



WOLLONDILLY
PRESCHOOL



Family HANDBOOK





**WOLLONDILLY SHIRE COUNCIL'S
CHILDREN'S SERVICES VISION:**

To *support* families and children by providing *trusted* quality childcare services that are *innovative*, flexible, *caring*, inclusive and *affordable*.



WOLLONDILLY PRESCHOOL

KEY INFORMATION

LOCATION	42A Menangle Street Picton NSW 2571
POSTAL	Wollondilly Shire Council PO Box 21 Picton NSW 2571
PHONE	(02) 4677 8383
EMAIL	preschool@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au
WEBSITE	www.wollondilly.nsw.gov.au
OPEN	8.30am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday The preschool is also open on public school pupil free days
CLOSED	Public holidays and public-school holidays
CAPACITY	30 children per day
STAFF	Preschool Director, Early Childhood Teacher and Trained Preschool Educators

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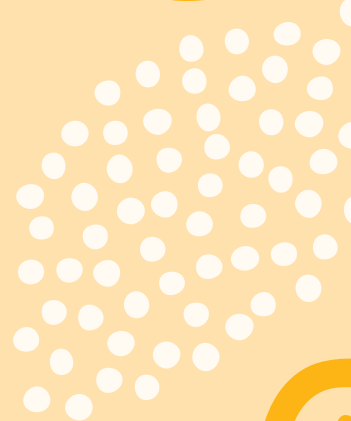
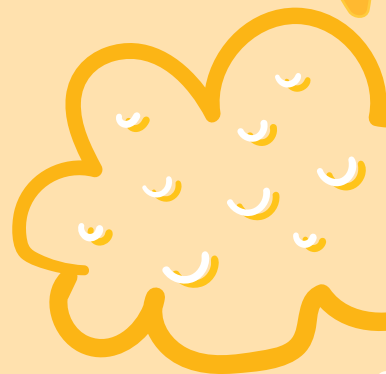
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About

WOLLONDILLY PRESCHOOL

WELCOME TO WOLLONDILLY PRESCHOOL

Welcome to Wollondilly Preschool. Your child and your family will become valued members of this Preschool. We hope that this will be a happy, educational and socially expansive experience for your child and you.

Wollondilly Preschool is committed to providing quality child care to the local community.

Wollondilly Preschool is licensed by the NSW Department of Education. All of our Educators are fully qualified and must abide by the Education and Care Services National Regulations (under the Education and Care Services National Law).

Wollondilly Preschool provides a play-based program in accordance with the Early Years Learning Framework. We provide a happy, safe, learning environment, which enhances children's overall growth and development.

Please keep this handbook for future reference as it deals with our key policies and practices. We hope that this booklet will answer many of your questions, and please feel free to ask the Preschool Director or Staff to provide further information. Most importantly, talk to your child's teachers about your child's interests and progress. We encourage you to embrace the vital role you play as your child's primary educator and to work closely with us to facilitate your child to build solid foundations for healthy relationships and academic success.

OUR STAFF

- Team Leader Children's Services/Preschool Director
- Early Childhood Teacher
- Diploma Trained Educators
- Certificate III Trained Educators
- Administration Officer

All of our Educators have a current First Aid, CPR and Working with Children Check.

Our staff undertake annual Child Protection Training.

OUR OPERATIONAL HOURS

Wollondilly Preschool operates from Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm.

Our service only operates during NSW public school terms. The Preschool will be closed during school holidays and on all public holidays however will remain open on public-school pupil free days.

CONTACTING US

Phone: 02 4677 8383

Email: preschool@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au

Please phone or email our office if you have any questions.



ENROLMENTS

The Preschool is licensed to enrol children from 3 years of age to under 6 years of age who are toilet trained and not already attending school. A child can be registered with the Preschool before they have turned 3. The child's name will be placed on a waiting list. A child may attend from 1 to 5 days per week depending on availability. If days are available, preference would be for your child to attend a minimum of 2 days.

2024 PRESCHOOL CALENDAR

TERM 1

Tuesday 30 January to Friday 12 April 2024

TERM 2

Monday 29 April to Friday 5 July 2024

TERM 3

Monday 22 July to Friday 27 September 2024

TERM 4

Monday 14 October to Friday 20 December 2024

Wollondilly Preschool closes for Public Holidays and NSW School Holidays.

MANAGEMENT AND LICENSING

Wollondilly Preschool is owned and managed by Wollondilly Shire Council, within its Community Services Division.

It is the role of the Preschool Director to manage the day-to-day operations of the service in close liaison with Wollondilly Shire Council's Manager Community Services who reports to the Director Shire Services.

FUNDING

The Preschool is run on a cost recovery basis by Wollondilly Shire Council and funded by the fees paid by the families whose children attend the centre and funding from the NSW Department of Education.

Wollondilly Shire Council provides the corporate support services of financial management, Information Technology and Human Resources, service planning and development and links to related community services. It also has a schedule of ongoing maintenance of the building and grounds.

Our Preschool will be participating in the Start Strong for Community Preschools program which provides funding to deliver affordable quality preschool education for 3 to 5 year old children enrolled in eligible community and mobile preschools in NSW.

From 2023, fee relief for families announced as "Affordable Preschool" in the context of the NSW Government's Early Years Commitment will be integrated into Start Strong and provide community and mobile preschools with sustainable long-term funding to deliver at least 600 hours of low, or no cost preschool to eligible children.

NATIONAL QUALITY RATING

Wollondilly Preschool is committed to the National Quality Framework (NQF).

The (NQF) aims to improve the quality of early childhood education and care services in Australia.

Providing children with quality experiences early in life can lead to better health, education and employment outcomes, building a productive and fair Australia.

The NQF includes legal requirements that all services must comply with, including:

- the number of staff and their qualifications
- staff ratios to children
- ensuring children's health and safety
- service space and layout
- the quality of developmental and learning experiences for children.

The NQF sets a high National Quality Standard (NQS) to encourage services to continually improve their programs and practices.

Services are assessed and rated against the seven quality areas of the NQS:

1. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE

Your child is supported to participate in play and learning.

2. CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Your child is protected from illness and hazards.

3. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Your child plays in a safe and well maintained environment.

4. STAFFING ARRANGEMENTS

There are enough qualified staff to give your child the attention they need.

5. RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

Your child is made to feel supported and welcomed.

6. COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Local community involvement and respect for the beliefs and values of families.

7. GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Your child is cared for in a positive and well managed environment.

As part of the National Quality Framework for education and care, services across Australia are required to participate in assessment against the National Quality Standard. This involves a self-assessment and external assessment against the 7 quality areas of educational program and practice, children's health and safety, the physical environment, staffing arrangements, relationships with children, collaborative partnerships with families, and leadership and service management.

Wollondilly Preschool is yet to be rated.





Fees

Wollondilly Shire Council sets the budget and reviews fees and charges annually in consultation with the Preschool Director. Every effort is made to keep fees at a minimum.

FEE REDUCTIONS

Under the NSW government Start Strong Reforms, the majority of government funding received will be directed to reducing fees for children, children with disability and additional support needs and children from Aboriginal or low-income families. A smaller funding allocation has been granted for children who will be 4 after 31 July 2023.

Contingent on NSW government funding we anticipate the following will be the maximum daily fees in 2023:

FEES 1 JULY 2023 UNTIL 30 JUNE 2024	
3 to 4 years old	\$70 per child per day
4 to 5 years old	\$60 per child per day
Aboriginal children, children with disabilities and children from low income backgrounds	
3 to 4 years old	\$25 per child per day
4 to 5 years old	\$20 per child per day
Administration fee - Enrolment (annually)	\$50 per child
Holding fee (refundable)	\$140 per child
Late fee	\$2.50 per minute
Dishonored EFT Payment Fee	\$9.90 per transaction
Hats	\$15 each

***There will be a slight fee increase from 1 July 2024.**



LOW INCOME FEE

The Low-Income Health Care Card has been chosen by the NSW Government as a simple, universal indicator of low income. Children from a family holding a Health Care Card (where the child is a named dependent on the card) will receive the lowest fee. The Federal Government has confirmed that Health Care Cards issued in the child's name only are not means tested. Therefore, children with their own Health Care Card will not be eligible. This includes Foster Care Health Care Cards and Health Care Cards for children with a disability.

Please advise the Director before the commencement of the year if you are eligible.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITY AND ADDITIONAL NEEDS

In order to receive the reduced fee one of the following must be provided: the child's NDIS reference number; or a copy of the most recent and relevant report, assessment or letter that outlines the child's disability or additional need from a relevant professional (signed and on letterhead).

HOLDING FEE

On confirmation of a placement, a refundable Holding Fee of \$140 is required to secure enrolment.

This Holding Fee is refunded after your final bill is paid in full. It is not refunded if the child is withdrawn before starting or if fees are owing at the time of withdrawal.

FEE PAYMENT

Fee payment is weekly in arrears and it is expected that full payment is received within 7 days of invoicing otherwise your child's position at the Preschool will be compromised.

Fees are to be paid by Direct Debit. No cash or cheque payments will be accepted.

An invoice will be emailed to you for your child's weekly attendance.

Parents may make an appointment with the Director to negotiate an alternative payment schedule if they are experiencing financial difficulty. The Fees and Rules Procedure is available in the Preschool Policy and Procedure Manual. A notice of 2 weeks is required for withdrawal.

Please note invoices cannot be split.

If fees are not paid / up to date, the Preschool reserves the right to refuse a position for your child in the following term.

Fees are charged for absences, including children being unwell, going on holidays and general days off.



PRIORITY OF ACCESS

The Australian Government's Priority of Access Guidelines sets out three levels of priority, which we must follow when filling vacant places when the demand for childcare exceeds supply:

- Priority one - a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect.
- Priority two - a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work/training/study test under section 14 of the New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999.
- Priority three - any other child.

Within these main categories, priority should also be given to the following children:

- Children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.
- Children from families that include a disabled person.
- Children from families that include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold or whose partner is on income support.
- Children from families with a non-English-speaking background.
- Children from socially isolated families
- Children of single parents.

Under the Priority of Access Guidelines, if there are no vacant places and we are providing care for a child who is a priority 3, the service may require that child to vacate the place in order to provide a place for a child in priority one or two.

CHILDREN WITH ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

We are committed to providing an inclusive environment.

To ensure your child is supported to reach their maximum potential and are appropriately placed, the Director will:

1. Ascertain the available Preschool resources for your child.
2. Request a full and current specialist's assessment of the condition, needs and management plan.
3. Arrange a meeting with you to discuss the management plan outlining educational, social and supervisory requirements.
4. May require a signed agreement on the level of additional support provided by the Preschool for additional needs and resources and the resources that you can provide to support this. This will be outlined prior to confirmation of enrolment.
5. If your child's needs change and this requires a different management plan, the Director is required to review the plan and make the necessary changes in consultation with you. This may include additional resources from you or a change in hours of attendance.

Once your child has been enrolled, the Preschool staff will provide regular developmental summaries of your child's progress both educationally and socially.

The Preschool will consider the additional support needs of children with identified additional needs and consider the resources available to meet those needs, however there may be occasions where children are unable to be enrolled due to the resources required or the child's needs are beyond the scope of the Preschool service.



RE-ENROLMENTS

Re-enrolment for the following year commences in October when we ascertain which children will return and who will leave to go to school.

Younger siblings of children who have attended the Preschool in prior years are given some priority. To be eligible parents of siblings must still complete a Waitlist Application Form. The policy acknowledges your long-standing involvement with the Preschool and provides a sense of community membership for you and your children.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents are encouraged to become involved in the program to the level at which they feel comfortable, working in partnership with the staff and children to enhance our daily program.

We encourage parents to share their interests and abilities with the children via Kinderloop. New experiences can excite and interest a child and they can find a new interest and strength. Do you enjoy hobbies such as model making, painting pictures, carpentry, fishing, sailing, soccer, play an instrument, cooking or football? Perhaps you could share your knowledge with the children. Talk to your child's teacher about how this might be possible.

We encourage parents to talk about their child's development with their teacher informally each day and formally twice a year. Parent - teacher discussions about your child's developmental progress are vital in providing an individualised and relevant program for your child. Please see your child's teacher to arrange a time to meet you.

Parent feedback about the service we deliver is encouraged. We believe everyone should have the opportunity to contribute their views, opinions and suggestions. Please feel welcome to talk with staff about any aspect of our service. You can call us or send an email to make an appointment with the Director or staff for more in depth discussions. We will work out a time to talk with you over the phone or in an outdoor area. We encourage parents to fill out the annual online survey we distribute regarding the quality of care, the educational program and the environment. Parent responses to these surveys play a vital role in the decisions that are made about the direction of the Preschool program, policy development, budgeting and planning for the future of the service.

Parent involvement may be called upon to assist with service provision and working groups. Please advise on enrolment if you are interested.

CEASING CARE & CHANGING DAYS

Any change to your child's enrolment requires two week's written notice.

When you give notice to leave, the Holding Deposit paid on enrolment will be allocated to the last two weeks fees. If the deposit is less than the final two weeks, the remaining amount will be added to your final invoice. If the deposit is more, you will be refunded the difference.

PREPARING
FOR THE

First Day





All children should be toilet trained prior to starting Preschool. Special consideration will be given to children with additional support needs. Please discuss any additional needs your child may have with the Director.

Separation from home and saying goodbye to mum, dad or carer can cause real anxiety for some Preschoolers. To ensure that your child experiences a happy, relaxed and confident entry into Preschool, we need the cooperation and assistance of parents/carers.

- Ensure your child knows what to expect when starting Preschool. Talk about what will happen during the day (See daily routine, page 22).
- Be positive! Try not to allow your own anxieties to be seen by your child, as they may mirror your feelings and become distressed unnecessarily.
- Coach your child to put on their socks and shoes independently. Work in stages and on your child's first day inform their teacher, where they are up to.
- Coach your child to follow a hygienic toilet routine. Tell your child's teacher if your child may need assistance to wipe their bottom. Staff will ensure they learn a direct route to the bathroom.
- Learn the teacher's names with your child.
- Be prepared to collect your child early on the first few days as starting preschool can be tiring.
- When it is time to leave, hand over to one of your child's teachers. It is important that there is an adult to provide support and comfort while your child watches you leave.
- Maintain an air of confidence.
- If your child becomes distressed, try to resist turning back.
- Be prepared to come back in necessary. (More often than not, the new Preschooler stops crying as soon as the parent/caregiver is out of view and will be fully engaged when you call).
- Feel free to call us throughout the day to check on your child.

- If you don't call and your child continues to cry, we will call you to decide together what to do next.
- Be assured that every effort will be made to reassure, comfort and divert your child's attention.
- We never leave a crying child alone. One of us will be there.
- Please avoid dragging out the good-bye.
- Long good-byes (lacking in adult confidence) heighten the emotional intensity of the experience and will impede the settling process.
- Have your own goodbye ritual, such as a hug or a kiss at the door.
- Call or email to pass on any useful information about your child's experiences and interests.
- Help your child to make connections: find out who they enjoyed playing with and invite them to play out of Preschool hours.
- Share observations and any concerns with your child's teacher.
- Stay abreast with the program and contribute where you can.
- Some children will be at ease and comfortable from the beginning (often the younger sibling of a Preschool graduate), however, most children will demonstrate anxieties in a variety of ways. Please discuss your child's way of dealing with this transition with the staff, who are trained professionals, able, and always available to help with your concerns.
- No toys are to be brought from home.

Starting THE DAY

The Core Preschool hours are 8.30am–4.00pm.

Families are welcome to arrive anytime after 8.30am.

Children must be signed 'in'– stating the actual time of arrival and 'out' each day the child attends as required by the National Child Care Regulations governing all centre based childcare facilities. Failure to comply with these regulations places our approval to operate at risk.

The sign in sheet/tablet is located inside the Preschool.

Remember to encourage your child to wash / sanitise their hands-on arrival and departure to reduce the risk of cross-infection.

We are conscious of the role this Preschool plays as a bridge between home and school. We know that it is difficult for parents with young families to adhere

to a strict timetable. With toddlers and babies in tow it is often a great achievement to leave the house without discord, a tantrum or external delays. The Preschool phase of your child's life is the period to learn to get to school on time. Every child is an individual. Every family has unique circumstances and pressures. Therefore, the staff of Wollondilly Preschool acknowledges that every child will adapt to "arriving on time" at their own rate and we need to be flexible.

We recommend that parents endeavor to arrive before 9:30 am to ensure that your child can participate in the morning rituals that foster a child's sense of membership to his or her group. Also, be aware of the dates when visiting educators and performers are scheduled and allow enough time for your child to settle in before the performances commence.

Ending THE DAY

You are welcome to collect your Preschooler any time before 4.00pm.

A late fee applies for each occasion a parent is late for collection. This is charged to encourage diligent adherence to the 4.00pm cut off.

Please make sure that you document names and contact details of people you authorise to collect your child on enrolment. No child under any circumstances will be released to anyone who is not listed as a person authorised to collect. All people authorised to collect your child must be a minimum of 18 years of age. They must provide photo I.D. the first time they collect your child on your behalf, unless you introduce them in advance in person to your child's teachers.

If needed, ask your child's teacher on how to update who is authorised to pick up your child.

If you have access (or custody) concerns, please inform the Director as a matter of urgency because staff are powerless to enforce wishes without legal documentation. Court Orders are to be given to the Preschool Administration.

If your arrangements alter during the day please call the Preschool. If there is an emergency and you or an authorised person is unable to pick up your child, please call the Director. Then send an email stating who you are, your child's name, and the person you authorise to collect your child (they must bring photo I.D.). If you are unable to speak with the Director or your child's teacher before sending the email, note a number where you can be reached on to verify the authenticity of the email (preschool@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au).

Persons affected by alcohol or drugs should make other arrangements to collect their child.

If an Educator feels that it is unsafe for a child to leave with a person they will ask the person to wait while attempts are made to arrange alternate pick up of your child. If this request is not followed Educators will contact the police to notify of the situation.



WHAT TO WEAR

Please dress your child in non-restrictive comfortable and easy to wash clothes suitable for messy and active play.

Please ensure that your preschooler wears comfortable, enclosed and supportive footwear that can easily be put on and taken off, such as sneakers with velcro fasteners. Please do not allow your child to wear 'cros', thongs or high heeled shoes to preschool.

Please also ensure that all tops cover your child's shoulders (no singlets) as per our Sun Safe Practices as can be found in the Preschool Managing Environmental Safety & Hazards Procedure.

Although every effort is made to protect your child's clothing, we recommend preschoolers wear clothes that are not of high emotional or monetary value, because accidents do occur when children are learning and exploring within a new environment. It is anticipated that a little paint may escape the apron and stain your child's clothing.

We advocate the value of messy sensory natural play for emotional health and fine motor development. We ask you to encourage your preschooler's participation in these types of activities by providing appropriate clothing. Please avoid limiting your child's enjoyment of these experiences by having realistic expectations about the care of their clothing.

LOST PROPERTY

Please label every item of clothing including shoes and socks so that discarded garments can find their way back to the rightful owner. Use a permanent marker – just as effective as commercially manufactured labels.

Staff will encourage the children to store discarded items of clothing appropriately in their Preschool bags.

When clothing does go astray, promptly check the lost property bins provided. Staff will display remaining lost property items towards the end of each term.

Uncollected items will be added to the Preschool's store of spare clothing.

WHAT TO BRING

1. A user-friendly labelled bag or backpack that your Preschooler can open and close by themselves.
2. A healthy no-waste lunch.
3. Munch & Crunch snack of fruit or vegetables in a separate container.
4. A piece of fruit for afternoon tea which will be shared with the group.
5. Drink bottle filled with water.
6. Sun hat that protects the face, ears and neck, or purchase a bucket hat through the preschool.
7. A complete change of clothes and underwear in a plastic bag inside the Preschool bag (to suit the season and labelled).
8. A comforter – a soft toy or security blanket (optional).

Please ensure that all of your child's items are labelled.

Curriculum





An emergent educational curriculum including language and literature, mathematics and science, music and movement, art, craft, drama and construction is planned with developmentally appropriate experiences to meet the interests and strengths of the children on a daily basis.

We implement the Australian Early Years Learning Framework to extend and enrich children's learning through opportunities which maximise their potential and develop the foundations for future success in learning. We record and evaluate each child's achievements, strengths and interests, then plan to extend their interest and build upon their strengths. We provide young children with ongoing opportunities for active learning through play - to explore, to learn at their own pace, to experience success, and develop initiative, curiosity, resourcefulness and self-confidence to foster qualities which will serve them well throughout their lives.

We aim to facilitate growth in the use of expressive language to empower each child to make meaningful connections with his/her peers, and to facilitate social competence to effectively function as a capable and contributing member of the group. Our goal is that every child becomes a successful learner, confident and creative individual and an active and informed citizen.

Fundamental to the Framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by belonging, being and becoming.

Experiencing belonging: knowing where and with whom you belong is integral to human existence. Belonging acknowledges children's interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. In early childhood, and throughout life, relationships are crucial to a sense of belonging. Belonging is central to being and becoming in that it shapes who children are and who they can become.

Being recognises the significance of the here and now in children's lives. It is about the present and children knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging in life's joys and complexities, and meeting the challenges in everyday life.

Becoming reflects the progress of rapid change that occurs in the early childhood years as young children learn and grow. It emphasises learning to participate actively in society.

The Framework conveys the highest expectations for all children's learning from birth through to the transition to school. It communicates these expectations through the following learning outcomes:

- Children have a strong sense of identity.
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
- Children have a strong sense of well-being.
- Children are confident and involved learners.
- Children are effective communicators.

UNDERPINNING THE FRAMEWORK ARE FIVE PRINCIPLES

1. SECURE, RESPECTFUL AND RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS

Educators provide nurturing relationships with consistent emotional support to assist children to develop the skills and understandings necessary to interact positively with others. We help children to learn about their responsibilities towards others, to appreciate their connectedness and interdependence as learners, and to value collaboration and teamwork. Through a widening network of secure relationships, children develop confidence and feel respected and valued. They become increasingly able to recognise and respect the feelings of others and interact positively with them.

2. PARTNERSHIPS

Learning outcomes are mostly achieved when early childhood educators work in partnership with families and support professionals. This involves valuing each other's knowledge of the child, communicating freely and respectfully with each other, sharing insights and perspectives and engaging in shared decision-making.

3. HIGH EXPECTATIONS AND EQUITY

Educators promote inclusion and participation of all children and believe in every child's capacity to succeed, regardless of diverse circumstances and abilities.

4. RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

Educators who respect and honour the diversity of families and communities and the aspirations they hold for children, are able to foster children's motivation to learn and reinforce the child's sense of themselves as a competent learner. The curriculum they provide upholds children's rights to have their cultures, identities, abilities and strengths acknowledged and valued.

5. ONGOING LEARNING AND REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Early Childhood educators are involved in an ongoing cycle of review through which current practices are examined, outcomes evaluated and new ideas are generated which support, inform and enrich decision making about children's learning.

The principles of early childhood pedagogy underpin practice. Educators draw on a rich repertoire of pedagogical practices to promote children's learning by:

- Adopting holistic approaches recognising the connectedness of mind, body and spirit.
- Being responsive to children, valuing and building upon children's strengths, skills and knowledge to ensure their motivation and engagement in learning.
- Planning and implementing learning through play provides opportunities to discover, create, improvise and imagine. While playing with other children they create social groups, test ideas, challenge each other's thinking and build new understandings.
- Deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful intentional teaching. Promoting learning through worthwhile challenging experiences that foster high-level thinking. Utilising strategies such as modelling, open questioning, speculation, explanation, and shared problem solving to extend children's learning.
- Creating vibrant and flexible physical and social learning environments that are responsive to the interests and abilities of each child and promote sustained shared thinking and collaborative learning.
- Promoting children's cultural competence. Valuing the cultural and social contexts of all children and their families, celebrating diversity and honouring differences is central to successful lifelong learning.
- Providing for continuity in experiences and enabling children to have successful transitions by assisting children to understand the traditions, routines and practices of the settings they are moving to and to feel comfortable with the process of change.
- Assessing and monitoring children's learning to inform curriculum provision and to support children in achieving learning outcomes.





COMMUNICATION

Each family will receive communication via Kinderloop as well as notes from teachers, account receipts and newsletters.

Information will also be displayed on the notice board in the room.

THE DAILY ROUTINE

8:30am	Centre opens and day begins
8.30 – 9.30am	Free play - morning activities indoor and outdoor (weather dependant)
Please arrive by 9.30am	
9.30 – 10.00am	Group time
10.00 – 10.30am	Morning tea
10.30am – 12.30pm	Free play / Focus groups / Intentional Teaching Experiences
12.30 – 1.00pm	Group time / Music & Movement
1.00 – 1.30pm	Lunch
1.30 – 2.00pm	Rest time / Quiet activities
2.00 – 3.00pm	Free play - Children's Choice
3.00 – 3.30pm	Afternoon tea
3.30 – 4.00pm	Free play indoors
4.00pm	Preschool day concludes

*** Times are flexible based on children's interests, weather or incursions.**

QUIET TIME

Although most children have grown out of the need for a daytime sleep by the time they commence Preschool everyone has some quiet time after lunch to recharge. Younger children are given the opportunity to sleep; however, no one is expected to remain on their beds.

Children may bring a comfort toy or 'security' blanket to use at this time. Please label these items and keep them in your child's bag or backpack until needed.

INTEREST/NATURE TABLE

While trying to discourage children from bringing toys to Preschool, we recommend you encourage your child to bring photographs or postcards and interesting natural objects instead. Things that have potential as 'conversation starters' and that may be of interest to the group. Please check with staff to ensure items of interest are safe, particularly if they're alive and as some plants and flowers are poisonous or may cause allergic reactions.

When handling/collecting tiny creatures for scientific study, please encourage your child to respect all living creatures by coaching them to ensure the creature has adequate air, food, water and a reasonable habitat for the duration of the study. We encourage children to return creatures to their natural habitat by day's end.

Well chosen Show and Tell items have educational value and provide the opportunity for the child to 'hold the floor' which nourishes self-esteem and confidence, fosters topic maintenance, improves expressive language skills and extends vocabulary. It is also an efficient means for children to reveal their interests, which are the building blocks for an emergent curriculum. We endeavour to extend the interests of children through all curriculum areas including music, songs, dance, literature, art, dramatic play and construction.

Please avoid bringing toys, jewellery, dress-up costumes, money or sweets because these items will become the focus of discord and exclusion amongst the group. The Preschool is well resourced with equipment designed to promote cooperative play and pro-social behaviour. Private property in the form of toys from home detracts from the noncompetitive and inclusive nature of the program.

ALLERGY AWARENESS/NUT FREE ZONE

Food intolerances in our modern world are becoming more prominent and can have troubling side effects for individuals and especially growing children. The only prevention is avoidance to foods which contain the allergen. Allergic reactions can and do occur where the child does not even eat the food they are allergic too, merely sharing the same toys, being in the same room as the food, or being touched by the person who has come into contact with the food can trigger a reaction. Anaphylaxis is the most severe form of allergic reaction and is potentially life threatening. We often have children at preschool who have food allergies, including those who are at the risk of anaphylaxis. As a consequence, we are an Allergy Aware preschool. Should your child have any food allergies or intolerances please notify Educators and the Office team on your child's enrolment at our service, so we can ensure everyone is across your child's requirement.

Nuts or nut products (such as peanut butter) are not to be included in Preschool lunches.

BIRTHDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays are always a special event for children, and everyone's birthday is celebrated at Preschool. Your child will enjoy being the centre of attention while we sing 'Happy Birthday'.

Talk to your child about what they would like to bring to Preschool to share with their classmates. A cake is a good option, but so are cupcakes, ice creams, cake pops, ice cream sandwiches, or even cookies. You may even want to let your young guests get in on the act. Bake a bunch of cupcakes, put out icing, sprinkles, and other decorations, and let them get to work creating a culinary masterpiece.

If your child's birthday falls on a Preschool day, we will serve these for morning tea. If your child's birthday falls on a day they are not at Preschool or over the weekend, we will celebrate on the next Preschool day if you wish.

Please let us know about any celebrations or traditions your family celebrates as we would like to include them in our program.

PARKING AND CAR PARK ACCESS

There are limited car parking spaces available adjacent to the Preschool site.

Please park in the designated spaces and not in the accessible parking space.

Council parking rangers are our neighbours and are frequently about.

The parking area becomes very busy at drop-off and pick up times, which is one of the reasons why we are flexible about time. To avoid long periods sitting in the car or circling the carpark consider picking up your child at an earlier time before 4.00pm.

VISITORS

From time to time the Preschool invites artists and educators to perform for the children. The cost of these is included in the fees charged to you each term.

Visits by student teachers, work experience students and professionals providing health and education services are anticipated. Parents will be informed by the newsletter or on the weekly white board.

Librarians from Wollondilly Library visit regularly to read stories to each group of children and to introduce new books purchased by the library. Watch the whiteboard for notice of librarian visits.

EXCURSIONS AND OUTINGS

Staff will capitalise on the wealth of opportunities available in our immediate vicinity for educational outings on foot. Please make suggestions to your child's teacher.

Health

AND SAFETY



Although every care is taken to prevent mishaps, accidents may occur which involve your child. When a child is injured a staff member will administer first aid immediately, comfort the child and notify you. All staff hold current first aid certificates and are experienced in managing the minor injuries which may occur.

If the injury is to the head a child will need close monitoring, therefore we will ask you to come to collect your child. If we are unable to contact you or your chosen emergency contacts, we will continue to monitor your child closely until you can be reached.

An ambulance will be called in case of a serious injury requiring urgent medical attention. The Director will remain with the child at the hospital and await your arrival.

All injuries are recorded and parents are requested to read the form, give a response and sign it.

A copy of the accident form will be posted via Kinderloop and a copy kept on your child's file.

IMMUNISATION

Immunisation is the safest and most effective way of giving protection against some diseases.

Immunisation uses the body's natural defence mechanism – the immune response – to build resistance to specific infections.

Our Preschool recognises the benefits of Immunisation in minimising the risk and spread of vaccine preventable diseases.

Following the introduction of legislation to strengthen vaccination enrolment requirements, Wollondilly Preschool cannot enrol a child unless an ACIR Immunisation History Statement is provided that shows that the child is up to date for their age with their scheduled vaccinations or Medicare forms are provided that show that the child is on a recognised catch-up schedule, or has a medical contraindication to vaccination.

Parents must also provide the Preschool with their child's updated ACIR History Statement after each scheduled vaccination to ensure that their child's records are up to date.

While we respect that it is the families' decision whether or not to immunise their child, exclusion periods will apply to children who are not immunised in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease.

Parents are asked to:

- Provide proof of Immunisation.
- Keep your child at home when suffering from a heavy cold or possible infectious disease or virus.
- Notify the Director immediately if your child contacts a contagious illness, including head-lice.
- Observe the recommended exclusion periods as set down by the NSW Department of Health.

ABSENCES / ILLNESS

If your child is unable to attend Preschool due to illness or on holidays, please notify the staff as soon as possible. Please inform us of the nature of your child's illness, especially when it is a contagious illness that others may have been exposed to. We ask that you consider the health of other children and staff within the Preschool. Please do not send your child, even when they insist that they want to attend, when there is any chance of passing on a contagious condition to others.

Please remain away until at least 24 hours after commencing antibiotics, and after vomiting, diarrhoea or high temperature.

Unfortunately, fees cannot be refunded as a result of your child's absence. Costs are the same whether your child attends for the day or not.

If a child becomes ill at Preschool, we will contact the parent most likely to be at home to come to collect the child as soon as possible. If we cannot contact the parents/primary carer to come, we will contact the first emergency contact and proceed through the list until a delegated person is reached. We believe that rest at home will give a child the opportunity to make a swift and effective recovery.

Children who are considered unwell are to be kept at home for at least 24 hours unless a doctors certificate stating they are fit to attend preschool is provided.

MEDICATION

Parents who wish staff to administer medication will be required to complete a Medication Form. Please speak with your child's teacher, who will provide the form, which you both will sign.

Two staff will administer the medication after checking the dosage and expiry date. After administering the medication each of the staff will sign the form.

Staff are not permitted to administer over the counter drugs unless prescribed by a doctor. Written documentation of instructions from the doctor will be required.

To ensure the safety of all the children in our care and visiting, please do not leave medication in your child's bag. Even cough lollies pose a hazard. All medication must be handed to a staff member for safe storage. Please remember to collect medication before departing.

If your child develops a temperature during the day, we can only administer Paracetamol when there is signed permission on file. When necessary we will administer first aid and call you immediately.

A current supply of the prescribed medication for on-going medical conditions, such as asthma, should be kept at the Preschool.

SUN PROTECTION

To meet recommendations by the Cancer Council, each child should bring a broad brimmed hat each day at Preschool. Your child will wear the hat whenever they are outdoors every day, throughout the year.

Hats are available for purchase on enrolment for a nominal fee.

In accordance with Cancer Council guidelines, we ask you to apply sunscreen at home before departing for the Preschool (to ensure the sunscreen is most effective by arrival). If you forget SP30+ is available at the Preschool.

If your child has a skin condition or sensitive skin, please advise staff and provide an appropriate alternative sun protection product. Please hand it to a staff member and do not leave it in your child's bag.

The Cancer Council recommends a combination of sun protection measures when the UV index is above 3. We do this by minimising the frequency and duration of time children are outside during these times, and using shade, hats and sunscreen.



CHILD PROTECTION

The NSW Department of Family and Community Services gives clear and specific guidelines regarding Child Protection Issues. In accordance with the guidelines the staff are trained to recognise the signs of possible child abuse and are obligated as Early Childhood Professionals to report any incidents of suspected abuse to the NSW Department of Family and Community Services.

The Child Protection Helpline can be contacted on Ph: 13 21 11 if you have doubts about the safety or wellbeing of any child.

GRIEVANCES

Wollondilly Shire Council, Management and staff are committed to the fair and effective resolution of family concerns or complaints, in order to cater for individual needs and to improve service quality.

Please read and become familiar with our feedback procedure and promptly make an appointment with the Director if you have any concerns so that these may be mutually resolved. Formal complaints may be lodged with the Director immediately, for resolution. If the issue remains unresolved you may contact the Manager – Community Services – phone: 02 46771100.

You can also contact us in writing:
email to: preschool@wollondilly.nsw.gov.au
post to: PO Box 21 Picton 2571

CUSTODY SITUATIONS

In the event of a separation in the family where one parent has custody of the child, and where restrictions may be in place, relevant Court documents must be given to the Director as this is the only way we can ensure your child is picked up by an authorised adult.

Also in these situations, it is necessary to inform your teacher and the Director of any changes that may have occurred, so they can help accommodate your child's individual needs.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Please refer to the comprehensive Wollondilly Preschool Policy and Procedure Manual located in the centre. These policies and procedures cover many of the underlying principles in providing high quality education and care. Please ask your child's teacher if you would like to view the manual. These policies are reviewed every 2 years or as required.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

We have an emergency drill every three months, at various times of the day, as required by Government Regulations. Everyone who is in the Preschool at the time must take part, listening and responding to staff directions while assisting us with the children. These drills are vital to ensure that staff and children are prepared to take appropriate action in the event of a genuine emergency.

Our Emergency Assembly Point is located in the laneway between the Council building and the Wollondilly Shire Hall.

The drills are evaluated each time to enable us to continuously improve our procedure and practices.

In the event of an evacuation, children and staff will gather and wait for parents and carers at the designated safe area to collect them.

NO DOGS POLICY

When walking to the Preschool, please leave your pet at home. Unfortunately, we cannot allow any dogs on the Preschool premises because some children are fearful of 'man's best friend', and it can be very distressing for them. Dogs carry a risk of an avoidable injury, which is not covered by our insurance policy.

Thank you for your cooperation to ensure our Preschool remains a safe place for children.

A photograph of a woman in a white shirt smiling as she serves food to three young children sitting at a table. The children are eating a meal consisting of yellow scrambled eggs, red bell peppers, and green vegetables. The woman's hand is visible in the foreground, holding a fork and serving a child. The background is bright and slightly blurred, showing light blue curtains.

Important REMINDERS

Please remember to:



Label all of your children's articles including clothing, shoes and lunch boxes.



Pack a hat that protects the face, ears and neck.



Pack a set of spare clothes.



Pack a healthy lunchbox that includes Munch & Crunch and lunch – **no nuts please.**



Bring a piece of fruit for afternoon tea.



Pack a bottle filled with water.



Apply sunscreen before your child comes into care.



Have your child wash/sanitise their hands on arrival.



Sign your child in and out of care each day.



If your child requires medication, complete the required form and hand the medication to an Educator.

Please do not forget to inform us if any situation changes in regards to your child. These include:

- Someone who is not authorised to pick up your child will be picking them up (not listed as an authorised person on your enrolment form).
- Your child will be absent from care.
- You have moved or if your phone number or email has changed.
- Changes in custody arrangements.
- Changes in your family situation that may affect care.
- Your child is diagnosed with a medical condition or disability.



**WOLLONDILLY
PRESCHOOL**

wollondilly.nsw.gov.au

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