

PARENT HANDBOOK



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At Forbes Preschool Kindergarten we believe:

All practices at Forbes Preschool are guided by the Principles of the National Quality Framework (Educational Program and Practice, Children's Health and Safety, Physical Environment, Staffing Arrangements, Relationships with children, Collaborative Partnerships with Families, and Leadership and Service Management)

- For children Preschool is about fun, love, laughter, friends, learning, exploring, excitement, creating and being nurtured by a dedicated team of professionals. What a beautiful way to start a life of independent education
- For parents and families Preschool is a comfortable place that they can visit anytime and feel a sense of belonging and pride
- As educators we are proud of ourselves and our Preschool, all staff are valued as members of the Preschool team and show pride in their role. All staff are warm and welcoming to all visitors and members of the Preschool
- For the community Preschool reflects, accepts and engages with people and places of our town. The Preschool has strong partnerships with other local services and is passionate about meeting individual family needs.
- Preschool welcomes everyone, for their individuality, for their ideas and contributions. Safe, secure and trusting relationships are developed amongst all who are involved at Forbes preschool. Relationships are always at the forefront of what we do.
- The staff employed at Forbes preschool are from a range of backgrounds, ages and have a range of talents/interests. This is also reflected amongst the families and visitors who use the preschool.
- Our program is embedded into everything we do, our conversations, interactions, daily practices, written and spoken, with adults and children alike.
- In the environments as a third teacher, a challenging environment that allows children to learn through hands on play. An environment that is natural and a reflection of the lives of the Preschool community.
- Offering a range of resources that includes traditional play experiences, symbolic, conventional and sensory play experiences. Providing long periods of uninterrupted play allows children to become engaged and develop skills whilst at play.
- In allowing the children to have a flexible routine, teaching skills and supporting development at these times. Encouraging children's independence and making choices at these times is also part of the preschool lifestyle.
- In providing a high staff:child ratio that allows for lots of spontaneous play and intentional teaching moments.
- In providing large blocks of uninterrupted play time, to assist in developing skills, confidence, sharing and resilience in our children.
- As educators we believe in continual professional development and keeping up to date on all current research. Our learning is evolving all the time through staff reflection, training and reading.
- That play is a child's occupation, it is what they do!

Play is Learning

Play is very important for children. Through play 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. (EYLF - Early Years learning Framework)

This is why play is the foundation of our program.

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

- A Strong sense of identity
- Connections with their world
- A strong sense of wellbeing
- Confidence and involvement in their learning; and
- Effective communication skills

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

The Quality of Education & Care provided by Forbes Preschool

As a parent, you instinctively know what you want for your child. You know whether they are happy or sad to come to preschool in the morning. You know whether they are learning or not. You know whether the staff at the preschool care for them. You know whether they are safe.

The National Quality Standard (NQS) defines what makes really good education and care.

The preschool was assessed under the National Quality Standards that include:

- Educational program and practice (M)
- Children's health and safety (M)
- Physical environment (E)
- Staffing arrangements (M)
- Relationships with the children (M)
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities (E)
- Leadership and service management (M)

The preschool is rated **MEETING** overall.

Forbes Preschool continues to improve and reflect on current practices. We have a Quality Improvement Plan that is implemented and reviewed regularly. It is available upon request and located with the program.

For more information go to www.acecqa.gov.au or talk to the Director of the Preschool.

Staffing

The Staff at Forbes Preschool include:

The Director

Amy Shine has worked in the Early Childhood industry for many years as a Director, Tafe Educator and mentor for other Directors in partnership with Community Childcare and Contact Inc.

Amy is passionate about the power of play and educating others in regards to the importance of the early years.

Amy works full time.

The Administration Officer

Lisa Jarick is committed to ensuring the preschool maintains up to date administrative procedures and she is looking forward to meeting new families. Lisa makes everyone feel welcome at preschool!

Lisa works Mondays, alternate Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

The Educators

Carmen Stephens is also a qualified teacher. Carmen inspires everyone with her inspiring stories and teaching resources. Carmen works full time and is the educational leader.

Carly Keane holds a Bachelor of Teaching (Early Childhood Education). She is committed to ensuring a high quality program is available to all children attending preschool.

Shea King has a Diploma in Children's services. Shea is dedicated to ensuring that all children develop literacy and numeracy skills appropriate to their age. She is the facilitator of the Girinya (play) Program.

M'Kenzie Best began at the preschool in 2013 and has a Diploma in children's services. She has lead the preschool in the Eisteddfod, and continues to develop as a quality educator in the education industry.

Mandy Hodge works full time and has a Diploma in Children's Services. She enjoys sharing her cooking abilities with both the staff and children. Mandy keeps everyone organized!

Rebecca Cheney has a Diploma in children's services. Beck enjoys finding healthy alternatives to cook with the children, allowing them to experience a variety of

foods. Her other passion is being outdoors teaching the children about sustainability and caring for our animals.

Sally Male has completed her Diploma in Children's Services. Sally is committed to ensuring each child's dignity and the rights of each child are maintained at all times.

Shirley Duke is the Aboriginal Educator, she is dedicated to ensuring all families develop a sense of belonging within the preschool community.

Emma Little has her Certificate III in children's services. She is looking forward to getting to know the children individually, their families and meeting their individual needs at preschool. Emma develops a sense of 'belonging' in families who are at preschool.

Codie Smith is studying her Diploma in Children's Services. Codie has a great rapport with the children and is often seen getting down to their level throughout the day to play. She fosters the Aboriginal culture in her daily practices.

Simone Patten is also studying her Diploma in Children's Services. Simone always has a smile on her face, and sees each child as an individual learner. Simone's positivity is infectious!

Caitlin Lewis has a Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care. She is very creative designing environments to further develop children's interests.

Jackie Wright is adored by many children. She is passionate about holistic learning through play and movement. She has a Certificate III in children's services.

Grace Quigley is a trainee completing her Diploma. Grace has brought her love of dancing to the preschool.

Emily Pavey is a Speech Therapist who runs a speech and language program at the preschool. Emily works closely with the preschool staff ensuring we are meeting children's speech needs.

Hours of Operation

Forbes Preschool provides early childhood education for children aged 3-5 years and operates Monday - Friday, from 8.00am - 3.30pm

Management Committee

The Forbes Preschool Management Committee is a voluntary committee made up of parents of the Preschool and community representatives. These positions are elected at the Annual General Meeting which is held in March each year. All parents are invited and encouraged to take an active role in the running of the Preschool.

The Management Committee is made up of 7 Directors, with a maximum of two community representatives.

Policies

The Preschool have a number of policies in place to help make parents and staff aware of how the Preschool is run. These policies include areas such as nutrition, hygiene, complaints, excursions, programming etc.

If you would like to read these policies, or would like to know more about them, a copy is available for you to borrow. Please ask a staff member if you would like to borrow a copy.

Preschool is about...

- Creativity
- Exploration and discovery
- Collaboration and social interaction
- Family and community
- Readiness for school
- Problem-solving and independence
- Literacy and numeracy
- Learning through play
- Qualified staff

Fees and Subsidies

Health care card/pension card holders, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attending for 2 days

\$5 per week (i.e. \$2.50 per day)

Children attending 2 days per week the year prior to school (4 on or before the 31st July)

\$10 per week (i.e. \$5 per day)

Culturally and Linguistically diverse attending 2 days

\$5 per week (i.e. \$2.50 per day)

Children attending 1 day per week

\$25.00

3 year old

\$25.00

The fees for preschool are reviewed annually and are set in accordance with the Service agreement and the Start Strong Funding model.

If you are eligible for a subsidy proof of income must be provided.

All accounts and fees are distributed during the beginning of the term and are due for payment by the end of week five (5). Parents may elect to pay fees weekly or fortnightly instalments and need to pay a week/fortnight in advance at all times. Families also have the option to pay their fees by the term.

If your child/children withdraw from Pre-school before the end of the school term, two weeks notice is required or two weeks of fees will be charged in lieu.

A co-operative fee of **\$10.00** per family is payable on enrolment of your first child.

Upon enrolment a fee of **\$20** will be charged.

The Program

A play based program allows children to develop their skills through their interests. A variety of experiences are provided that meet the child's interest while developing their skills. Children are offered a variety of choices to build their independence. A balance of traditional play experiences, symbolic, conventional and sensory play materials are included in our daily program.

At the end of each term children will receive a summary of learning and experiences they have been involved in. At the end of your child's time at preschool you will receive a comprehensive file of pictures taken during preschool. Checklists and observations throughout the term assist in developing the preschool program that is displayed in the hallway.

The staff would appreciate any suggestions that you have regarding experiences or topics that you would like the staff to explore with your child in general.

Please feel free to come and talk with us anytime regarding your child's development and interests. Surveys will be sent home throughout the year to assist the staff in reflecting on the program and individual needs.

Procedures for Arrival and Departure

When children arrive at the Preschool their parent or carer is to sign the attendance register. The child's lunch box and drink bottle is to be packed into the fridge provided at the front doors. The children's bag and belonging's should be placed in the lockers provided.

The parent/carer is to ensure that a member of staff is aware that the child has arrived. In most cases we find that children settle in more easily if the parents spend a short period settling their child and saying a confident, quick farewell.

If your child is upset about separating from you, it is often made worse if you stay longer. **Always say good bye** to your child before leaving as sneaking away often leads to children becoming insecure.

When collecting your child remember to sign them out on the attendance sheet, THANKS!

Parent Involvement

Parents and carers are welcome to join in activities with their child upon arrival at Preschool. Parents are also encouraged to make suggestions verbally or through surveys etc.

A newsletter is sent home to keep you informed about what is happening at Preschool and we encourage you to ask questions whenever anything is unclear.

You are free to gain access to your child at any time. We have an open door policy and you and your family are welcome to call in anytime throughout your child's day at Preschool.

Medical Emergency Procedures

In the event of a medical emergency through either illness or accident the staff will:

1. Perform first aid or stabilize the child
2. Call for an ambulance
(Telephone parents, if they are unavailable call the emergency contact)
3. A staff member with a first aid certificate will stay with the child and closely monitor their condition until the ambulance or parents arrive

FORBES PRESCHOOL IS A NUT FREE ZONE



There is consistent international evidence that children who have participated in high-quality preschool education programs gain significant long term benefits from what has been termed the 'preschool advantage'.

These include:

- Higher levels of completed education and subsequent employment;
- Greater stability in relationships and lower rates of mental illness (Farrer, et al, 2007)

WHAT TO BRING TO PRE-SCHOOL

Packed lunch:

We encourage children to eat a healthy lunch; some suggestions would be a sandwich with a healthy filling, a piece of fruit, yoghurt, slice of cheese etc. We ask that parents do not send foods that are low in nutrition such as chocolates, chips, roll ups and foods high in sugar.

A Drink Bottle:

Filled with water!!

Water will also be available for children throughout the day.

Morning Tea:

Children have their morning tea from their lunch boxes. They choose themselves when to have morning tea, usually between 10-11am. We strongly encourage fruit, yoghurt, cheese etc rather than chips and chocolates etc.

A Sun Hat:

Particularly during term 1 and 4, during these times we have a strict NO HAT NO PLAY outside policy. We are all aware of the importance of slip, slop, slap and need to be consistent when we convey this important message to our children.

Please apply sunscreen to your child prior to coming to Preschool; we will then re apply throughout the day as sunscreen is available at the Preschool.

Change of Clothes

As the children enjoy water play in the summer months we strongly recommend a change of clothes be kept in their bags. This is also recommended as accidents may happen anytime!

Rest Sheet

A small cost sheet is ideal for the stretcher beds provided.

All children have the option of a rest.

This is a time to re-energise and be calm, listening to stories and music.