

# **Macquarie College Pre-school**

## **Handbook**

**2021**

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# INTRODUCTION

## WELCOME

Welcome to Macquarie College Pre-school. We look forward to a happy and rewarding year working with you and your child.

The first day of pre-school is a milestone in the life of your child, a time when he or she steps out as an individual, moving forward towards independence in a new environment. We aim to make this transition as smooth and exciting as possible.

## MACQUARIE COLLEGE PRE-SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

We work with the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), adhere to the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics and draw inspiration from the principles of Reggio Emilia philosophy and Nature Play.

### Macquarie College Preschool Aims to...

- Provide a caring and stimulating program which encourages children's learning in a play-based environment, supporting individual interests and needs.
- Nurture children to develop their full potential as unique God-created individuals and as members of their family and broader community, acknowledging their strengths, recognising areas of interest, developing respectful interactions, providing positive guidance, supporting ongoing learning, offering inclusive programs and promoting self-help skills, confidence, resilience and teamwork.
- Show God's love in all we do, encourage children to wonder in God's creation and incorporate Biblical values in every aspect of children's preschool experience.
- Through extensive outdoor play and our bush garden, create learning environments that encourages risky play and supports the children to make choices, collaborate, take challenges, assess risk, explore ideas, appreciate beauty and diversity, ask questions, feel nurtured, safe and well-cared for, invite curiosity and be a source of enjoyment within a play-based context.
- Recognising that we are God's caretakers of the earth, commit to reducing the impact of our global footprint and create a sustainable environment which practices waste wise initiatives, reduces water usage and increases biodiversity as well as educate children to reduce our impact on the environment.
- Value partnerships with families and promote a positive and strong link between home and Macquarie College Preschool, respecting and encouraging family input and involvement – their skills, strengths and knowledge – and openly communicate with parents all aspects of the preschool program.
- Through regular and meaningful connections with Macquarie College Junior School, we will assist children's transition to school and also the greater community.





- Continually seek ways to build our professional knowledge and engage in open, honest, reflective discussions that may lead to changes in practice and policy development.

We acknowledge, appreciate and incorporate the culture and diversity of our families and community.

We acknowledge that the Preschool stands on the land of the Awabakal people, that this land continues to be sacred to them, and we not only pay our respects to elders past and present but

endeavour to impart this respect and knowledge of indigenous culture to children.

We, as a staff, feel privileged to share this time in your child's life with you.

*The Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and the National Quality Framework form the basis of policy development and are used to guide practice and procedures. We also acknowledge that various theorists influence the educators and the decisions and learning programs they provide, whether this is through subtle awareness or intentional teaching.*

## STATEMENT of LEARNING OUTCOMES

When children attend our centre we will encourage each one to experience learning in a way that is engaging and builds success for life. Integral to this is a developing sense of BELONGING - knowing where and with whom you belong; of BEING- which incorporates the significance of the here and now; and BECOMING – reflecting the process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early childhood years.

The five main areas for development are as follows:

### **Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity.**

Children feel safe, secure, and supported.

Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency.

Children develop knowledgeable and confident self identities.

Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.

### **Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world.**

Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation.

Children respond to diversity with respect.

Children become aware of fairness.

Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.

### **Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.**

Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing.

Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing.

### **Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners.**

Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.

Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating.

Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another.

Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials.

**Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators.**

Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes.

Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts.

Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media.

Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work.

Children use information and communication technologies to access information investigate ideas and represent their thinking.

*Credit is given to the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*

## **STATEMENT OF OUTCOMES FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION**

Partnership with families undergirds our aim to encourage secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships. Incorporated into the daily interactions between educators, staff and families will be a respect for diversity and a valuing of the role families play in the life of our centre. We will provide opportunity for formal and informal involvement and communication through:

- ♦ Surveys
- ♦ Newsletters -emailed
- ♦ Verandah White Board
- ♦ Parent Suggestions / Contributions to children's learning experiences
- ♦ Parent Information Nights
- ♦ National Quality Standards parent involvement
- ♦ Fundraising and social functions
- ♦ Formal and informal comments on programs
- ♦ In-put into the children's portfolios
- ♦ All children will have an allotted pigeon hole in the foyer for communication purposes, however most communication is via email.

As well as these more formal ways of interacting with families, educators will be available to discuss each child's progress when children arrive and leave each day. For a lengthier discussion an appointment can be made at a mutually convenient time.

## **HISTORY OF MACQUARIE COLLEGE**

Macquarie College is a Christian co-educational campus catering for young people from Pre-School to the Year 12 Higher School Certificate. While the pre-school is operated by the Seventh-day Adventist Education Department, it is governed by an elected Board of Management.

The College traces its beginnings to 1901 when a one room primary school opened in Lindsay Street, Hamilton. The school transferred to Kemp Street, Hamilton in 1933, adding a high school component preparing students for the Leaving Certificate and later for both School Certificate and Higher School Certificate. In the early 1990s the Kemp Street site was seen as becoming inadequate for the needs of a growing and changing student population. In 1992, a six-hectare site was purchased to provide a more desirable learning environment and to accommodate the growing needs of the Hunter region. A pre-school was incorporated into the new educational development in recognition of the growing need for such a service.

The College campus includes pre-school, primary and secondary facilities and a multi-purpose gymnasium.

## **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The Macquarie College Pre-school is an integral part of the Macquarie College campus. It is administered by a Management Committee, which is appointed annually by the Macquarie College Council. The Pre-school Management Committee has the primary responsibility for administering and overseeing the operation of the pre-school program. It also directs the financial running of the centre, staffing, policy-writing and any sensitive issues that need addressing. The committee consists of college council and pre-school representatives, together with nominated parent representatives of the pre-school. Meetings are generally held quarterly.

## **NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD COMMITTEE**

This committee comprises educators, administration staff and parents. The focus of the committee is to review all aspects of the service covering the following seven quality areas:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Governance and Leadership

We will invite all families to give comprehensive feedback about all aspects of our service and how we strive to meet the National Quality Standard during the year. There will also be a small survey on leaving the centre. It also includes the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

## **FUNDRAISING**

When we have enough parent volunteers we are able to have an active fundraising committee. This committee comprises a staff representative and parents committed to organising fundraising activities with the view to raising funds for the purchase of equipment for use by the children at the centre. This committee follows the guidelines of the Seventh-day Adventist Christian ethos and the health standards upheld by the college.

## **WORK PLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Macquarie College Pre-school is committed to providing the highest level of health and safety for all children, families, staff and visitors.

Our monthly staff meetings assess risks and review procedures as a priority. Please report any concerns to the Director.

## **RESPECTING YOUR PRIVACY**

In order to provide you with the highest standard of service, our organization is required to collect personal information from you about your children and yourselves as parents/guardians before and during the course of your child's enrolment in our service. We are committed to protecting your privacy and we abide by the National Privacy Principles contained within the Commonwealth Privacy Act. Please see the Privacy Policy for details.

## **STAFF**

The educators employed by the pre-school are highly experienced and qualified with credentials well above minimum standards. This has contributed to the high level of professionalism evident within the program and to the quality of care offered to each child.



New educators and administration staff who are employed at our centre undergo a thorough and challenging interview process to ensure they possess the highest level of integrity, teaching skills and knowledge, and love for children. There is a comprehensive orientation process to ensure new employees can smoothly take-over the responsibility of the educator / administration staff member who is leaving. We aim to make the transition process as smooth as possible for all children and families.

The management of Macquarie College Pre-school provides and facilitates regular professional development for all educators and administration staff. This includes attendance at programs run by professional development groups, or special presenters who come to the centre after hours for training. In this way we aim to keep our pre-school at the fore-front of early childhood education.

## The Pre-school staff members are as follows:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Director/EC Teacher</b>   | <b>Djuna O'Hern</b><br><i>Bachelor of Education Early Childhood</i><br><i>Tuesday Wednesday Administration Days – Non Teaching</i><br><i>Monday, Thursday, Friday</i>  |
| <b>Wombat Room</b>   |  |
| <b>EC Teacher</b><br><b>Possum Room</b>  | <b>Vicki Budden- Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday</b><br><i>Master Education (Early Childhood), Graduate Certificate</i><br><i>111(Children's Services)</i>  |
| <b>Educational Leader</b><br><b>EC Teacher</b><br><b>Possum Room</b>   | <b>Maryann Burns Thursday, Friday</b><br><i>Bachelor of Education Early Childhood</i><br><i>Wednesday (Administration Day Non-teaching)</i>  |
| <b>Room Leader</b><br><b>Educator</b><br><b>Possum Room</b>  | <b>Jennie Kelly - Wednesday, Thursday, Friday</b><br><i>Diploma of Community Services (Children's Services)</i>  |
| <b>Educator</b><br><b>Possum Room</b>  | <b>Amy-Louise Ford - Monday Tuesday</b><br><i>Diploma of Community Services (Children's Services)</i>  |
| <b>Room Leader</b><br><b>Educator</b><br><b>Wombat Room</b>  | <b>Barbara Rosendahl - Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday</b><br><i>Associate Diploma of Social Science (Child Studies)</i>  |
| <b>Educator</b><br><b>Wombat Room</b>  | <b>Rachel Tooley - Monday to Friday</b><br><i>Diploma of Children's Services (Early Childhood Education and Care)</i>  |
| <b>Educator – Support Role</b><br><i>Relieves educators and director for lunch breaks and administration time.</i> | <b>Maree Prigg - Monday Tuesday, Wednesday</b><br><i>Diploma of Community Services (Children's Services)</i><br><b>Amy-Louise Ford - Thursday Friday</b><br><i>Diploma of Community Services (Children's Services)</i> |
| <b>Inclusion Support</b>   | <b>Jade Sansom - Monday to Friday</b><br><i>Certificate 111</i>  |
| <b>Administrative Assistant</b>  | <b>Jemima Foster - Monday to Friday 8:30-2:30</b>  |
| <b>Environmental Services</b>  | <b>Colleen Lonsdale - Monday to Friday</b>   |

# ADMISSION INFORMATION

## ENROLMENTS

Due to the fact that our Centre is open **48 weeks a year, 7:30am – 5:30pm, Monday to Friday**, **Child Care Services** allowance is available to all eligible parents. Our priority of access is in accordance with their guidelines. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the guidelines, please speak to the Director. Consideration is also given to the length of time a child has been on the waiting list. All enrolments are at the discretion of the Director and the Macquarie College Pre-school Management Committee.

A fee deposit of \$250.00 is payable to confirm the position offered by the centre prior to your child commencing pre-school. The fee deposit is held by the centre until the end of your child's placement. Fees need to be up-to-date before the fee deposit will be credited to your fee account.

If you wish to **terminate** your child's placement, or alter the pattern of attendance, **two weeks' prior notice** must be given in writing. If this does not take place, and the child's place is not able to be filled immediately, then two weeks' fees may have to be charged in lieu of notice.

During the year the Director will distribute to each family a letter asking for the preferred days and times of **continued placement** for the following year. This must be returned with the required information or the place may be forfeited. Places are not guaranteed if fees are in arrears.

At the beginning of each year attendance times for the first week will be staggered to allow staff the maximum amount of time to help each child adjust to his/her new environment. The exact starting date and time will be forwarded to the family before the Christmas closure period.

**Please note:** Admission to Macquarie College needs a separate application form. The forms are available from the Macquarie College Administration office. All forms must be received by the College by the end of March during the year prior to commencing Kindergarten. Acceptance at Macquarie College Pre-school does not guarantee admission to Macquarie College Kindergarten.

## FEES

Macquarie College Pre-school is an extended hours pre-school. This means a minimum operating schedule of 10 hours a day for **48 weeks** of the year. Fees are charged for the full 48 weeks. As such the centre qualifies for **Child Care Subsidy** for all eligible families who attend on a regular basis. To apply for Child Care Subsidy you will need to register with Services Australia via a Centrelink Online Account and MyGov online Account.

Daily fees have been structured to include activities and expenses, including craft consumables such as paint, paper, glue, craft items, etc, also shows and special guests for the children, parent night guest speakers, printing colour photos for portfolios, Mother's Day, Father's Day and Christmas gifts.

Fees are required to be paid **two (2) weeks** in advance. Fees can be paid either per year, per term, per month or per fortnight on a regular basis via Ezi Debit. **Ezi Debit is a direct debit system and your details will be organized with the Administration Assistant before commencement of Pre-School. A fee statement** will be issued to each family on a monthly basis. Receipts will be placed in children's foyer pigeon hole.

## FEE ENQUIRIES

Should you wish to discuss your fees or have any queries regarding fees, please contact the Administrative Assistant between 8.30am – 2.30pm, Monday to Friday. The Director is available Tuesday and Wednesday 8.30am – 4.30pm.



## LATE FEE

**It is essential that every child is collected in time to allow the centre to close at 5:30pm.** Please notify us by phone if an emergency situation prevents this and we will care for your child until you arrive. In the event of this happening without notice, or adequate reason, a fee will be charged in accordance with the Late Fee Policy. If you have any questions relating to fee payment, please contact the Director.

## ABSENCES

**Allowable Absences** (in regard to claiming **Child Care Subsidy**) are set by the Government and are limited to 42 days per child per year for any reason. Should your child be absent from Pre-school for any reason for more than 42 days during the year, then Child Care Subsidy cannot be claimed after that time and full fees must be paid. (See ARRIVAL and DEPARTURE)

In order for us to budget accurately we are obliged to charge fees for those days your child is absent due to **sickness**. If the illness is prolonged a reduced holding fee will apply after three consecutive weeks of absence due to the one illness. This will consist of 60% of the normal fee. A doctor's certificate will be required.

To assist families who wish to take holidays an 'Occasional Days' notice board is on the door of the Administration Office. Fill in the details on the white form and place on the board. Other families may wish to take an extra day(s). If this is the case, they will attend in your child's place and the daily fee will be charged to their account and you will not have to pay for the day(s) taken. If you require an additional day(s) then please use the yellow 'days wanted' form and place on the board.

## POLICIES

All policies regarding the pre-school will be made available to each family prior to commencement at the centre. Policies are reviewed regularly and, at this time, parents are invited by email to comment on the current policies noting any changes that may be required. These can be read in full by logging into the Macquarie College web site [www.macquariecollege.nsw.edu.au](http://www.macquariecollege.nsw.edu.au). To log into Moodle you will need a user name and password. Please contact the Administrative Assistant for this. Select School Policies – Preschool Policies and Handbook.

A list of policies follows:

### ***Quality Area 1 ~ Educational program and practice***

Additional Needs, Portfolio Documentation, Program Evaluation, Orientation, Referral, Transition to School.

### ***Quality Area 2 ~ Children's health and safety***

Allergies and Anaphylaxis, Arrival and Departure, Asthma, Child Health, Child Protection, Clothing and Comfort, Death of a Child, Excursion, Food Handling, Storage and Hygiene, Infection Control, Medical Conditions, Nutrition, Oral Health, Providing a Child-Safe Environment, Quiet Time, Staff Health, Supervision and Staffing.

### ***Quality Area 3 ~ Physical environment***

Code Blue, Emergency and Fire Evacuation, First Aid Procedures, Hazardous Substances, Sun Smart, Water Safety, Workplace Health and Safety.

### ***Quality Area 4 ~ Staffing arrangements***

Code of Conduct, Holiday Leave, Professional Responsibilities, Staff Health, Staff Immunisation, Technology Use, Telephone, Relief Staff, Uniform.

### ***Quality Area 5 ~ Relationships with children***

Behaviour Guidance, Inclusive Practices, Interactions with Children

### ***Quality Area 6 ~ Collaborative partnerships with families and communities***

Communication, Complaints, Confidentiality, Enrolment, Orientation, Parent Involvement and Participation, Privacy

### ***Quality Area 7 ~ Leadership and service management***

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation, Determining the Responsible Person, Fees, Governance, Record Keeping, Staff Development and Education, Staff Orientation, Volunteers / Students / Visitors

## **QUALITY ACHIEVEMENT**

The pre-school is licensed under Seventh-day Adventist Schools (Nth NSW) Ltd. and is an approved centre. Macquarie College Pre-school has been assessed in line with the National Quality Standards. The assessment visit was carried out in July 2016 and the Centre was rated as **Meeting the National Quality Standards**. The preschool will go through our Assessment and Ratings review early in 2021. You can access a copy of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) in the Administrative Assistants office or the preschool foyer.

### **National Legislative Framework**

The national legislative framework is established through an applied laws system and consists of:

- The Education and Care Services National Law Act
- The Education and Care Services National Regulations.

A new national body—the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority—will oversee the National Quality Framework and ensure the consistent and effective implementation of this new system which replaced the National Childcare Accreditation Council.

Information regarding the National Quality Standards can be found at:

<https://www.dese.gov.au/early-childhood>

[www.acecqa.gov.au/families/](http://www.acecqa.gov.au/families/)

## **THE PROGRAM**

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The centre’s program is based on a play-based, emergent curriculum. The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) and the National Quality Framework (NQF) form the basis of our programming and planning.

The daily program is designed to meet the needs of every child, recognising that all children develop at different rates. Each experience is provided with a purpose in mind. Individual assessment programs for each child will be in the form of a digital portfolio. The digital portfolio will consist of documented development covering the following areas:

EYLF Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity.

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners.

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.

Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world.

Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators.

It will also include spontaneous and group experiences, photographs, samples of work and some group learning projects.

Educators will observe and assess each child then plan accordingly. All room Educators contribute to each child’s Learning Journey, observing, planning and reflecting. This allows Educators to contribute their own experience and perspective when observing and planning for each child.

The portfolios will be made available to parents. If you feel a need to discuss your child’s

progress, please speak to one of educators in your child's room.

The program is displayed in each room, recording the children's interests, reflections on children's learning, proposed learning experiences, intentional teaching experiences, music and group times.

Routines help us provide the consistency that is important for children to feel safe and secure. It is important that routines be implemented in a way that is flexible and responsive to both individual children and to the group. This way, our routines can be used to support children in their learning rather than disrupting valuable and enjoyable play experiences. Interrupting a child in the middle of an absorbing play experience can cause frustration or confusion, and perhaps even prevent them from being totally engaged in subsequent play.

Our program offers blocks of time both indoors and outdoors to allow the children to become fully engaged in play.

We value each child's uniqueness and nurture future growth by embracing the individual, acknowledging their strengths, recognising areas of interest, developing respectful interactions, providing positive guidance, supporting ongoing learning, offering inclusive programs and promoting self-help skills, confidence, resilience and teamwork. All experiences provided for the children are planned for the possibilities that may emerge.

Learning in the outdoors is a key part of our early years practice. Over the last few years, our preschool has been on a journey towards embracing more learning in and through our natural outdoor environment and more recently we have had the addition of our Bush Garden.

The Early Years Learning Framework identifies in OUTCOME 4: CHILDREN ARE CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNERS.

Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating.

The framework highlights, when educators promote this learning, for example, when they: Plan learning environments with appropriate levels of challenge where children are encouraged to explore, experiment and take appropriate risks in their learning.

As educators, the 'Bush Garden' continually provides the preschool children with opportunities where they are able to problem solve as individuals and in small groups as they play. The children are moving the logs from one place to another in the garden is an example of problem solving, using experimentation and inquiry.

Our program also involves elements of risky play. Risky play is a natural part of children's play and is defined as a thrilling and exciting activity that involves a risk of physical injury; and play that provides opportunities for challenge, testing limits, exploring boundaries and learning about injury risk (Sandseter, 2007; Little & Wyver, 2008).

As an early childhood educators our role is to ensure that children have opportunities to enjoy all the benefits of risky play, but without any serious injuries taking place.

According to Ellen Beate Hansen Sandseter, a professor at Queen Maud University in Trondheim, Norway, there are six different categories of risky play:

- **Great heights:** Children climb trees and other structures to scary heights, from which they gain a birds-eye view of the world and the thrilling feeling of I did it!
- **Rapid speeds:** Children swing on vines, ropes or playground swings; slide on sleds, skates or playground slides; shoot down rapids on logs or boats; and ride bikes, skateboards and other devices fast enough to produce the thrill of almost, but not quite, losing control.

- ***Dangerous tools:*** Depending on the culture, children play with knives, bows and arrows, farm machinery (where work and play combine), or other tools known to be potentially dangerous. There's great satisfaction in being trusted to handle such tools, but also a thrill in controlling them, knowing that a mistake could hurt.
- ***Dangerous elements:*** Children love to play with fire, or in and around deep bodies of water, both which pose some danger.
- ***Rough and tumble:*** Children everywhere chase one another around and fight playfully, and they typically prefer being in the most vulnerable position - the one being chased or the one underneath in wrestling (the position that involves the most risk of being hurt and requires the most skill to overcome).
- ***Disappearing/getting lost:*** Little children play hide and seek and experience the thrill of temporary, scary separation from their companions. Older ones venture off, on their own, away from adults, into territories that to them are new and filled with imagined dangers, including the danger of getting lost.

Reference: Care for Kids 2020, Why Risky Play is Important for young children <https://www.careforkids.com.au/child-care-articles/article/189/why-risky-play-is-important-for-young-children.>, Viewed 3 November 2020 <careforkids.com.ai>

If you have any questions about your child's day, please speak to an educator.

EYLF Learning Outcome 1

## TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

School readiness and the transition process are foremost in the thinking of both educators and families and even the children themselves, in the year before commencing Kindergarten.

Our policy is to prepare the children for Kindergarten in every way through out their pre-school experience. This is not something that we attach onto the program but is an integral part of every day.

At group times, the children are divided into two groups according to age, interest or need. These group times target specific skills that are age appropriate and prepare children for the school environment.

We also familiarize the children with the Macquarie College environment, with visits to the Junior School Assembly, Chapel program, Kindergarten classrooms and the College library.

**Please refer to the Transition to School Policy for details.**

EYLF Learning Outcome 1

## HOURS OF OPERATION

The Centre provides an extended hours pre-school program from **7:30am – 5:30pm.**

The Centre will be open Monday to Friday **48 weeks a year (this includes school holidays)**, with closure for 4 weeks over the Christmas/New Year period. We will be closed on all gazetted State public holidays.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Please make sure an educator is aware of your child's **arrival** and **departure**. The preschool will be open right on **7:30** children and families cannot access the preschool prior to this time. It is essential that you sign in **via the digital attendance register** on arrival and departure. Failure to sign the digital attendance register when your child attends pre-school will result in this day being recorded as an absence. For those families claiming Child Care Subsidy, there is a limit of 42 days per child per year absences before full fees will be charged. Licensing regulations require that all people collecting your child must be written on the enrolment form. It is also essential to have your child recorded as present in the event of an emergency evacuation being necessary. We practice Emergency Evacuation and Lock Down Drills regularly and use the attendance registers to make sure all children are safely located.

If your child will be **absent** for even one day, please telephone and make this known to a staff member as early as possible (ie. 7:30am onwards). You are then required to sign the digital attendance register for the absent day the next time you are at the centre.

It is important for you to inform staff of any **changes** regarding the person who will collect your child from the Centre, (see SAFETY). If the need arises during the day for a person other than those listed on the enrolment form to collect your child then we need to receive in writing the name, address and contact number of this person. This may be emailed to the centre.

If staff do not know the person then a photo identification such as a driver's license will be required.

Also, if anything has occurred that you feel may affect your child's behaviour or emotional well-being it would greatly help our understanding and handling of the situation if you make us aware of this. For example, a death in the family, a lost pet, father on a business trip, a special holiday coming up etc.

**Read** all notices on the verandah white board, emails and also newsletters so you may always be informed about the daily program and special events.

Hand all **medications** directly to a staff member and sign the medication sheet in their presence. (See section on MEDICATIONS).

Please **do not** allow your child to bring **toys** of any description to the centre. Unfortunately, they cause problems with sharing and also readily get lost or broken, causing tears. Dress-up clothes such as super-hero costumes are best left at home too. A soft comfort toy, such as a teddy bear, may be brought along if needed.

Please note that the front door of the centre is locked each day so you can enter the pre-school through the gates on the left side of the building or the right side of the building near carpark 2 adjacent to the preschool.

On departure please sign the digital attendance register, collect all of your child's belongings, including any communication that has been put in your child's pigeon hole in the foyer. Please try to allow time for your child to say good-bye.

Our Child Protection policy prevents anyone **under the age of 18** from collecting pre-school children.

## VISITORS

All visitors to the centre must sign either the visitor's register located in the foyer or the visitor's register near the attendance sheets. This includes time of arrival and departure from the centre as well as the reason for the visit. If both parents accompany their child one must sign the child in/out on the attendance sheet and the other sign the visitor's register. This is a requirement of the Department of Family and Community Services.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are welcome to be involved in the program and to spend time with their child in the centre. It is very important for your child to see your interest in his/her activities. This contributes to a holistic approach to learning where all aspects of the child's world are taken into consideration. Learning is a social experience that involves families and the community.

*EYLF Learning Outcome 2*

If you have a particular skill or interest, such as the ability to play a musical instrument, which you feel would contribute to the program, please feel free to let us know. We would love to expand the children's experience in this way. We invite parents to make suggestions to the children's programs and lessons.



A small **Parent Library** is available for all to use. Books and DVDs are available on a variety of topics which may help you in your role of bringing up your family. Please see the Administration Assistant if you wish to borrow any of these items.

Guest speakers will be invited to share their knowledge and experience. We would be glad to hear your suggestions regarding subjects of interest.

A monthly newsletter will be available keeping you up-to-date with happenings at the centre and informing of future plans and activities.

We, as a staff, recognise that parents know their children best. Your communication with us is greatly valued. Should you wish to discuss any matter regarding your child's progress and development, please do not hesitate to speak one of their room teachers. Any other issues or concerns can be raised with the Director.

## **GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR**

We aim to provide a caring, happy, safe environment where the children have a definite understanding of acceptable behaviour. Consistent, clear limits are set in order to give a predictable setting where the children feel secure. Rules will be decided together with the children that protect the child, educators, families and the environment.

At all times educators' expectations of children's behaviour will be developmentally appropriate. We aim to be available to children at all times, helping and encouraging them to express ideas and feelings, accepting and listening with respect.

Shouting, physical behaviour management and humiliation of any kind are not acceptable forms of management in this centre. Our policy is summed up as follows - Love and acceptance of the child but not of the problem behaviour. A full Behaviour Guidance Policy is contained in the Policy Folder. *EYLF Learning Outcome 2*

## **QUIET TIME**

This is a period of the day after lunch and our more formal group times when the children that require a rest are able to have some quiet time. The children participate in meditation or relaxation exercises to prepare them for sleep or quiet activities.

Quiet time may take the form of lying/sleeping on a mattress with a sheet and a small pillow, listening to music while resting, or quiet table activities such as drawing, puzzles or games. We ask you to make known to us the rest requirements for your child.

## **SPECIAL VISITORS**

Throughout the year special visitors will be organised that would be of interest to the children and to enhance their learning. To ensure each child has the opportunity to experience such events, we will schedule visitors for each day of the week.

# **CHILD WELFARE**

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are important days for children. Please remind us when it is your child's birthday. You may send a cake along if you wish. It is essential that it be large enough for a class of twenty children. **Individual patty cakes or homemade biscuits are best.** We will be happy to take photographs if you send along your camera, or alternatively, you may like to come early and enjoy the time with us.

*EYLF Learning Outcome 3*



## CLOTHING

Pre-school is a place for children to play, learn and discover. They do this best when not hampered by inappropriate clothing. Clothing should be comfortable, easily managed for toileting purposes, and as simple as possible (overalls, jeans with zips or buttons are difficult for children to manage themselves). If the child feels he/she will be censured for getting dirty this will inhibit his/her play experiences. To ensure adequate protection from the sun T-Shirts and dresses with sleeves are best. There will be sand, dirt and mud play available (weather permitting), so please keep this in mind when dressing your child for pre-school. From a safety aspect sandals or joggers are the best footwear. Thongs or slip on shoes can be dangerous when climbing on play equipment.

## MEALS

Your child will need to bring morning tea and lunch from home. If your child is attending for extended hours, then afternoon tea will also be needed. The centre will provide water and milk for morning tea. You should provide your child with a **water bottle for lunch no larger than 500ml.**

We aim to promote sound health principles in accordance with the Hunter and New England Health Department's Good for Kids, Good for Life guidelines. Therefore, we ask that fruit and a bread product be brought for morning and afternoon tea. This may include raw vegetables such as celery sticks, carrot sticks or cherry tomatoes for example. **Please send morning tea, afternoon tea and lunch in separate containers.** Lunch will need to be brought in a sealed container large enough to hold all your child's food for that meal. Wholemeal sandwiches, rice cakes, pikelets, fresh fruit etc. will provide a nutritious lunch. All lunches should be wrapped in paper or foil as cling wrap is very hard for the children to undo. We aim to teach as much independence as possible!

All food and water bottles must be placed in the refrigerator. Please clearly mark your child's name and the meal (e.g. morning tea or lunch) on each item and place it in the labeled baskets marked with your child's room name (Wombat or Possum). As there is limited fridge space, please select as small a lunch box as possible. There is no need for insulated bags as all food is kept refrigerated.



The Pre-school is a **NUT FREE ZONE** therefore we are requesting **NO** peanut butter or other nuts in any form **be** sent to pre-school. Please read labels on other items carefully. Children will eat at regular times and we hope to make meal time an enjoyable social experience for them and the educators alike. Please ensure all articles are clearly named.

**For a full list of suitable foods and drink please refer to the Nutrition Policy in the Policy Folder (Pre-School Policy Folder available: [www.macquariecollege.nsw.edu.au](http://www.macquariecollege.nsw.edu.au))**

## Lunchbox Recommendation Checklist

Please tick if the food provided for your child for pre-school includes the following:

- ☐ 1 main meal
- ☐ Morning and afternoon tea if staying after 3.30pm
- ☐ 1 child-sized serve of lean meat or meat alternative
- ☐ 3-4 child-sized serves of vegetables
- ☐ 1 child-sized serve of fruit
- ☐ 3 child-sized serves of reduced-fat dairy
- ☐ 3-4 child-sized serves of bread, cereals, pasta, rice or noodles.
- ☐ Water to drink
- ☐ No foods high in fat, sugar or salt.

If all points are ticked your child's nutrition requirements have been met.

Good for Kids Good for Life NSW Health Hunter and New England

## TOILET-TRAINING

If your child is not yet toilet-trained please send them in pull-ups, not nappies, until they are comfortable and capable using the toilet at pre-school. Please provide several pairs of pull-ups in their bag so staff can change them as needed.

The children will be reminded to use the toilet at regular intervals and assistance given as needed with clothing.

## SAFETY

In order to keep the centre a safe place for your children the following precautions must be observed:

- ♦ Gates are to be kept shut and latched at all times.
- ♦ Make sure only the children for whom you are responsible leave the pre-school grounds with you.
- ♦ **NO SMOKING** under any circumstances - the College grounds are smoke-free zones.
- ♦ Kitchen and adult toilet doors are to be shut at all times.
- ♦ Always sign the digital attendance and departure register as these provide the educators with a record of attendance in the event of a fire or other emergency where the building has to be evacuated.
- ♦ Our licensing regulations require the names of all people collecting your child be recorded on your enrolment form, or in writing.
- ♦ The program will be designed to protect the children and educators from as much bright sunlight as possible. We will utilize the shade during the hottest part of the day. Broad-brimmed hats will be required at all times, for educators and children, and sunscreen will be provided for morning and afternoon outdoor activities. Please remove all cords from hats.
- ♦ Please put sunscreen on your child each morning before leaving home.
- ♦ The children will be supervised at all times. The staff-child ratio set out by the Department of Community and Family Services for 3 – 5 year olds is one teacher to every 10 children. This will be adhered to in all circumstances to ensure the safety of every child.

Please refer to Policy Book ~ WH & S, Sun Safe and Child Protection Policies

## SETTLING-IN

For many children pre-school is their first experience outside the home, and even for those used to other carers it is still a new, and maybe frightening experience. Some children take a little time to settle in so please don't worry too much if your child becomes upset at first. How **you feel** will influence your child's reactions to some extent.

The following suggestions may be helpful:

- ♦ **DO** show confidence in his/her ability to cope.
- ♦ Talk about the fun things he/she will do, always showing a **positive** attitude. If you need to shed a few tears, (and many do!) try to hold them back until you leave.
- ♦ Make sure your child knows where his/her locker is, point out the symbols on it and help him/her remember this. Show where to wash hands and use the toilet.
- ♦ Ensure clothing is loose and easily managed by the child alone. If he/she needs help with toileting, please inform an educator.
- ♦ Please include a change of clothes in your child's bag. If they get wet or dirty and need fresh clothes most children prefer their own, and will get upset if they have to put on strange clothes.
- ♦ Some parents use pre-school as a reward for good behaviour, or denial of attendance as a punishment. This tends to build up a fear complex in the child's mind, so please do not use attendance in this way.
- ♦ It is most important that your child trusts your word. Do not say that you will wait outside in the car, or come back early unless you are willing to do just that.
- ♦ Your child has to get used to the fact that you will leave him/her and come back again. Please try not to be late. If you have to leave your child in tears, we will never allow these to continue for an extended period. If it persists we will contact you. In the first few weeks we must have a contact number at all times. (This should be on the enrolment form). If you are concerned, please telephone us for an update on how your child has settled.
- ♦ When you leave say good-bye, then walk out the door. **Never sneak out when the child is busy as this will create a sense of abandonment and mistrust.** It is important not to return to your child once you have said goodbye. Prolonging your exit only makes the child upset for a longer period. Let us know if he/she is upset and we will comfort your child as you leave.
- ♦ If you are having problems, do let us know and we will try to help. However, do not talk while your child is nearby, they have surprisingly acute hearing!

## MEDICAL INFORMATION

### ILLNESS

The Department of Health sets guidelines on infectious diseases and exclusion times from pre-school attendance. The Macquarie College Pre-school will abide by these for all cases of illness whether child or staff.

(See the section on QUARANTINE PERIODS FOR VARIOUS ILLNESSES.)

In the interests of other children and staff we ask that your child not attend the centre if he/she is suffering from:

- Chicken pox
- Conjunctivitis
- Consistently high temperature
- Excessive discharge from eyes, ears or nose
- Head Lice
- Impetigo (if not able to be covered)
- Measles
- Mumps
- Productive cough (ie. bringing up mucous)
- Ring worm (if not covered)
- Rubella (German Measles)
- Scabies
- Diarrhea
- Tonsillitis
- Vomiting
- Whooping Cough
- Covid-19

If you suspect that your child has an infectious condition, or the early symptoms of illness, they should be kept home until you have had the symptoms checked by your doctor. If your child is suffering from an infectious disease it is important that you inform the centre so other parents can keep a watchful eye on their children.

**A doctor's clearance certificate will be required before re-admission to Pre-school.**

**Please note:** There is a **24-hour exclusion period** from the last attack of **diarrhea** or **vomiting**. Refer to Child Health Policy in Policy Book or on the preschool website.

Sick children cannot be adequately cared for at pre-school as they need individual attention at this time. It is in the interest of all the children that a sick child be kept at home or with another person who is able to give them the emotional and physical support they need.

We realise that it is especially difficult for working parents when a child is unable to attend, therefore we advise that, at the beginning of the year, an alternative carer be arranged in the event of illness.

## MEDICATION

If medication is to be administered at the centre an authorisation form must be completed in the presence of an educator. This authorisation will last for that day only, except for on-going asthma, or other continuous medication which must be revised. It is the responsibility of the educator to administer the medicine or cream and record time and signature. **Only prescribed medication will be administered. Dosage will be checked and medication form co-signed by another permanent staff member.**

All medication must be in **the original bottle prescribed, bearing name, dosage, method and time** and must be handed to an educator on arrival. Non-prescriptive medication will not be administered. Please refer to the medication policy for further details.

**UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE IS MEDICATION TO BE LEFT IN A CHILD'S BAG.**

Educators reserve the right to refuse admission, or request early departure of a child with obvious signs of sickness.

Parents will be advised on the front door of the centre and near sign in and out sheets of any infectious disease affecting a pre-school child or staff member. It is important to read the policy on Child Health in conjunction with this information.

## IMMUNISATION

From 1 January 2018, children who are unvaccinated due to their parent's conscientious objection will no longer be able to attend preschool.

We would like to bring this to your attention so you can begin your child's immunisation program, if not already in progress. An Immunisation History Statement will be required upon school entry also.

Only approved Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) forms can be accepted.

The Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) maintains immunisation records for children up until their seventh birthday.

You can obtain an AIR Immunisation History Statement for your child by:

- By calling 1800 653 809
- By email [air@humanservices.gov.au](mailto:air@humanservices.gov.au).
- Online at [www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online](http://www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online)
- visit a Medicare or Centrelink office

This must be viewed by the Director or Administrative Assistant and a copy be kept in the Centre's records. It is also to be available to the Department of Health if required.

If you are applying for childcare subsidy for the first time, you will need to certify when you start childcare and ensure that your child's immunisation is up to date.

## NSW IMMUNISATION SCHEDULE

Please refer to the website

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Pages/schedule-changes.aspx>

## QUARANTINE PERIODS FOR VARIOUS ILLNESSES

Educators are guided by 'Staying Healthy in Child Care' 5<sup>th</sup> Edition 2012 as to the exclusion periods for illnesses. This document can be found at

[www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55\\_staying\\_healthy\\_childcare\\_5th\\_edition\\_0.pdf](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/ch55_staying_healthy_childcare_5th_edition_0.pdf).

Exclusion times may vary according to the discretion of the Medical Officer of Health -Public Health Department of NSW (Hunter Area).

## REQUIRED ITEMS

### YOUR CHILD WILL NEED

Each day the following items need to be brought to Pre-school:

**Please label/name all articles clearly.**

1. Lunch in a sealed plastic container or bag.
2. Water for lunch - in a small non-spill water bottle (500ml or smaller)
3. Morning tea - in a separate container or bag to lunch
4. Afternoon tea, if attending extended hours, in a separate container or bag.
5. At least one full change of clothes – labeled with name
6. Hat - Broad-brimmed – labeled with name –cords must be removed
7. Sleeping requirements (If your child needs a day sleep) - **small** pillow or cushion, cot-sized fitted sheet to lie on, flat sheet for cover and a small blanket during colder months. Please supply a draw string bag to keep all the rest time items in. The bag and all items must be clearly named.

## COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*How many children are you licensed for each day?* **40**

*What are the hours of operation?* **7.30am – 5.30 pm**

*Do we provide food?*

**No. We request that parents provide morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea if children are staying past 3.00pm**

*Do children rest?*

**Yes, we provide opportunity for Preschoolers to rest on mattresses from about 2pm, if that is what you want for your child. Please indicate this on your enrolment form. Children are never made to sleep.**

*How many children in each class?*

**There are 20 children in each Room, mixed age groups of 3-5 year olds.**

*What is the educator to child ratio?*

**We comply with the Education and Care Services and ensure that there is 1 adult to every 10 children. Each room is staffed by an Early Childhood trained teacher and a TAFE – trained teacher.**

*How do I enroll for Kindergarten at Macquarie College?*

**It is important that you complete a separate enrolment form for the College. This is usually due in the beginning of the year before your child is due to start school.**

*When is the Centre closed?*

**The Centre provides care 48 weeks of the year and closes over the Christmas New Year period.**

*Do you charge for public holidays?* **No**

*Do I still pay if my child is away due to illness or holidays?*

**Yes, to keep your position, you are still required to pay for absences.**

### **Useful Links**

- Department of Education (Early Childhood Education) <http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/what-we-offer/regulation-and-accreditation/early-childhood-education-care>
- Department of Education Skills and Employment <https://www.dese.gov.au/early-childhood>
- NSW Commission for Children and Young People (child protection) <http://kids.nsw.gov.au/>
- Keep them safe (child protection) [www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au/](http://www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au/)
- Cancer Council (sun protection)
- NSW Health (immunisation / infection control) [www.health.nsw.gov.au/](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/)
- Kids an Traffic [www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au/](http://www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au/)
- Sids and Kids (safe sleeping) [www.sidsandkids.org](http://www.sidsandkids.org)
- Kidssafe (safe playgrounds and equipment) [www.kidsafense.org/](http://www.kidsafense.org/)
- Sanitarium Health Food Company (Healthy food ideas) [www.sanitarium.com.au/](http://www.sanitarium.com.au/)
- Seventh-Day Adventist Church (what Adventists believe) <http://www.adventist.org/beliefs/index.html>
- Australian Early Childhood Code of Ethics (Code of Conduct)  
[www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/code\\_of\\_ethics/early\\_childhood\\_australia\\_code\\_of\\_ethics.html](http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/code_of_ethics/early_childhood_australia_code_of_ethics.html)
- Child Care Fact Sheets providing information relating to CCS, child care usage, allowable absences, registered care etc.: [www.mychild.gov.au/pages/CCFactSheets.aspx](http://www.mychild.gov.au/pages/CCFactSheets.aspx)

### **Notes:**