

Tweed Heads South • Vibrant
Public School • Caring
• Successful

Tweed Heads South Preschool

- Belonging
- Being
- Becoming



Preschool Handbook



Education
Public Schools

**BELONGING, BEING
& BECOMING**
The Early Years Learning
Framework for Australia

Information for families



We believe preschool children are...

capable,
competent,
skilled and
creative

learners who are able to make choices and take charge of



their own learning.

Preschool children learn best through play. Play provides opportunities for children to

discover,
create,
explore,
refine,
improvise
and imagine.

The foundation of our educational philosophy here at
Tweed Heads South Preschool,
is striving to create an environment in which
all children can *belong*, *be* and *become*.

Contents

☺	Our Preschool Philosophy	3
☺	Acknowledgement	4
☺	General Information	5
☺	Summary of Key Policies	8
☺	About Tweed Heads South Preschool	9
	• <i>Our Philosophy</i>	9
	• <i>Our Curriculum</i>	9
	• <i>Our Programs</i>	12
	• <i>Our Learning Environments</i>	16
	• <i>Semester One Timetable</i>	20
	• <i>Code of Ethics</i>	21-22
☺	Additional Information for Families	
	• <i>Early Years Learning Framework – Family Guide</i>	23
	• <i>Learning Through Play</i>	25
	• <i>Top 10 tips for Parents of Children Starting Preschool</i>	27
	• <i>First Day at Preschool</i>	28

A copy of the NSW Department of Education (DoE) booklet “Welcome to Preschool - Parents Guide” can be found in your **Orientation Bag**. You can also access a copy from our school Website by clicking the PRESCHOOL tab at: <http://www.tweedhdest-p.schools.nsw.edu.au>

A copy of the forms ‘Authority to Collect/Deliver Children’, ‘Media Consent’ and ‘Taping Conversation Permission Note’ can also be found in your **Orientation Bag**. Please fill in these forms as soon as possible and return them to the preschool on the Preschool Orientation Morning.

Tweed Heads South Public School Preschool Philosophy

We strive to ensure each child feels a sense of belonging to our environment, being in the moment and becoming themselves. Our program and daily practice are guided by the Early Years Learning Framework, National Quality Standard and our children and families.

We believe each child brings with them their own unique beliefs and cultures. Children first and foremost belong to their family and community. We believe that the children and their families need to feel welcome, safe and secure in an environment that is supportive, nurturing and predictable.

We believe children are capable, competent and creative learners who are unique, develop, and learn in their own way.

We strive to provide opportunities through a play based and supportive program for children to learn independence, confidence in their own abilities and to take safe risks and form their own identity.

We believe that through daily observations and critical reflective practice, we aim to provide a program that provides for child centred responsive practice and caters to diverse learning styles.

We strive for children to become confident learners and in themselves to transition to school. Our whole school community engages with our preschool children, which fosters a sense of belonging to the school and the environment.

We value Aboriginal culture and perspectives. These are embedded throughout our program and environment. We value all cultures and ways of being. We include and respect all aspects of diverse cultures and ways of being in our program through collaborative partnerships with families and communities.

We endeavour to create an atmosphere that is fun, engaging and inviting for children, families and our educators to enjoy, laugh and play. We strive to ensure all our children, families and educators grow holistically through an inclusive environment and to become confident in themselves, kind lifelong learners.

Our Philosophy is seen as a living document, continually evolving in the light of new research, the ideas of new team members and input from families.

Our Children's Voice:

I like playing with the playdough- Johan

It's just so fun - Emily

I like building with the boxes- Saxon

Playing with my friends - Diya

Our Families Voice:

*Our daughter will ask every day if it is a school day. Her willingness to attend tells us a lot about her levels of comfort at 'little school'. We hold high regard for the teachers and support staff who have developed a safe, family friendly, respectful and fun learning environment. Having had our son come through the preschool previously, we have witnessed the benefits of the close relationship between the school and preschool also. All in all very happy. Thank you. **Natalie***

*I love this centre! My son looks forward to it every day. Amazing teachers, they are always willing to communicate, always cheerful and very friendly. I love the mini classroom library and the fun and educational games that my son can borrow from. The teachers are always introducing different activities. Very well, organised teachers, keep up the great work and thank you! So pleased. **Luwam***

*I love that Layla is being regularly exposed and learning about indigenous values, culture and belief systems. Hope it will continue as she moves through the schooling years. **Michael and Natalie***



*We wish to acknowledge the
Nganduwahl and Minjungbal
people as the traditional owners
of the land on which we meet to
learn, work and play today.*

*Together, we say thank you for
sharing the land and we promise
to take care of the animals,
people and all things on
Bundjalung land.*





Tweed Heads South Preschool

• Belonging
• Being
• Becoming

General Information

Staff	Felicity Henderson R/School Principal Gretal French Preschool Supervisor/Educational Leader Amanda Ellem Preschool Teacher Jacki Burton Preschool Support Staff
Phone No Access	07 5524 3408 (School Office) Department of Communities Preschools offer a 'One Year Preschool Program'. Our program caters for children in the one year prior to commencing primary school.
Attendance	Enrolment is for one school year on a part time basis. We offer a 5 day fortnight program with the following classes: Blue Whale (Baawii) Class – Monday, Tuesday and every alternate Wednesday Green Turtle Class (Bing Ging) – Thursday, Friday and every alternate Wednesday <i>All positions are subject to availability, priority enrolment criteria and at the discretion of the Preschool Enrolment Committee</i>
Enrolment	All requirements below must be met before your child can start preschool <ul style="list-style-type: none">☺ Completed enrolment form☺ Proof of age to be provided - birth certificate, passport etc.☺ A copy of immunisation history☺ Original Health Care Card or Pension Card to be sighted if applicable☺ Additional Needs Forms and Health Care Plans – asthma, allergy etc.☺ Any relevant court orders <p>All documentation must be presented to the office to ensure your place at the preschool.</p>
Transition	A 'Preschool Orientation Morning' will be organised from 9.30am – 11.00am during Term 4, prior to your child beginning preschool the following year. This is a great opportunity for you and your child to meet the staff, families and other children who will be attending Tweed Heads South Preschool with you. This is also where you can bring back any outstanding paperwork, ask questions and discuss any medical needs of your child with staff. Morning tea will be provided by the current families of the preschool. At the orientation morning, an interview will be arranged for you to meet with the preschool teacher to develop your child's individual learning program for Semester 1.
Hours	Preschool starts at 9am and finishes at 3pm . The staff will open the preschool building and be ready to greet families in the morning when the school bell rings at 9am. Please note that outside the hours of 9am-3pm, children must be supervised by a parent / guardian. This is a non-negotiable requirement of the licensing regulations for our service. All children need to be signed in and out of the preschool by their parents, guardians or

another person who has been nominated by you on the 'Authority to Collect and Deliver Children' form.

School Terms

The preschool runs to the 4 public school terms and we are also closed for school development days and cleaning/planning days during the year. Please see your year overview or the whiteboard in the preschool for the current school term calendar. Alternatively, you can locate it on the DoE website.

Outside School Hour Care

If you are unable to drop off and pick up your child within the hours of 9am – 3pm, you can contact one of the local family day-care providers who can arrange before and after school care. See preschool staff if you have any enquiries. We also have an onsite before and after school sessions called Active OOSH. Operating hours are 6:30am to 6:30pm. Phone 0437 360 134 for more information.

Uniforms

1st Shirt Free (at orientation morning), Additional Shirts \$15.95, Bucket Hat can be purchased from Lowes. 2014 saw the introduction of our "preschool uniform". At preschool, learning happens through play which is hands-on and at times messy! The cost of wearing the uniform is much less than replacing regular clothes which may be stained by play dough, paint or wet sand (to name a few). The uniform also meets our sun safety requirements and is part of the 'belonging' element of our preschool learning program.

T-Shirt – You will be given one shirt *free of charge* (in a random colour) at the orientation morning!

The uniform is a "Tweed Heads South Public School Preschool" T-Shirt made from cotton material with short sleeves and a boat neck. The shirts come in each colour of the rainbow (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, navy, pink and purple).

If you wish to purchase additional shirts, the cost is \$15.00 each. Please see staff to enquire which colour T-Shirts are in stock for you to purchase.

During winter months, a singlet and/or a long sleeve shirt can be worn under the T-Shirt and of course, a jumper can always be worn over the top of the shirt. If your preschool child has an older sibling at Tweed Heads South Public School, it may be a good idea to purchase a preschool shirt in the 'sport house colour' of your older child as this will be the same sports house your pre-schooler will be in when they start kindergarten in the following year at THSPS. They will be able to wear their preschool shirt when in kindergarten to all the sports carnivals!

Hat – A Sun safe hat

These hats meet our sun-safety regulations and remember, your child will be able to continue wearing their hat in the following years at big school at THSPS.

Recess & Lunch

Your child needs to bring a vegetable or piece of fruit (that equals one serve of fresh vegetable or fruit), a nutritious lunch and afternoon recess. You also need to pack a drink bottle with water for your child to have at recess, lunch and throughout the day.

Food needs to be packed in safe containers (e.g. no glass/tins) and food packed should encourage children to be independent (e.g. provide a spoon if needed and food that does not require heating/re-heating due to health regulations, e.g. the potential risk of food poisoning and of scalding if the food temperature is too hot).

Water and plain milk are the only drinks to be provided at preschool. See our healthy eating policy for more information.

What to Bring Each Day

- ☺ Wear your **Preschool Shirt or Sun safe Shirt** each day you attend preschool (one was given to you free of charge on Orientation Morning or if you did not attend the orientation session, one will be given to you on your child's first day at preschool)
- ☺ Bring your **School Hat** each day you attend preschool. In the unlikely event where you misplace your school hat, the substitute hat **must be a bucket/ broad brim hat**. It needs to cover the ears and neck to meet the 'sun safe' requirements. Our sun safe policy states that we need to wear a hat when playing outside.
- ☺ **One serve of vegetable or fruit in a small container for fruit break**
- ☺ Lunch and Afternoon Recess in a lunch box
- ☺ Water Bottle
- ☺ Children's Bag – with at least one change of clothes in a plastic bag (sometimes when we learn we get wet and messy, e.g. when mixing water in the sandpit)
- ☺ Sheet, blanket and a pillow in a sleep bag (only if you wish your child to sleep at preschool)
- ☺ Tissues - (1 box for the year)

Fees

See next page for information about our preschool fees.

Absences

Please contact the school office as soon as you are able to inform us of your child's absence from preschool.

Book Club

We participate in Scholastic Book Club. Scholastic brochures will be distributed via your communication pocket.

Excursions, Special Visitors, & Visiting Shows

During the year a variety of excursions, special visitors and/or visiting shows are organised. These may be part of Tweed Heads South Public School events or just specifically for the preschool children. In the past we have had hip hop dance lessons, yoga and gymnastics lessons. Notes will be sent home in advance advising you of the details and costs of these experiences. When leaving the grounds, permission notes must be signed and parent helpers are always welcome.

Health Services

During the year we have visits from many health care professionals such as Vision (to check children's eyes), Healthy Harold (Healthy Lifestyle Program), The eye, ear and nose educator, dentists and many more. These services are free and you will receive more details about these programs as they occur during the year. The exception is the Healthy Harold program which incurs a small fee. We are able to access the school counsellor who visits the primary school during the school year as well as the school speech therapist. Please see the preschool or school office staff if you wish to organise an appointment.

Summary of Key Policies

ACCIDENT POLICY

Occasionally, children have accidents whilst at preschool. first aid and comfort will be given to the child. All accidents are logged in the accident folder and parents need to sign the form at the end of the day. In serious accidents the parent or carer will be contacted.

ASTHMA POLICY

On enrolment please notify staff if your child is asthmatic. Asthma Record Cards need to be completed and kept up to date in consultation with your child's doctor.

ALLERGY POLICY

On enrolment please notify staff if your child has any allergies. For more serious allergies, such as anaphylaxis, an individual health care plan will need to be kept up to date in consultation with your child's doctor.

HEALTHY EATING POLICY

Each day that children attend preschool, caregivers pack morning tea and lunch for their child. We aim to ensure that the children eat and drink properly while in our care, so as to realise their full physical and cognitive potential. As recommended by NSW Health, recess and lunch needs to be healthy food. We encourage families to pack at least one piece of fresh fruit with recess and ask that other food is packed in safe containers and encourages children to be independent (e.g. no glass / sharp tins, providing spoons if needed and providing food that does not require heating / re-heating due to the potential risk of food poisoning and scalding). Food containing high fat and high sugar content such as lollies, soft drinks, cordial, fruit juice poppers and chocolate bars are not permitted on a daily basis. **Water and plain milk are the only drinks to be provided at preschool.**

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

We require certain information be collected in accordance with regulations. We disclose personal and sensitive information to the staff for the specific purpose of administration and education of your child. All information given to us will be kept securely. At no time will the preschool disclose any information given to us without first requesting permission from the family.

EXCURSION POLICY

Classroom teachers are responsible for the thorough planning and organisation of all excursions. Permission notes must be signed before children can leave the school grounds. At least one staff member attending will hold a First Aid Certificate. The adult/child ratio for all excursions will be adequate to ensure the safety and well-being of all attending.

PRESCHOOL FEE POLICY

Fees are paid each term - there are four terms in a school

year. They need to be finalised by Week 9 of each term. Fees can be paid by EFTPOS, online, by cash or cheque at the front office. A receipt will be issued for your fees.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE POLICY

All parents will be notified of any infectious diseases at the preschool. Notices will be displayed outlining signs & symptoms. If a child shows signs & symptoms of any infectious disease the parent will be contacted. Exclusion periods prevail for most infectious diseases, please see exclusion guidelines in policy book.

MEDICATION POLICY

We will only administer prescribed medicines if written authority has been given by the parent or carer, by completing a 'authority to administer medication form'. Over the counter medication will not be administered by staff. Medication must be handed to a staff member for safe storage.

SICKNESS POLICY

If you think your child is too sick to participate in the busy preschool day please keep your child at home. If your child displays symptoms such as a high temperature, diarrhoea, wheezing, vomiting, rash or evidence of infectious disease the parent will be called and if the parent cannot be reached the nominated emergency contact will be called.

SUNSAFE POLICY

During Term 1 and 4, the outdoor play session is held in the morning to avoid the higher UV rays during the hottest part of the day. All children wear hats when playing outside, the preschool has some spare hats for those children who may forget their hat on the odd occasion. A 4 hour 30+ Sunscreen is kept at the front entrance of the preschool, parents are encouraged to put sunscreen on their child on arrival and indicate the time applied and sign the sign in register when completed. Children will be directed to put on sunscreen if playing outdoors more than four hours after first applying sunscreen or if it has not been applied in the morning. Staff will model / teach children how to apply their own sunscreen in order for them to take increasing responsibility for their own health, safety and wellbeing.

GREVANCE POLICY

If at any time you have any concerns or questions, please talk to preschool staff or the school principal. The DoE procedures outlined in the DoE Complaints Handling Policy' will be followed and all complaints will be dealt with in a timely manner.

To read all our localised procedures or policies in full, you can find them in our Policies and Procedure Book found in the foyer of the preschool.

All About Tweed Heads South Preschool

Our Philosophy

Welcome to Tweed Heads South Preschool. We are only one of five NSW Department of Education Preschools in the North Coast Region and cater for children in ***the one year prior to beginning Primary School***. We believe that preschool children are **capable, competent, skilled and creative** learners who are able to make choices and 'take charge' of their own learning. We believe that children learn best through play. Play provides opportunities for children to discover, create, explore, refine, improvise and imagine. The foundation of our educational philosophy here at Tweed Heads South Preschool, is striving to create an environment in which all children can **belong, be and become**. Please see a copy of our philosophy in full on 'page 3' of this handbook.

To Belong:

Relationships are crucial to a sense of belonging. Staff need to actively build positive relationships with children to create a sense of belonging to Tweed Heads South Preschool and recognise that children belong first to a family, a cultural group, a neighbourhood and a wider community.

To Be:

Being recognises the significance of the here and now in children's lives and the joys and complexities of being four years old! It is about the present, children knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging in meaningful and appropriate experiences for a preschooler and meeting challenges in everyday life. The early childhood years are not solely preparation for the future but also about the present and celebrating the here and now.

To Become:

Becoming reflects the process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow. It emphasises having new and different experiences, forming new ideas, constructing new knowledge, challenging thinking and learning to participate fully and actively in society.



Our Curriculum

Our philosophy and curriculum is based on the beliefs of the **Early Years Learning Framework for Australia**. We are also guided by the 'National Quality Framework' and the Department of Education Prior to School Class Procedures. While at Tweed Heads South Preschool, children will be working towards the following five **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***

We believe that children's play is holistic, complex and dynamic. Therefore, the five learning outcomes will not happen in isolation, but instead be interconnected and interrelated. Often all five learning outcomes will be present in children's learning experiences. When designing our preschool curriculum, staff plan for children's development in relation to the five learning outcomes but also strive to implement the key principles and practices outlined by the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia:

Principles	Practices
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secure and Respectful Relationships 2. Partnerships 3. High Expectations and Equity 4. Respect for Diversity 5. On-going learning and Reflective Practices 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Holistic Approaches 2. Responsiveness to Children 3. Learning Through Play 4. Intentional Teaching 5. Learning Environments 6. Cultural Competence 7. Continuity of Learning and Transitions 8. Assessment for Learning

Early Years Learning Framework for Australia - Belonging, Being & Becoming

The National Early Years Framework for children birth to five years has been developed to ensure that all children in a birth to five year old setting receive a quality education program. The framework is used by early childhood educators to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities and recognises children learn best through their play. For more information go to: www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood

Tweed Heads South Preschool Curriculum

"In the early childhood setting, curriculum means all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occurs in an environment designed to foster children's learning and development." (Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, Page 9)

Our daily curriculum includes learning in both the indoor and outdoor environment. There is a balance of child initiated and adult initiated experiences and children can choose to play independently, with a peer, with a small group and with or without an educator.

We also have teacher led language, math, music and fundamental movement skill group times and undertake learning projects throughout the year.

Intentional Teaching Focuses:

Children will be involved in a variety of play provisions that will develop their interest, understanding and skills in early literacy, mathematics, fine motor, gross motor, wellbeing concepts and creativity. Intentional teaching of these concepts will be based on the children's strengths and needs and planned for on a weekly cycle.

Projects:

During their year at Tweed Heads South Preschool, children will undertake learning projects. Projects encourage holistic development as they allow children to transfer and utilise the knowledge they have learned. When completing a project, a variety of different learning areas are integrated (such as literacy, math, science, technology, social skills, fine motor skills and many more are all used when undertaking a project 'Growing Sunflowers'). Projects also allow for continuity of learning as they are completed over a period of time and develop life-long skills such as problem solving, team work, peer teaching, persistence, reflection and higher order thinking.

Projects may last for a year, term, week or days depending on the scope and continuing interest of the project undertaken. Projects have the potential to extend children's learning, allow children to utilise their strengths, to introduce children to new and exciting concepts and to allow children to discover new interests.

Core Curriculum:

The core curriculum is planned for on a Term basis to allow children the adequate time to discover, repeat, revisit, add to, consolidate, master and extend their thinking. Children are also encouraged to request additional equipment to resource their learning, and staff may add to the core curriculum during the term in order to extend and challenge children's thinking.

The children will have access to a variety of **core curriculum areas** on a daily basis:

- Technology
- Puzzles
- Imaginative Play
- Dramatic Play
- Creative Arts (painting, drawing & collage)

- Manipulative (play dough, plasticine, clay)
- Class Library
- Listening Centre
- Block & Construction Area
- Literacy and Numeracy
- Science & Discovery
- Gross Motor Skills

Technology at Tweed Heads South Preschool

We aim for children to become confident and capable at using technology, therefore we integrate Technology throughout our curriculum. The children have access to an interactive whiteboard, computer, printer, and other technology such as a light table, a beebot and a ipads. Educators work with children individually or in small groups to use the computers to develop computer skills and knowledge. We use the different technology to engage our children, for children to document their learning, and to extend and challenge children's learning.



Curriculum Approaches

At Tweed Heads South Preschool, our curriculum is influenced by a variety of research and perspectives to early childhood education, especially the: Developmental/Emergent, Social Constructivist, Project, Gardner's Multiple Intelligence/Blooms Taxonomy and Reflective Practice approaches.

Developmental/Emergent approach is based on the idea that children learn through exploration and play and that development is holistic, with all developmental domains being interrelated and interwoven. This approach suggests that there are certain 'developmental milestones' or skills that are typical for certain age groups of children. By observing and listening, the educator can respond appropriately to emerging knowledge, skills, understandings and interests and both the educator and child work collaboratively to plan experiences that sustain, challenge and expand the children's development and understanding.

Social Constructivist approach is based on the educator and children engaging in shared learning where language is a key learning tool. Children construct knowledge through their interactions within a social environment. The educators' role is to guide and facilitate children's learning.

Projects emerge from children's and adult interests, things in the physical and social environment and the community. Projects develop understanding and learning around the topic and can include play provisions, excursions, visiting experts and research. Children and teachers will document the learning that takes place during a project.

Gardner's Multiple Intelligence/Blooms Taxonomy approach recognises that we all like to learn in different ways and that there are many different ways to be 'smart'. The educators roll is to ensure children are given opportunities to learn in many different ways, to facilitate learning with the use of questioning and to guide learning experiences so that children are encouraged to think about what they know, develop new understandings, apply their knowledge, analyse what is happening, to be given opportunities to create and to evaluate their learning.

Reflective Practice means that educators see themselves as life-long learners who reflect, question and challenge their practice in order to achieve high quality education and care for children and families. They engage in professional development, professional conversations and seek support from colleagues in order to keep up to date with current early childhood research about how children learn. The learning program is constantly evolving in response to educator reflections on their practice.

Role of the Educators

We believe that teachers make a difference! At Tweed Heads South Preschool we provide child – teacher ratios and staff qualifications that are better than the National Quality Standard. At all times in the preschool, the minimum ratio of students to educators is 1-10. The preschool is staffed by a full time Teacher and School Learning Support Officer which allows children to have consistency of care. The preschool teacher is a fully qualified Early Childhood/Primary School Teacher with a speciality in Early Childhood Education and the School Learning Support Officer is very experienced with a Certificate Three in Education & Support and a Certificate Three in Early Childhood Education.

We believe that interactions and conversation are central to children's learning. Teachers actively promote children's learning through worthwhile and challenging experiences and interactions that foster high-level thinking skills. Intentional teaching involves educators being deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their decisions and actions. Educators will use strategies such as modelling, demonstrating, open ended questioning, explaining, shared thinking and problem solving to extend the children's understanding and learning.

At Tweed Heads South Preschool, educators are responsive to, value and build on children's strengths, abilities, interests, skills and knowledge to ensure they are motivated and engaged in learning. Educators plan opportunities for intentional teaching and knowledge building.

Assessment for Learning

The educators are also responsible for documenting and monitoring children's learning. They will document play provisions, projects and shared learning experiences in their program and through children's learning journals, wall displays and observational notes. Through daily and weekly reflection on play provisions and observations, the educators will use this knowledge to plan future provisions.

Learning Journals - Your child's individual journal is an illustration of their involvement in the preschool curriculum over the year. The educators will collect photos, work samples and learning stories (written, DVD, recordings etc.) to document your child's emerging skills, strengths, interests, thoughts and learning related to the five learning outcomes

Photo Slide Shows - each week the educators document the children's involvement in the curriculum through a photo slide show. The slide show contains photos of the children's involvement in play provisions and learning experiences. While it is only a snap shot of what happens in the day, it is a tool we use to provoke conversation between you and your child or you and the educators.

Wall Documentation - while we are very proud of everything the children create, it is the process the children go through that is the most important. For example the questions asked, answers found, discussion had with their peers and educators while working on their creations is where the learning has occurred. Educators will document the process of the children's play provisions, creations and projects. The walls around your child's classroom will contain documentation of children's learning. When you have time, take a moment to read what's on the walls!

Preschool Programs

Across the week we run a variety of programs that are part of our educational curriculum:

Cultural Circle Time Program

Each week our Aboriginal Education Officer has a cultural circle time. He shares Aboriginal stories, teaches the children aboriginal dance, song and art and knowledge. The children are learning and appreciating Aboriginal culture and become curious about the world around them.



Reading Program

Our library and home reading programs are a great way to encourage reading at home. The first step to learning to read is to have lots of books read to you every day. Families will receive some information about the four levels of questioning after reading a text (provided by the school speech pathologist to encourage language development) an information sheet on ways / ideas to engage with a text using the multiple intelligence areas, guided reading activity cards and a A4 poster showing the development of speech sounds in children birth to six years old. These information sheets are for your reference and will be sent home with children as part of the library and home reader programs.



Library

The library is well resourced and has an extensive collection of fiction and non-fiction children's books. Each week the children will visit the library with their class. Each child is encouraged to bring a library bag and can borrow one book each week. During library time, children get the chance to browse a variety of books. A big school buddy reads to their preschool buddy and introduces library knowledge and literacy skills such as fiction and non-fiction, author and illustrator and how to care for books.

Literacy and Numeracy Library

Families may choose to utilise our preschool home literacy and numeracy resources. Each family will receive a home reader folder at the beginning of the year. The home reader box and numeracy stand is located in our classroom and you may change resources as often as you wish (just fill in the log book).

Environment Sustainability Program

We have sustainability areas that include a worm farm, compost bin and recycle bin that encourage good practice and conversation around re-using and re-cycling. We use the liquid worm castings produced by our worm farm to fertilise our vegetable gardens and fruit trees in our outdoor space. The worms also encourage exploration about lifecycles and the children enjoy caring for the worms and investigating their needs. The edible gardens are an important part of our preschool curriculum as we learn about planting, caring for and using fruit and vegetables to eat and cook with. Educators use these outdoor learning environments to help children develop an understanding for our key messages around sustainability - reduce, re-use and re-cycle.

Munch & Move Program

Munch and Move is a healthy lifestyle program for children from 3 to 5 years attending preschool in NSW. The program focuses on supporting the development of:

- Fundamental Movement skills through game-based activities
- Encouraging healthy eating
- Reduced time spent in small screen recreation (TV, computers, DVD's)

Across the terms the children are introduced to a variety of movement skills, taught how to do them and then practice through drills and games. The children really enjoy learning how to skip, balance, hop, dodge, throw, catch and hit. During the year we also have a specialist work with the children in the area of fundamental movement skill development including gymnastics and hot shots tennis. Each fortnight, tips and hints will be sent home with children relating to the areas of healthy eating, exercise and reducing time spent in small screen recreation.

Music Program

Each day the children engage in musical experiences. During music time, the children develop basic music components such as rhythm, pitch and tempo. The children participate in a variety of experiences including movement, dance, drama, singing and the playing of percussive instruments. The children have great fun learning new songs, games and dances. We also encourage parents and members of the community who can play a musical instrument to come along share their skill with the children.

Wellbeing Program

During the year we learn about many wellbeing concepts such as social skills, healthy eating, the importance of exercise, sun safety, health and hygiene (e.g. brushing our teeth, washing our hands) and important community safety messages such as reduce reuse recycle, water safety, road safety, safety in the home and about 000 emergency services. We have some special visitors from the community come and visit us through the year to help teach us important safety messages (e.g. Healthy Harold, dentist, NSW Fire Department etc.)

Parent Play Program

From 9am – 9:20am each morning we have 'Parent Play' time. Parents are able to engage in a range of activities with their child based on 'Triple P': Parent Reading, Puzzles and Preparation for Writing (Fine Motor Program that includes a play dough, pencil and scissor skill program designed by an occupational therapist who specialises in hand therapy).

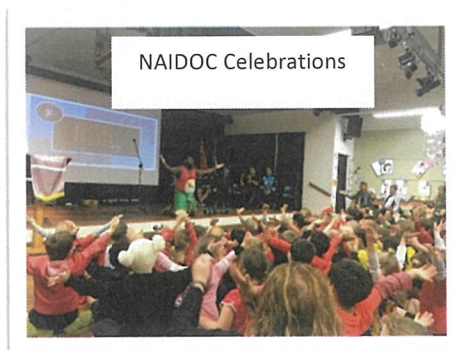
Transition to School Program

We are an integral part of our attached school – Tweed Heads South Public School. One of the major advantages of attending a Department of Education preschool is the comprehensive and on-going 'Transition to School Program' we are able to provide.

Each day, a teacher from K-6 spends half an hour in the preschool. Over the year, the children develop positive relationships with their future kindergarten and other teachers, helping to make the transition to school a positive experience.

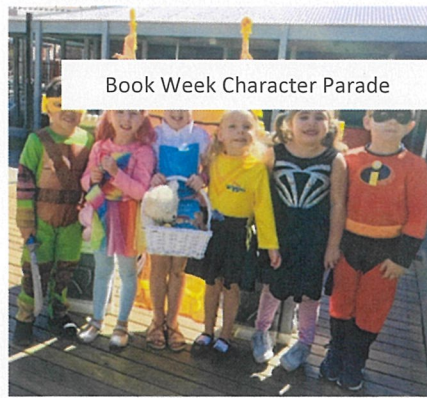
During the year we participate in all school special events and celebrations such as the Easter hat parade, ANZAC day ceremonies, cross country carnival, athletics carnival, early childhood wet and messy play day (swimming carnival), camp days, NAIDOC week celebrations, book week activities, visits to the school library, performing arts morning, invitations to visit classes around the school to engage in peer teaching / learning and many other events that occur during the year. Children have many opportunities to become familiar with the 'big school' environment, staff and students in preparation for starting school.

In Term 3 and 4, a formal Kindergarten Orientation Program takes place with fortnightly visits to classrooms to engage in specific transition to school activities as well as a parent information session.





The Tissue Princess



Book Week Character Parade



Peer Teaching with Primary School Students



School Camp Day



Athletics Carnival



Swimming Carnival
(Pre – Year 1)



Easter Hat Parade



Kindy Orientation Days



ANZAC Day Service



Cross Country Carnival

Learning Environments

At Tweed Heads South Preschool there is a large classroom and a very large outdoor play space. We aim to provide a stimulating learning environment that supports learning. Our learning environments are always evolving and never finished as we seek different resources and new ways of creating spaces that are inspirational, a source of wonder and delight, interesting, responsive to the interests and needs of the children, functional and aesthetically pleasing.

Learning environments are designed so children can make choices and direct their own learning. They are also planned to give children options between different types of play (active, quiet, creative, cooperative, dramatic manipulative), to cater for different learning styles (visual, audio and kinaesthetic) and also consider the multiple intelligences of children (Word Smart, Number Smart, Picture Smart, Body Smart, Nature Smart, Music Smart, People Smart and Myself Smart).



We see our children as **capable, competent, skilled and creative** learners. Therefore our environment gives them opportunities to:

- Make decisions
- Discover
- Be curious
- Ask and answer questions
- Work collaboratively with others

The experiences and resources in our environment reflect the current skills, interests, and emergent skills of the children.



Children have a choice of experiences from our core curriculum areas:

- Technology
- Puzzles
- Imaginative Play
- Dramatic Play
- Creative Arts (painting, drawing & collage)
- Manipulative (play dough, plasticine, clay)
- Class Library
- Listening Centre
- Block & Construction Area
- Literacy and Numeracy
- Science & Discovery
- Gross Motor Skills

The integration of technology into our curriculum means children become confident and capable at using technology to create, explore, experiment and document their learning.

We use computers, digital cameras, light tables and beebots to engage, extend and stimulate learning for the children.



We aim to create a play space that provides a variety of opportunities to experience nature.





Our garden is an extension of the indoor classroom, with lots of opportunities from our core curriculum areas, as well as encouraging exploration and interaction with our natural environment.

In our garden we delight in finding:

- Caterpillars
- Lady Beetles
- Ants
- Worms
- Fallen Leaves
- Flowers
- Many Visiting Birds



In our garden, the children are able to make connections with nature and can explore environmental sustainability through our:

- Worm Farm
- Recycling
- Composting
- Vegetable Garden
- Sunflower Garden
- Lavender Garden
- Strawberry Field
- Cherry Tomato Patch





We are lucky enough to have a large grassed area that has plenty of room for large motor skills such as climbing equipment, running, throwing and cooperative games such as soccer, cricket, T-Ball, Volley ball and other gross motor resources such as mini-trampolines/totem tennis/balance boards,



Future plans for our garden include:

- Cultural murals on blank sheds and walls
- Creation of an outdoor dining room
- An engaging and colourful outdoor area in the rear yard

And many more long term plans!

Time	Experience
9am	Day Begins
9:00am-9:15am	<p>Arrival and Parent Play Program (Transition to Preschool)– Parents are welcome to stay and engage in activities with their child focusing on: Monday and Tuesday - Fine Motor and Language ('Triple P' - Parent Reading, Puzzles and Preparation for Writing). Play provocations/experiences include RAP (Reading Aloud to Preschoolers with access to a Reading Activity Bucket and Questioning Guidelines by our school Speech Pathologist), Puzzle Centre, Game Table, Construction Activity and Fine Motor Activities, including: Play Dough Skills, Scissor Skills and Pencil Skills (Occupational Therapist Program – Building Strong Hands for Writing) and another fine motor activity (e.g. threading, sewing, using tongs, tap tap etc.). Wednesday – 'Hands on Math' Children choose play provisions that promote the development of early number, shape, spatial awareness, measurement and problem solving concepts</p>
9:15am – 9:25am	<p>Belonging Circle – Whole group time that focuses on saying hello to our friends, sharing our personal stories and the shared planning / co-construction of our learning at preschool for the day</p>
9:25am – 11:15am	<p>Outdoor Child Centred Play – Children have choice of our outdoor core curriculum activities that promote the development of gross motor skills. Projects may occur at this time also. Sunscreen applied and hats on heads before going outside.</p>
11:15am – 11:30am	<p>Project Yarn - Children will undertake a project/investigation. During the project yarn, children will engage in shared thinking and learning related to their chosen project with their peers and educators. We will engage in play provisions that will help us find answers to our questions as well as discuss and record the learning that has taken place.</p>
11:30am – 11:50am	Lunch – Toilet, Wash hands, eating time.
11:50am – 1:15pm	<p>Indoor Child Centred Play – Children have choice of our range of indoor core curriculum activities that have been designed to meet their individual strengths, needs and learning styles and to foster their growth in a range of developmental areas. Projects may also occur during this time.</p>
1:15pm – 1:30pm	<p>Mat Time: Language Session – Walking Talking Texts Whole group intentional teaching activity that uses a focus book to introduce and facilitate the development of early language, literacy, literature, math, wellbeing/social, creative arts and science concepts. Topics are based on children's emerging interests, skills and strengths in literacy and math or our visual arts and wellbeing program</p>
1:30pm – 2:00pm	<p>Meet and Eat with my Big School Teacher Recess – Toilet, wash hands, eating time. Transition to quiet reading when finished. Transition to Big School Time – A teacher from the 'big school' builds relationships with the children while engaging them in conversation and learning experiences</p>
2:00pm – 2:45pm	<p>Sleep / Rest / Quiet Time The teacher engages children in a restful/wind down experience. The children then choose one of the following options: Option 1: Sleep Time – Children may choose to sleep if feeling tired or as requested by parents in the 'quiet room'. They will help to make their beds and lie down on their beds for the duration of the 45 minute rest period (or longer if they choose / fall asleep). Children may choose to sleep or just have some quiet time to rest and reflect on the day. Option 2: Indoor / Outdoor Quiet Activities– Children can choose to engage in the many quiet play experiences offered both indoors (quiet table-top space) and in our outdoor garden area.</p>
2:45pm – 3pm	<p>Family Music and Movement Time – If you can, join us for experiences involving singing, dancing, music games and concepts, musical instruments and moving to music using props such as bean bags, scarves, streamers, puppets, hoops etc. Experiences are related to texts we are exploring, projects we are undertaking, fitness/exercise or musical concepts we are investigating.</p>
3pm	Day Concludes
VARIATIONS TO ROUTINE	<p>Library – I walk to the 'Big School' library with my teachers and borrow a special book from the Library to take home to my family. Reading at Preschool with our Big School Buddies – My 'Year 5/6 Buddy' class walks to preschool. Next year I will have the same buddy when I start kindergarten at 'big school'. My buddy's job is to read my chosen books aloud to me (RAP program – <i>Reading Aloud to Preschoolers</i>) and will talk to me about an important library / reading skill. Munch and Move Time – Our school sport teacher will work with the children. Play experiences offered will promote the development of essential gross motor skills such as hand eye coordination, eye foot coordination, balance, running, leaping, jumping, galloping, crossing the mid-line etc.</p>

VISION

Professionals who adhere to this Code of Ethics act in the best interests of all children and work collectively to ensure that every child is thriving and learning.

PREAMBLE

Early Childhood Australia recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been nurturing and teaching children on this land for thousands of years. The Code of Ethics acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional ways of being and caring for children.

This Code of Ethics is informed by the principles in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1991) and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). A Code of Ethics is an aspirational framework for reflection about the ethical responsibilities of childhood professionals who work with, or on behalf, of children and their families. In this Code of Ethics the protection and wellbeing of children is paramount and therefore speaking out or taking action in the presence of unethical practice is an essential professional responsibility.

Being ethical involves thinking about everyday actions and decision making, either individually or collectively, and responding with respect to all concerned. The Code of Ethics recognises that childhood professionals are in a unique position of trust and influence in their relationships with children, families, colleagues and the community, therefore professional accountability is vital.

CORE PRINCIPLES

The core principles in this Code of Ethics are based on the fundamental and prized values of the profession. They act to guide decision making in relation to ethical responsibilities. These core principles require a commitment to respect and maintain the rights and dignity of children, families, colleagues and communities.

- Each child has unique interests and strengths and the capacity to contribute to their communities.
- Children are citizens from birth with civil, cultural, linguistic, social and economic rights.
- Effective learning and teaching is characterised by professional decisions that draw on specialised knowledge and multiple perspectives.
- Partnerships with families and communities support shared responsibility for children's learning, development and wellbeing.
- Democratic, fair and inclusive practices promote equity and a strong sense of belonging.
- Respectful, responsive and reciprocal relationships are central to children's education and care.
- Play and leisure are essential for children's learning, development and wellbeing.
- Research, inquiry and practice-based evidence inform quality education and care.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The first Code of Ethics for the Australian early childhood profession was developed in 1988; it was widely cited and used for 19 years. The first review of the Code of Ethics began in 2003 with the second version launched in 2007. The second review of the Code of Ethics began in 2014 with the third (current) version approved by the ECA National Board in February 2016.

ECA is grateful to everyone who has contributed to the development and ongoing review of the Code of Ethics including those who have participated in consultation surveys, forums and workshops over the years as well as those who have provided advice and oversight through their service on reference and advisory groups. We would particularly like to acknowledge those engaged in writing each version of the Code.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS IN ECA'S CODE OF ETHICS

A CODE OF ETHICS—defines the core aspirational values of the profession and provides guidance for professional decision making especially when there are conflicting obligations or responsibilities.

CORE PRINCIPLES—fundamental and prized values of the profession.

FAMILIES—the people who have significant care responsibilities for and/or kinship relationships with a child.

CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL—a person who works with or on behalf of children and families in education and care settings.

COMMUNITIES—a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common.

COLLEAGUES—includes employers and those with whom you work directly or more broadly.

STUDENT—a person undertaking study at a secondary or tertiary institution.



Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

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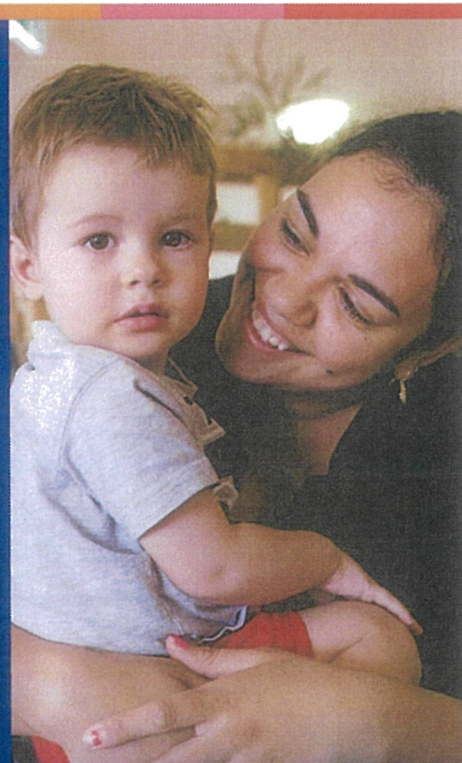
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Code of Ethics



Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children



IN RELATION TO CHILDREN, I WILL:

- act in the best interests of all children
- create and maintain safe, healthy, inclusive environments that support children's agency and enhance their learning
- provide a meaningful curriculum to enrich children's learning, balancing child and educator initiated experiences
- understand and be able to explain to others how play and leisure enhance children's learning, development and wellbeing
- ensure childhood is a time for being in the here and now and not solely about preparation for the future
- collaborate with children as global citizens in learning about our shared responsibilities to the environment and humanity
- value the relationship between children and their families and enhance these relationships through my practice
- ensure that children are not discriminated against on the basis of gender, sexuality, age, ability, economic status, family structure, lifestyle, ethnicity, religion, language, culture, or national origin
- negotiate children's participation in research, by taking into account their safety, privacy, levels of fatigue and interest
- respect children as capable learners by including their perspectives in teaching, learning and assessment
- safeguard the security of information and documentation about children, particularly when shared on digital platforms.



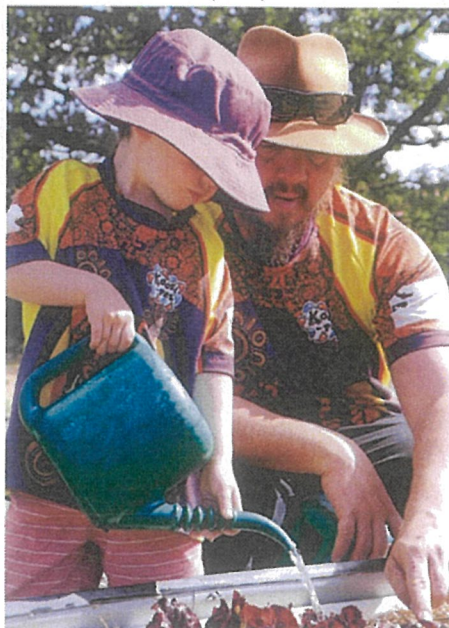
IN RELATION TO THE PROFESSION, I WILL:

- base my work on research, theories, content knowledge, practice evidence and my understanding of the children and families with whom I work
- take responsibility for articulating my professional values, knowledge and practice and the positive contribution our profession makes to society
- engage in critical reflection, ongoing professional learning and support research that builds my knowledge and that of the profession
- work within the scope of my professional role and avoid misrepresentation of my professional competence and qualifications
- encourage qualities and practices of ethical leadership within the profession
- model quality practice and provide constructive feedback and assessment for students as aspiring professionals
- mentor new graduates by supporting their induction into the profession
- advocate for my profession and the provision of quality education and care.



IN RELATION TO COLLEAGUES, I WILL:

- encourage others to adopt and act in accordance with this Code, and take action in the presence of unethical behaviours
- build a spirit of collegiality and professionalism through collaborative relationships based on trust, respect and honesty
- acknowledge and support the diverse strengths and experiences of colleagues in order to build shared professional knowledge, understanding and skills
- use constructive processes to address differences of opinion in order to negotiate shared perspectives and actions
- participate in a 'lively culture of professional inquiry' to support continuous improvement
- implement strategies that support and mentor colleagues to make positive contributions to the profession
- maintain ethical relationships in my online interactions.



IN RELATION TO FAMILIES, I WILL:

- support families as children's first and most important teacher and respect their right to make decisions about their children
- listen to and learn with families and engage in shared decision making, planning and assessment practices in relation to children's learning, development and wellbeing
- develop respectful relationships based on open communication with the aim of encouraging families' engagement and to build a strong sense of belonging
- learn about, respect and respond to the uniqueness of each family, their circumstances, culture, family structure, customs, language, beliefs and kinship systems
- respect families' right to privacy and maintain confidentiality.



IN RELATION TO COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY, I WILL:

- learn about local community contexts and aspirations in order to create responsive programs to enhance children's learning, development and wellbeing
- collaborate with people, services and agencies to develop shared understandings and actions that support children and families
- use research and practice-based evidence to advocate for a society where all children have access to quality education and care
- promote the value of children's contribution as citizens to the development of strong communities
- work to promote increased appreciation of the importance of childhood including how children learn and develop, in order to inform programs and systems of assessment that benefit children
- advocate for the development and implementation of laws and policies that promote the rights and best interests of children and families.



BELONGING, BEING & BECOMING

The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia

Information for families



EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK

A new, national early learning framework for children from birth to five years



“I want my child to have lots of opportunities for creative play”



WHAT IS THIS NEW LEARNING FRAMEWORK ABOUT?

We have developed the Early Years Learning Framework to ensure your child receives quality education programs in their early childhood setting. This is a vital time for them to learn and develop.

The Framework's vision is for all children to experience play-based learning that is engaging and builds success for life.

It is a guide for early childhood educators who work with children from birth to five years. They will use the Framework in partnership with families, children's first and most influential educators, to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities, and recognise that children learn through their play.

The Early Years Learning Framework describes childhood as a time of *belonging*, *being* and *becoming*.

- **Belonging** is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they *belong* because of the relationships they have with their family, community, culture and place.
- **Being** is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just 'be'—time to play, try new things and have fun.
- **Becoming** is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.

PLAY IS LEARNING

Play is very important for children. Through play babies and young children explore and learn to understand the world around them as they come to communicate, discover, imagine and create.

When children play they are showing what they have learned and what they are trying to understand. This is why play is one of the foundations of the Early Years Learning Framework.

By using this Framework educators will guide your child's play by carefully designing learning activities and stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments.

RELATIONSHIPS ARE KEY

It is well known that children learn best when they have secure relationships with caring adults. When children from a very early age develop trusting relationships they feel more confident and able to explore and learn.

In early childhood settings, when children feel emotionally secure they learn through play to develop the skills and understandings they need to interact positively with others and gradually learn to take responsibility.

“The learning outcomes are positive and help me to think about how my child is progressing”



HOW WILL IT WORK? WATCHING YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS

Educators will use this new Framework in a range of early childhood settings, including long day care, preschools and family day care to ensure that your child receives a high quality experience. It has been created and trialled by experienced early childhood educators, academics, parents and carers.

The Framework focuses on your child's learning. Educators will work with you in order to get to know your child well. They will create a learning program that builds on your child's interests and abilities, and keep you in touch with your child's progress.

Through the Framework's five learning goals educators will assist your child to develop:

- a strong sense of their identity
- connections with their world
- a strong sense of wellbeing
- confidence and involvement in their learning; and
- effective communication skills.

“The Framework helps me to understand how skilled the staff at my centre are and what a great support they are to me and my family”

Using the Early Years Learning Framework educators will observe your child's learning so they can build on it and plan the next steps. They will do this by listening, watching and talking to your child.

They will keep in touch with you regularly to discuss your child's progress. They may use photos or keep a folder of your child's work to show what your child is learning, how they are developing and what particular learning interests them.

Before your child starts school educators will prepare information about your child's learning and development to share with their new teacher. This will help ensure that your child's new school is well prepared to continue your child's learning.

WORKING TOGETHER

By working together parents and educators can enhance a child's learning and wellbeing.

As the most important person in your child's life you can make a difference by talking regularly with your child's early childhood educator and asking about their learning.

Information you provide allows educators to link your child's experiences at home with the time they spend together in the early childhood setting.

FIND OUT MORE

This booklet is an introduction to the Early Years Learning Framework.

To find out more or to access translations visit

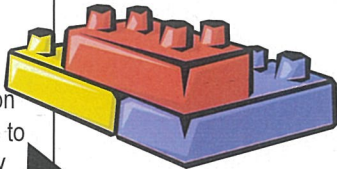
www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood or ask your child's early childhood educator.

Produced by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments.

CONSTRUCTION TOYS

When your child is engaging in construction play they are:

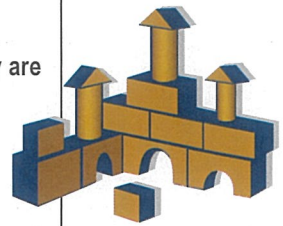
- Problem solving
- Experimenting
- Using fine motor skills
- Using hand-eye coordination
- All of these skills contribute to helping your child with early writing and math development



BLOCKS

When children are playing with blocks they are using these skills:

- FINE MOTOR – manipulation of blocks
- SCIENCE – balancing and modelling
- CREATIVE – planning and imagination
- SOCIAL – cooperation, discussion and communication
- COGNITIVE – imaginative play, problem solving
- MATH – dimensions, shapes, space, ratios



PAINTING

When children are painting they are:

- COLOURS
 - Recognising colours, describing colours, learning colour combinations
- SPACIAL AWARENESS
 - Learning about body parts and movements (e.g. forwards, backwards)
- LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT
 - Learning about maths
 - Learning through touch
- HANDWRITING
 - Expressing their feelings
 - Experimenting with words
 - Expanding their vocabulary
 - Communicating their thoughts and ideas through a creative process
- Using finger muscles
 - Learning about shapes and letters
 - Experimenting with movement

Play is Children's Work and helps construct their "Tree of Knowledge"



WATER PLAY

When your child is playing with water they are learning to:

- Fill / pour
- Estimate
- Make predictions
- Coordinate
- Think and investigate
- Experiment with floating and sinking
- Work with early math concepts (size, capacity, full, empty, order, compare and problem solve).



COOKING

When children are cooking they are learning:

- Fine motor skills
- Measurement, weight and time
- Counting skills
- To read and write recipes
- To follow instructions
- Social skills such as turn taking
- Change through heating and cooling
- About different foods
- About various cooking techniques
- Food safety
- Hygiene



EATING TOGETHER

When children are eating together at school, they are learning:

- Manners
- Personal Hygiene
- Personal Responsibility
- Healthy Eating
- Social Conventions



CUTTING AND PASTING

When children are cutting and pasting they are:

- Developing thinking skills
- Developing pre-writing skills
- Developing pre-reading skills
- Developing eye-hand co-ordination
- Developing fine motor skills
- Developing social skills
- Developing spatial awareness skills
- Developing speaking, listening and understanding skills



PUZZLES

When children interact with puzzles they are:

- Predicting
- Planning
- Problem solving
- Thinking
- Using visual / spatial intelligence
- Using logical / mathematical intelligence
- Developing Math Skills (Estimating, Pattern, Size, Shape)
- Developing pre-reading skills
- Developing pre-writing skills



OUTDOOR GAMES

When we play outdoor games we are learning how to:

- Communicate
- Think and plan ahead
- Be responsible
- Play fair
- Practice and develop our gross motor skills

We need these skills to help us be successful during our school years and beyond.



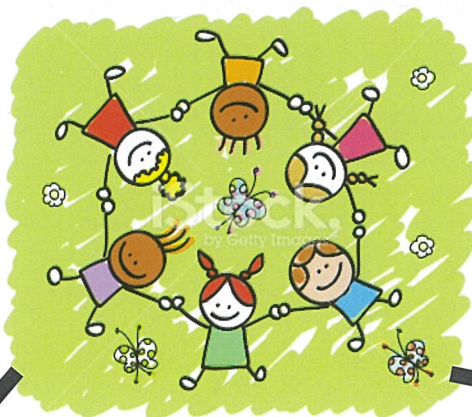
RHYMES AND FINGER PLAY

When engaging in finger play and rhymes, children are:

- Communicating
- Learning to read and write
- Developing fine motor control, which is the foundation for handwriting skills
- Developing speaking and listening skills
- Expanding social skills that help them build peer relationships



Playing to learn and Learning to Play



PLAY DOUGH

Playing with play dough develops:

- Social skills
- Hand-eye and body coordination
- Creativity
- Fine motor skills
- Language skills when talking about our creations
- Modelling skills
- Planning and spatial awareness skills
- Creativity

HOME CORNER

When children are playing in the home corner they are:

- Learning to interact and cooperate with others and form friendships
- Building off other children's language and knowledge of the world
- Using language for different purposes
- Developing their language in all areas (children talk, listen, read, write and act during dramatic play)
- Developing their imagination and creative thinking through imaginative play
- Expressing and releasing their feelings
- Imitating adults and other roles to develop an awareness of others and their feelings
- Developing their fine and gross motor skills through movement and use of materials provided in the home corner
- Learning mathematical concepts through set-ups such as "The post office" and "The Supermarket"



REFLECTING

When we listen to our children share about their Preschool day, we are:

- Helping them to develop the oral language skills that are so important for beginning readers and writers
 - Valuing their efforts as learners
 - Building their self-confidence as members of a learning community
- Making time to listen makes a difference*



IN THE SAND

Your child is developing:



MATHEMATICAL AWARENESS

- Spatial – when they choose their work area
- Volume and Capacity – when they fill equipment
- Problem Solving – when they overcome building problems

PERSONAL AWARENESS

- Conflict resolution – when they share space and equipment
- Relationship building – When they communicate and work together with their friends

LITERACY AWARENESS

- Writing skills – when they draw in the sand and use fine motor skills to manipulate their tools
- Reading skills – when they recognise patterns
- Listening and speaking skills – when they discuss their constructions

Ten Tips for Parents of Children Starting Preschool

1. Visit the preschool to become familiar with the setting

The more familiar your child is with the preschool staff and the environment, the easier it will be for your child to settle into the preschool. If possible, make a time to visit preschool during school hours. Parents/carers can observe the preschool in operation and have the opportunity to meet the staff, ask questions and discuss any concerns. Your child will have an opportunity to mix with other children, meet the preschool staff, and become familiar with the environment while feeling secure that someone familiar is close by.

2. Be well informed

Parents/carers need to be prepared for preschool, too. Talk to the principal and the preschool teacher to find out as much information as you can about your child attending preschool. If you know about the new routines and experiences your child will encounter, you will be ready to answer any questions they might have, such as: How will I get there? How long will I be there? How many days do I have to go? What if I want to go to the toilet? What room will I be in and what am I going to do there? Will I get to play?

The first day of preschool can be an anxious experience for both you and your child. Preparing your child for preschool by answering all their questions honestly and in as much detail as they can understand can curb potential anxieties.

3. Find out what your child will need to bring to preschool

Talk to your principal or preschool teacher to find out the preschool's requirements regarding lunchboxes, drink containers and other necessary personal items.

4. Encourage independence

Children who are able to care for themselves and their belongings will feel more confident at preschool. Parents/carers can encourage children to practise personal hygiene, such as wiping their nose and toileting independently. Help your child to feel confident and independent by dressing them in clothing which is simple enough for them to manage with little adult help. Children who assist in packing their bag at home each morning will readily identify their own belongings during the day.

5. Label equipment and clothing

Children's belongings may look very similar to their classmates'. Labelling your child's equipment and clothing with their name will help prevent loss, confusion and possible upset for your child.

6. Pack a change of clothes for preschool

Accidents do happen. There may be a toilet mishap, wet sleeves from hand washing, or mess from craft or outdoor experiences. When accidents occur children prefer to change into their own clothes, rather than "school clothes". Pack a spare set of clothes, labelled with your child's name, in your child's bag.

7. Share information with the preschool teacher

Children learn best when parents/carers and teachers share together in a partnership. Your child's preschool teacher has many students to get to know. Because you know your child best, you can help the teacher understand your child by sharing information, concerns and insights. Regular communication between parents/carers and teachers bridges the gap between home and preschool and provides opportunities to exchange information which support children's learning.

8. Keep the preschool teacher informed of changes

Changes to your child's family situation can impact on their emotional and academic well-being. If you keep your child's teacher informed of any changed circumstances the child can be supported if necessary. Examples of changes include the birth of a sibling; moving house; divorce or separation or the death or hospitalization of a loved one. It is also important to notify the school of changes to contact details, such as address and emergency telephone numbers.

9. Participate in the preschool and the school

Parents/carers are welcome to participate in the preschool by attending special activities and by volunteering to help in the classroom. This may assist to reassure your child that you are interested in them and their preschool.

10. Provide information about your child's immunisation status

Your child will be coming into contact with other children and infections can spread quickly.

Immunisation records will be requested for preschool enrolment. Under the Public Health (Amendment) Act 1992, children who have not been immunised may be sent home during an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease.

First Day at Preschool

The first day of preschool can be an exciting, yet anxious time for you and your child. There are a number of things that you can do to smooth your child's transition from home to preschool.

Familiarise your child with the preschool

This will help ease first-day anxieties. If possible, arrange to visit the preschool prior to the first day, introduce your child to the teacher and spend some time in the preschool.

Be positive

Parents/carers play an important role in shaping your child's attitude toward preschool. A balance of enthusiasm and matter-of-fact acceptance is a good approach. Honestly discuss with your child about the friends they will meet and the activities they will be able to participate in.

Reassure your child

Many children feel a little uncertain about starting preschool. Answer your child's questions honestly. Make sure your child knows you will be there to pick them up at the end of the session and ensure they know what to do if they feel worried about anything during the day. Help them to readily identify their own belongings and to be independent with personal hygiene skills such as toileting. If you are confident when discussing preschool with your child, they will feel reassured that everything is all right.

Separation Anxiety

Separating from family and saying goodbye can be difficult for some children. If your child cries or is upset when you leave them, remember, this is a normal response. You are welcome to call the preschool to see how they have settled. Although you might feel anxious yourself, do not leave without saying good-bye.

