the Preschool including hand washing, use of gloves, colour coded mops/cloths
- follow manufacturer's directions for cleaning products and chemicals (see Safety Data Sheets- SDS)
- ensure a register of all hazardous chemicals, substances and equipment is used at the Service. The register should include where they are stored, their use, any risks, first aid instructions and the current SDS.
- chemicals are never mixed together
- chemicals and cleaning products are stored in original containers provided by the manufacturer
- all items are clearly labelled
- wash hands immediately if any chemical is spilled
- in the event of a chemical spill, isolate the area and advise the Nominated Supervisor
- wash hands thoroughly after using any chemical or disinfectant
- ensure containers are disposed of correctly following local council guidelines and not reused under any circumstances
- seek medical advice immediately if poisoning or potentially hazardous ingestion, inhalation, skin or eye exposure has occurred.
- **Poisons Information Line 13 11 26 or call an ambulance on 000**
- ensure emergency, medical and first aid procedures are carried out according to preschool policies and procedures.

Slips Trips And Falls

Children must be adequately supervised at all times. Identifying potential hazards such as sustaining an injury from play equipment or slipping on a wet surface should be considered through the risk assessment process.

Establishing appropriate control measures for staff and children, assist in managing the possible risk.

All staff should:

- wear covered shoes with slip resistant soles and heels
- be alert for any object that could be a trip hazard
- pick up any objects sticking up from the floor or ground, so as not to cause injury
- ensure warning signs alerting others of wet and slippery floors are used
- immediately clean any spills to avoid slips and falls
- notify the Nominated Supervisor and the HSR if a slip or fall is witnessed, whether it is a work colleague or visitor
- ensure the appropriate paperwork is completed (including notification to the Regulatory Authority if required).

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT TESTING

Services must ensure that electrical equipment is tested by a qualified person on a regular basis which is recorded with a tag attached to the equipment tested. This must be kept until the equipment is next tested or disposed of and must specify:

- name of the tester
- date and outcome of the testing
- re-test date

Records will be maintained including details of electrical equipment tested, tag number, location, test date, pass/fail and when electrical equipment is due to be re-tested (the recommendations are for all equipment to be tested annually).

Maintenance Of Fire Equipment

All fire equipment at our Preschool will be maintained as per the Australian Workplace Safety Standards. External agencies will be employed to conduct the maintenance of the fire equipment. Fire extinguishers will be inspected every six months.

Psychosocial Hazards

Our Preschool is committed to identifying, assessing and managing psychosocial hazards as far as reasonably practicable. Our Preschool will comply with WH&S regulations, including the [Code of Practice on Managing Psychosocial Hazards at Work](#). Management will take reasonable steps to eliminate psychological and physical harm to employees through identification, reducing, managing and responding appropriately to matters of psychosocial hazards occurring in the workplace environment

Back Care And Manual Handling

Our Preschool refers to [Safe Work Australia / Manual Handling](#) practices as part of our commitment to ensure a best practice approach. Educators are at risk of work-related ergonomic injuries, particularly back injuries, through carrying children, bending, reaching and not using adult sized furniture. Manual handling is any activity requiring the use of strength used by the person to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move, hold or restrain any person or object.

Manual handling injuries may be caused by the activities listed above. Injuries can include back strains, similar strains and sprains in parts of the body such as the neck, arm, shoulder and knee. Manual handling injuries also include overuse injuries or, because of falling during manual handling, bruising or laceration.

Recommendations

Due to the physical demands of working with children, it is sensible to do warm-up exercises for three to five minutes before starting work particularly through the winter period as muscles and tendons are more likely to be damaged when cold. Simple exercises to warm and stretch all the major muscle groups will help prevent injury.

To help prevent injuries, there are legal requirements for manual handling in the workplace.

The Nominated Supervisor Will:

- provide educators training in Manual Handling and Back Care



- make sure that equipment and containers are designed and maintained to be, as far as workable, safe and without risk to health and safety when manually handled
- make sure that the work practices involving manual handling and the work environment are designed to be, as far as workable, consistent with safe manual handling activities
- identify, assess and control all risks associated with manual handling in each workplace
- clearly mark any equipment which requires more than one person to lift or move it.

Preventing Manual Handling Injuries

- Eliminate or reduce the amount of manual handling
- Reduce the amount of bending, forward reaching, and twisting, in all tasks
- Reduce worker fatigue
- Keep all equipment in good working order
- Keep the workplace environment safe

To Help Prevent Manual Handling Injuries

- Kneel rather than bend down
- Sit down with the children rather than bend over
- Sit in an appropriately sized chair or on the floor
- Carry children only when necessary
- The correct way to carry a child is with one arm under the child's buttocks and the other arm supporting the child's back. At the same time, hold the child facing you, as close to your body as possible
- *Adults should try to avoid carrying a child on their hip because this can strain the back*
- When lifting awkward loads, be careful to lift with a balanced and comfortable posture
- Minimise the need to reach above shoulder level
- If necessary, use a step ladder
- Avoid extended reaching forward
- For example, leaning into low equipment boxes
- Share the load if the equipment is heavy, long or awkward
- To lift a child out of a cot, it is vital to put the side down of the cot first, lean against the cot and raise the child as close as possible to your body. Do not stretch over and lift.
- When sliding, pulling or pushing equipment that is not easy to move, e.g., trestles or gym mats, ask for help and organise a team lift
- Where possible, rearrange surroundings to meet the needs of both children and adults
- Remember these needs when buying furniture and equipment or upgrading facilities
- Use equipment and furniture that can be moved around as safely and easily as possible
- To complete lengthy writing tasks, e.g., program planning, sit at an appropriate adult sized chair at an adult sized table
- Larger children to climb up steps/ladder provided to change table.

Avoid Twisting When Lifting

Many injuries result from twisting while lifting. To avoid this:

- move equipment when children are not around
- rearrange storage so that it is easier and safer to replace and remove items
- lift only within the limits of your strength
- use beds and equipment that are easy to move
- make sure you can see where you are going when carrying equipment or children
- be especially careful when lifting a child with special needs.

Avoid Accidents With Careful 'Housekeeping'

'Good housekeeping' means fewer accidents. Check that:

- the floors and other walking surfaces are uncluttered, even and non-slip
- the workplace is tidy
- there is adequate space to perform each task
- equipment is maintained regularly
- lighting is adequate.

How To Lift Safely

1. Place your feet in a stride position

2. Keep your breastbone as elevated as possible
3. Bend your knees
4. Brace your stomach muscles
5. Hold the object close to your centre of gravity, i.e., around your navel
6. Move your feet not your spine
7. Prepare to move in a forward-facing direction
8. Ask for help when it is not possible to lift on your own

How To Organise A Team Lift

1. Ask a colleague who is willing and able to help. Ideally the colleague should be well matched to you in size and strength.
2. Agree on a plan of action. A coordinated movement during a lift is important
3. Timing is important for co-ordination. One person should act as a team leader and 'call' the lift.

How To Assess The Correct Storage And Shelving Height

Correct storage and shelving height are important to prevent slips, falls and strains.

- The best height range for handling loads is around waist level
- The acceptable height for lifting is any point between the individual's knuckle and shoulder
- Seldom-used objects can be stored at the shoulder-to-raised arm height (use ladders to avoid stretching)
- Avoid storing objects at a level between an individual's knuckles and the floor
- Mechanical aids such as ladders and trolleys should be used where possible to avoid lifting

Risky Play/ Adventurous Play

Educators will provide an environment that encourages children to effectively learn in play which involves supporting them to take risks. No play space is risk free. It is important for children's development to become adventurous and participate in opportunities to explore and test their own capabilities, manage risk, and to grow as capable, resourceful, and resilient people.

Educators will assess the risks to children's safety and develop guidelines to encourage children to test their abilities within a safe environment.

When we find children exploring risky play, educators will supervise and assist when appropriate.

