

# Rainbow Playhouse Preschool Family Handbook



Where learning is fun...

**Tahmoor Community Centre**

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# ABOUT US

## Welcome

Welcome to Rainbow Playhouse Preschool where we strive to provide a fun and engaging preschool program for children and families in a friendly, welcoming environment.

This handbook explains our key policies and practices and should be kept for future reference.

We look forward to working with you and your child. Please always feel welcome to talk to us about any questions you may have.

## Our History

Established in 1989, we are a community based, not for profit preschool. We were started by a group of parents who wanted a preschool in Tahmoor, as the only preschool then was in Picton. Their success more than 30 years ago still gives children and families today the opportunity to be part of a great preschool.

We still nurture the community spirit that was our humble beginnings and are proud that our smallness and community based approach is unique to us within the community.

We are licensed by the NSW Department of Education and are required to abide by the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*.

We receive operational funding from the NSW State Government through the Department of Education. This is known as Start Strong and is provided to offset the operational costs of the service with the aim to maintain affordable fees.

We were assessed and rated in 2019 against the National Quality Standards as being a service who is Meeting the standards in all seven of the quality areas.

## Introducing our Staff

We are proud of our high calibre of staff. Our educators are qualified and experienced in early childhood education and are passionate about

the education and care of children.

Director	Bec G (Director & Educational Leader)
Educators	Margaret Clair Vanessa Amanda Blair Bec W
Administration Officer	Rhonda

## Our Hours, Days & Closures

We operate Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.00pm.

We are licensed to provide education and care during these times only.

Being a preschool, our service operates during NSW public school terms. We are closed during school holiday periods and all public holidays.

Fees are not payable when we are closed.

## Contacting Us

Phone 4681 8931

Email [rainbowplayhouseinc@bigpond.com](mailto:rainbowplayhouseinc@bigpond.com)

For enquiries regarding accounts our Administration Officer is available Thursday and Friday 9.00am to 1.00pm. You can also email enquiries.

For all other enquiries our Director is contactable most days. Our Director is sometimes required on the floor and thus it isn't always possible for her to address enquiries or concerns while working with the children. In this case the Director will contact you as soon as possible.

Email or Kinderloop can be a good way to contact us if you are having difficulty catching the person you need to talk to.

## Governance

Being a community based preschool, we are

governed by an elected management committee and managed in partnership with the Director (Nominated Supervisor).

The management committee is elected at the Annual General Meeting each year and is made up of families of the service and interested community members. As of 2023 it is a condition of enrolment that at least one parent/guardian is available to attend the Annual General Meeting, which will also be an information night about the service.

The management committee is responsible for the management and operation of the service as the Approved Provider of an education and care service under the *Children (Education and Care Services National Law) Act 2010* and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*.

In carrying out its responsibilities the management committee undertakes to serve the interests of its members, employees, families and children of the service. The management committee is also the employer of the service's staff.

The management committee employs a Director to act as the Nominator Supervisor to manage the day to day operation of the service and delegate's authority to the Director to ensure the service abides by relevant regulatory legislation.

Our management committee also has a fundraising role. As a not for profit service we are a registered charitable organisation. Funds raised provide resources to purchase teaching and learning equipment and help reduce the overall operation costs of the service.

Further information about the governance and management of the service, including delegations of roles and responsibilities is in our Governance and Management Policy in the Policy and Procedures folder in the foyer.

## Membership

Because we are an incorporation, families are required to be members of our organisation.

Current membership is also required to serve on the management committee.

Initial membership fee is \$30.00 and is paid prior

to your child's first day. This will now cover 2 years of membership and include a hat and t-shirt.

We are also introducing a levee of \$50 per family, payable to the service before July. This levee will be used to help us cover costs for things such as events/celebrations, excursions and other programs.

## GETTING READY

### Preparing for the First Day

Feeling safe and comfortable in unfamiliar situations takes time. It takes time to build relationships, learn about routines and feel safe. Preparation before the first day helps with the settling-in period.

We strongly encourage families to visit us several times before the first day. Visits give your child an opportunity to see and hear what preschool will be like and to meet our educators.

Children feel most secure with their families and seek information about how they should feel about an experience by how their families react.

If you are comfortable and excited about preschool you will help your child feel comfortable and excited as well.

Including your child in the preparations such as helping to organise their school bag, lunchbox, hat etc, can help them feel comfortable knowing what's in their bag and what they will need.

### The First Day

You are welcome to stay and play with your child for a short time. An educator will be nearby and will start to engage with your child.

If you sense that your child is becoming anxious it is often best to allow an educator to help you say goodbye rather than staying longer. It is best to avoid prolonged farewells. Calmly give your child a hug and kiss and say goodbye.

Saying goodbye even if your child is upset and crying is important for them to understand you have left. Sneaking away can leave your child feeling anxious about where you are.

After you have left, if you feel uneasy, please feel welcome to phone after a short time to check how they have settled. We will always be honest with you about how your child is feeling and responding.

If your child is significantly upset, we will phone you to let to know and give you the opportunity to pick them up earlier. We want children's first experiences with us to be positive.

Starting with a shorter day is an option for families who are concerned about their child's settling.

You are always welcome to talk to us about your child and their settling in transition.

## What to Pack

Each day your child will need in their bag:

- ✓ at least one full change of labelled clothes
- ✓ sun hat that protects face, ears and neck
- ✓ Munch & Crunch snack of fruit or vegetables in a separate container labelled with name
- ✓ lunchbox containing healthy food for lunch - see mealtimes for ideas
- ✓ healthy snack for afternoon tea
- ✓ drink bottle filled with water
- ✓ towel for quiet time
- ✓ nappies if required, at least 3 each day
- ✓ special comforters, if needed
- ✓ extra clothes to suit the season such as a jacket and beanie for colder months.

## Where to Put Everything

- Children's bags are placed in the lockers outside on our veranda.
- Hats remain inside bags until we need them for outside, unless we start outside.
- Drink bottles are placed on the grey trolley near the door leading out to the lockers.

→ Munch and Crunch is placed on the red trolley.

→ Lunchboxes are placed on the wooden trolley.

→ Nappies can be left in your child's bag.

Please label each one with your child's name.

## What to Wear

Being comfortable is important to being able to actively participate in play.

Our play is often messy, so children need clothes and shoes they can play freely in and won't matter if they get messy and stained.

Wearing one of our logo tops is a great option. We have short and long sleeve t-shirts, jumpers and hats for \$10.00 each.

Three important rules about what to wear are:

1. Tops must cover shoulders (no singlets)
2. Shoes must be enclosed and sturdy such as sneakers. NO THONGS and if shoes have open toes children will not be able to ride the trikes or visit the chicken coop.
3. Sun hat is needed all year

## Lost Property

The only way to avoid lost items is to label everything your child brings and wears to preschool.

Items left each day are placed in the foyer for collection and can only be kept for a short time due to lack of storage.

## ARRIVING & LEAVING

### Starting the Day

Families are welcome to arrive anytime after 8.30am. The front door may be locked, if so, just knock firmly on the door. We CANNOT allow children onto the premises before 8:30am by law.

Children must be signed in and out on the Attendance Sheet each day they attend.

The Attendance Sheet is located in the foyer, or



at the back gate if we are outside. Attendance Sheets are also used to account for children in an emergency.

Please ensure you sign in and out every day.

Before entering please apply sunscreen to your child and hand sanitizer, or wash hands in the bathroom, to yourself and each child. These are in the basket next to the attendance sheets.

Please bring your child into the environment where children and educators are and encourage your child to greet our educators. It is important for our educators to see children as they arrive.

We support children's feelings of confidence and being capable. Once your child feels settled in preschool please involve your child in helping to put their own bag, Munch & Crunch and drink bottle away.

## **Ending the Day**

Families are welcome to pick up their child any time before 4.00pm. Our front door will be locked. Please just knock firmly on the front door. If we are outside when you arrive, please walk around to the far gate.

Your child will not be able to leave with a person who is not listed as an authorised person for collection on the enrolment form or who is unknown to our educators.

If it is unavoidable that a person not on the enrolment form and/or unknown to the staff is to pick up your child, please phone us to discuss what is required and the necessary procedure in order for the person to pick up your child.

Information is also detailed in our Delivery and Collection of Children Policy in the policies folder in the foyer.

It is important that children are signed out on the attendance sheet every day.

## **Custody, Access & Collection of Children**

Only persons nominated on the enrolment form as authorised persons for emergencies and collection will be given access to your child.

For families experiencing custody and access

restrictions please talk to us so we can discuss with you our policy and legal position regarding access to children.

Persons affected by alcohol or drugs should make other arrangements for the collection of their child.

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

Information regarding the collection of children is stated in our Delivery and Collection of Children Policy in the policies folder in the foyer.

## **FEES & ATTENDANCE**

### **Fees & Fee Practices**

We now have access to the Start Strong funding from the Government which allows us to provide children with 2 free days of early childhood education. The below information regarding fees is to let you know what our fee practices are in case the funding model changes in the future. If that happens, you will be provided with plenty of notice.

To ensure as many children have access to early education as possible within our community, we currently are only offering 2 day positions.

Fees are invoiced at the start of each term for the whole term in advance.

Fees do not have to be paid upfront for the term however it is a requirement that at least half of the term account is paid by week 5 and the full account prior to the end of each term.

Our preferred method of payment is direct debit.

Our Fee Policy states that the service reserves the right to refuse a position for your child in the following term if fee payments are not kept up to date.

Please ensure you have carefully read our Fee Policy included in the enrolment pack, especially ensuring you understand the procedures that are implemented when outstanding fees become

considered a debt.

Please discuss any issues related to fees with either the Director or Administration Officer. We always aim to support families as best we can and we can help you to develop a payment plan for outstanding amounts.

Our fees are set by the management committee. Changes in fees only occur if there is a change in our operation costs. We aim to change fees only once a year, usually at the start of the year. Families will be given at least 2 weeks notice of a fee increase.

A copy of our Fee Policy is available in the Policies and Procedures folder in the foyer for families to view freely.

## **Absences**

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

Make up days are not usually available unless there are extenuating circumstances and we have vacancies available.

Fees are not charged when the service is closed.

## **Changing Days & Terminating Position**

Any changes to your child's attendance requires two weeks' written notice.

When you give notice to leave the service the deposit paid at enrolment will be allocated to the last two weeks fees. If the deposit is less than the final two weeks fees the remaining amount will be added to your final invoice. If the deposit is more than needed to cover the final weeks you will be refunded the difference.

# **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

## **Our Program**

Our curriculum is based on the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). The EYLF's vision is for children to experience play-based learning that is engaging and builds success for life.

It is the aim of our program to work in partnership with you to develop a learning

program responsive to your child's ideas, interests, strengths, abilities and learning needs.

Our program incorporates blocks of guided play, where children have opportunity to play and explore experiences supported by intentional teaching from our educators.

Paint, playdough, goop, water, sand, clay and slime are part of our program everyday. Children will get messy. Please ensure you dress your child knowing they are likely to get their clothes marked or stained.

Our program also incorporates opportunities for learning through group experiences lead by an educator.

Family involvement in our program is encouraged. We want families to read our Kinderloop stories, share ideas for experiences with our educators, tell us about what's happening as a family and volunteer to be part of the program through spending time with us (where COVID allows).

## **Documenting Children's Learning**

Our program and documentation of children's learning is recorded on Kinderloop.

Kinderloop is a secure online programming tool.

Families set up an account with Kinderloop which can be accessed via the website or the Kinderloop app. Families can view and share comments on all our documentation about their child and our program, as well as important reminders, easily from their device or computer.

A consent form for Kinderloop is included in the enrolment pack. Once you sign it we will send an email invite to set up an account.

Please talk to us if you have any questions about Kinderloop.

## **Evidence of Learning**

Each child participates and creates in different ways.

Sometimes children express their learning and creativity through physical artworks while other times express it through play.

Regardless of whether children create actual pieces of work all children are learning all of the time and we value that learning as important.

Our emphasis is not on what children make but their total involvement in our program.

## **Toys from Home**

Toys from home often cause a distraction to children being involved in our educational program and create issues between children.

If your child uses an item for comfort and security, please talk to us about how we can manage your child's needs.

If a toy is brought in your child will be asked to put it in their bag after they have had a short play with it or place it safely in the office.

## **News**

News is a wonderful opportunity for children to practice speaking out and develop their talking and listening skills. News is also a great opportunity for us to learn about your child and your family.

We prefer news to focus on children's interests and experiences rather than on toys. Of course, new toys or a special toy are fine as a sometimes news item.

## **Family Involvement**

We actively encourage families to be involved in our service and program. Everyone has unique hobbies, interests, talents and experiences that offer learning opportunities for children.

Where COVID allows, we welcome families to come in and spend time with us. Examples of involvement are reading to children, cooking favourite foods, helping with gardening, playing a musical instrument, teaching a song, sharing a different language, as well as any other idea you have.

Please come and talk to us if you would at any time like to be involved in our program.

## **Excursions & Community Visits**

We believe in the importance of being part of and

engaging with our community. Where COVID allows, we regularly include walks and excursions in our program, as well as have visitors come to the service to help us learn about the wider world.

We hope to resume our regular visits to Tahmoor Public School as part of our program to support children's preparation for school when COVID limitations allow.

Where an outing involves walks locally a notice will be displayed in the foyer for families to provide permission for their child to participate.

For excursions involving transport and/ or a longer time away from the service a permission note will be sent home detailing all the information.

Families are often welcome to join us on walks and excursions. Please express interest to an educator or indicate on the permission note that you are available to join us.

People who join us on walks and excursions are expected to abide by our code of conduct to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. A copy of the code of conduct will be given prior to the event.

A copy of our Excursions Policy is in the Policy and Procedures folder in the foyer for families to view freely.

## **Celebrations**

Sharing celebrations with children and families is an important part of our program. Please let us know about any celebrations or traditions your family celebrates as we would like to include them in our program.

Birthdays are an important celebration for children, and we like to acknowledge each child's birthday. Please remind us when it is your child's birthday.

If you would like to bring in celebration food or activity for your child to share at afternoon tea please talk to an educator. Please let us know in advance so we can make arrangements for children with food intolerance and medical conditions.



## Special Events

We value hosting events at the service and where COVID allows try to arrange opportunities for families to come to the service. Some events are management committee social events and fundraising while others are organised by educators as opportunities for families to spend time in the service.

We encourage families to join in our events as they are opportunities to chat to educators, meet other families, support the service, observe your child in our environment and generally create an atmosphere of community within the service.

Invitations are sent home for most special events and are promoted in the foyer, newsletters and on Kinderloop.

## Donations

We gratefully accept donations of craft materials, recycled materials, spare clothes, stationery and pantry food (plain flour, cooking salt, oil).

From time to time we advertise for donations of particular items. It is not an expectation for families to participate in donations. It is purely voluntary when and if you are able to.

## Community Cupboard

In our foyer area we have an area set up which we call our Community Cupboard. In this area families can add items they longer want or use which are in good condition that another family may be able to use and take items they will be able to use. Examples include clothing, household items, in date non-perishable food, toys etc. We also have a bookshelf to donate and borrow books. We encourage our families and children to access these shelves.

## Environmental Practices

We are committed to practices that benefit and help sustain our environment and the wider world.

Our practices aim to reduce waste, reuse items and recycle. We compost food scraps, recycle paper and plastic, repurpose items, reuse household items to reduce waste and limit use of

disposable items.

We also educate children about the importance of our environment and its sustainability. We incorporate learning about nature, respecting living things, conserving water and energy use, growing food, recycling, reducing waste and being environment conscious in our everyday interactions and programs with children.

## KEEPING INFORMED

### Communicating Together

We openly seek communication, feedback and information sharing between us and families.

In the interests of being environmentally responsible most information and notices are sent via email and Kinderloop.

Our main methods of communication are:

1. Kinderloop which we use for programming and documentation of children's learning, as well as newsletters, important notices and reminders.
2. Email which we use to send invoices, important letters and notices, reminders of events and newsletters.
3. Foyer Displays and Noticeboards which we display important service information as well as community events.
4. Family Pockets which we use to send home fee receipts, important letters and immunisation reminders.
5. Facebook which we also use to promote what is happening in the service and for general reminders.

Please check Kinderloop, your email and family pocket regularly to stay informed with all our happenings.

We actively encourage families to communicate openly with us regarding their child, their expectations and their feedback about the service.

All information shared with staff and

management committee will be treated respectfully and confidentially.

## Important Information to Share with Us

Please remember to always inform us when:

- Someone different is picking up your child (they need to be an authorised person on the enrolment form).
- Your child is unwell or is going to be absent.
- Your child has an infectious illness, including COVID.
- Custody/access arrangements change.
- Your address, phone numbers or email address have changed.
- Your child is diagnosed with a medical condition or diagnosed with a disability.
- Significant changes are occurring in your family.
- You have concerns about your child, or your child needs at home are changing.

## Parent Feedback & Managing Complaints

Feedback may take the form of compliments, suggestions, enquiries, concerns or complaints.

We welcome all feedback and questions from families.

Most often the best way to communicate is to speak directly with us. Most questions and concerns can be worked out through a conversation. Email is another option if opportunity to talk at the service is difficult.

If families do not wish to speak with a member of staff including the Director or you do not feel your initial concern was addressed satisfactorily a formal complaint can be made to the management committee.

The management committee can be contacted either in person or in writing.

If you wish to submit a written complaint, we have forms available in the foyer. The procedure

for how to submit a written complaint is detailed on the form and displayed on the noticeboard.

If you continue to feel dissatisfied regarding a complaint you have the right to contact the Early Childhood Education Directorate of the NSW Department of Education. Their contact details on the foyer noticeboard and on the complaint form, and on the back page of this booklet.

It is always our aim to actively work with families to achieve a fair and effective resolution of all concerns in a timely manner.

A copy of our Complaints Handling Policy is in the Policy & Procedures folder in the foyer for families to view freely.

## HEALTH, HYGIENE & SAFETY

### Hygiene Practices

We are committed to maintaining a clean and hygienic environment for children, families and our staff.

We have cleaning procedures to ensure that equipment and furniture are regularly cleaned.

Hand washing is an important practice within the service and is the most effective method to ensuring good health. We promote good hand washing through our practices, our program and our daily routines.

During outbreaks of an infectious illness our routine cleaning procedures and hand washing will be increased to help reduce the spread of infection

Most illnesses are spread through airborne contamination. We teach children to cough and sneeze into their elbow not their hand. Please help us with these practices by using the same techniques at home.

Further information can be found in our Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy in the Policy and Procedures folder in the foyer.

### Managing Illness & Infectious Diseases

In the interest of all children and staff we ask families to keep unwell children at home for the duration of their illness to ensure unnecessary

exposure to infectious diseases.

We maintain a confidential record of all illnesses to monitor the overall health of the service.

Please ensure you notify us as of any illness your child experiences, is diagnosed with or treated for.

We implement the recommendations of *Staying Healthy in Childcare (5th Ed)* for responding to infectious diseases and their exclusion periods. Children who have an infectious disease will be required to stay home for the whole exclusion period unless a clearance letter from a doctor is provided.

Children who are experiencing high temperatures, vomiting and/or diarrhoea must be kept at home for 24 hours after the last temperature, or vomiting and/or diarrhoea was experienced.

The service has the right to request a clearance letter from a doctor if we believe a child may have an infectious disease. Children will be unable to attend until a clearance letter is received.

If a child displays signs and symptoms of being unwell while at the service families will be contacted and required to pick up their child.

We do not keep Panadol or other pain relief medication commonly used to reduce fever on the premises. As part of our management of children who show signs of illness staff will monitor a child's temperature using an underarm digital thermometer. If a child develops a temperature higher than 38°C while at preschool the family will be notified immediately.

If a family member or authorised person is unable to be contacted an ambulance will be phoned and first aid procedures implemented to manage the temperature until medical support arrives.

If an incidence of an infectious disease occurs within the service families will be notified through a notice in the foyer and a post on Kinderloop. For serious outbreaks a note will be sent home.

A copy of our Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy is in the Policy & Procedures folder in the

foyer for families to view freely.

## **COVID & Being COVID Safe**

Being a COVID safe business is very important to us and we appreciate families helping us keep everyone safe.

As a Department of Education Early Childhood Directorate funded service we are required to follow and implement all restrictions and requirements related to COVID. These frequently change depending on the status of COVID at different times.

During periods of high COVID transmission, families can expect stricter requirements around children's health and the need to keep children at home even with very mild symptoms known to be possible COVID symptoms.

We change our practices to reflect the current COVID requirements and we rely on our families support to help us fulfill requirements and restrictions.

A copy of our Managing COVID-19 Policy is in the Policy & procedures folder in the foyer for families to view freely.

## **Medication**

There are legal requirements we must comply with in regard to administering medication to children. Medication refers to any medicines or creams either pharmaceutical or natural that you require us to administer or apply to your child.

If your child requires medication at preschool, please advise an educator who will show you where to store it and the medication form to complete.

Medications must be handed to an educator and not be left in children's bags or lunchboxes.

Medication cannot be administered if it has not been recorded correctly on the medication record with authority from a parent.

If your child requires an antibiotic, we ask for their own wellbeing that they complete at least a 24 hour course of the anti-biotic before they attend preschool.

For medication to be administered it must have a label that includes the following:

- ✓ Name of the medication
- ✓ Dosage to be administered
- ✓ Frequency (when)
- ✓ Expiry date

Prescription medications need all of the above information as well as the following:

- ✓ Child's full name (not the name of another family member)
- ✓ Date of prescription
- ✓ Requirements such as before/after food, refrigeration etc.

If your child requires ongoing medication a letter from their doctor or practitioner detailing the medical condition, the name of the medication, the dosage and frequency will need to be provided and an ongoing medication form completed.

A copy of our Medication Policy is in the Policy & Procedures folder in the foyer for families to view freely.

## Medical Conditions

If your child is diagnosed with a medical condition that requires ongoing treatment and/or medication, please advise us immediately.

Medical conditions such as asthma, allergies, anaphylaxis, epilepsy and diabetes require an action plan to be completed by your child's doctor. We can provide you with a form to take to the doctor.

Children with a medical condition will have a Risk Minimisation Plan and a Communication Plan developed and an identification card with their photo and details of the medical condition displayed to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

Families are responsible for ensuring we are aware of your child's medical condition and treatment plan, including updating us of any changes. A child CANNOT attend the service if their medical condition information is not up to date or incomplete, or their medication has not been provided.

A copy of our Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy is available in the foyer in the Policy & Procedures folder. Families of children with a medical condition will receive a copy of this policy.

## Incidents & Injuries

Minor incidents and injuries are an expected part of being at preschool and being in a group situation with same age peers.

Children are continually developing their physical skills, relationships with each other and self-regulation skills.

All incidents and injuries are recorded in our Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record.

For minor incidents and injuries, you will be notified via the kinderloop incident tool. Please ensure you read through and click to 'sign.'

For serious incidents and injuries, including trauma you will be notified by phone as soon as is practicable after the incident has been managed and the information recorded on an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness form.

You will be asked to sign the form as acknowledgment that you were informed of an incident and a copy can be provided.

The service is legally required to inform families of all incidents within 24 hours.

At least one educator with current first aid, CPR and asthma and anaphylaxis training are in attendance and accessible to children every day.

A copy of our Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy is available in the Policy & Procedures folder in the foyer for families to view freely.

## Immunisation

Children who are not vaccinated because their parents are conscientious objectors cannot attend the service due to an amendment to the NSW Public Health Act, effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2018.

It is a requirement under the NSW Public Health Act 2010 that families supply the service with appropriate documentation of their child's

immunisation status.

For immunised children please provide us with a copy of their Immunisation History Statement on enrolment. If children not immunised please talk to us about required documentation. This must be the one from Medicare.

Please ensure you provide us with an updated Immunisation History Statement after each vaccination.

Reminder notices are sent home regularly of upcoming or overdue vaccinations.

Unimmunised children, including late vaccinations, may be required to stay home from the service during an outbreak of a disease.

More information is available in our Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy which families can view freely from the folder in the foyer.

## Sun Protection

Sun safe practices are implemented all year round. Hats are required to be worn every day regardless of the weather or season. Sunscreen is applied when the UV rating is 3 or higher.

Please apply sunscreen to your child before arriving. Sunscreen is available in the foyer if needed. Please stamp your child's hand to identify that they are wearing sunscreen.

If we go outside later in the day educators will apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes prior to outdoor time.

Children who do not have a hat will be encouraged to wear a spare hat for the day. Children who are not comfortable wearing a spare hat will be limited to playing in the shaded areas of the environment.

During the months of May to September when the UV index is below 3, sunscreen will not be applied to children prior to outside play in the afternoon.

These months are an opportunity for children to receive the benefits of vitamin D from the sun however educators do monitor the UV index daily and when the UV rating is 3 or above sunscreen will be applied.

Sun safe hats with our logo are available for \$10.00 each.

A copy of our Sun Protection Policy is available in the Policy & Procedures folder in the foyer for families to view freely.

## OUR ROUTINES

### Mealtimes

We promote healthy eating following the guidelines of *Get Up and Grow* and the *Australian Dietary Guidelines*.

We have three routine mealtimes scheduled to be similar to the breaks used at most local schools, however we are flexible regarding children's individual needs for food and nutrition.

1. Munch and Crunch is an optional time for children to eat. At this time children eat a piece of fruit or vegetable. Munch and Crunch is generally about 10.00am for children who feel hungry. Please pack Munch & Crunch in a separate snack container or environmentally sustainable package (i.e brown paper bag) with your child's name clearly labelled.
2. Lunchtime occurs about 11.30am and is the time to eat the main meal such as a sandwich, crisp bread, wrap etc. After their meal food children are encouraged to eat other healthy foods such as yoghurt, fruit or vegetable, and cheese. Some children may prefer to eat 'leftovers' style food rather than a sandwich, and this is fine, however we are unable to reheat heat for children so this food would be consumed cold. Lunchboxes are stored in the fridge throughout the day, so there is no need for a bulky insulated bag, just a box or container. The insulated bags tend to take up a lot of room on our lunch tables and encroach on children's space to eat.
3. Afternoon tea is our final mealtime and occurs about 2.20pm. At this time children eat their remaining food and may choose snack foods such as cheese and crackers, rice crackers, small packet of biscuits, muffin or slice. Children will be encouraged to finish any healthy foods that have not yet been eaten at this time.

Foods not to be consumed at preschool for health reasons are those high in salt and sugar such as chips, chocolates, lollies, cordial, juices and soft drink etc. These will be sent home and a healthy alternative, such as fruit or rice crackers provided.

Foods not to be consumed at preschool for safety reasons are nuts and all products made from or containing nuts, including almond milk & almond flour.

Our mealtimes are promoted as calm and relaxing opportunities to gather together and share conversations.

If your child has any dietary requirements or you are concerned about their needs in relation to our mealtime guidelines, please talk to us and we can work together to ensure your child's individual health needs are met.

A copy of our Nutrition, Food and Beverages Policy is in the Policy & Procedures folder in the foyer for families to view freely.

## **Rest**

Children participate in a short period of rest each day. Rest and being restful are important for children's health and assist their overall wellbeing throughout the day.

Our rest period is after lunch where children sit or lay down on their towels while listening to music, stories, or engaging in a quiet activity.

Children who benefit from a sleep can be provided with a bed. Families are asked to supply a cot sized sheet set if they think their child will sleep. Families will be informed of how long their child has slept.

## **PROTECTING CHILDREN**

### **Child Protection**

The *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, emphasises that the care of children and young people is a responsibility shared by families, government and communities working in partnerships.

It is the responsibility of this service to ensure the safety and welfare of children and act as an advocate for the rights of children.

Our educators are mandatory reporters and thus have a legal obligation to report concerns regarding the safety, wellbeing and welfare of a child or young person.

As a community organisation we have knowledge of and networks to many community services and groups who can provide support and advice to families.

We strongly encourage families to talk us so we can help source and refer you to relevant support services.

### **Visiting & Being at the Service**

Families who spent time at the service while children are in attendance for any purpose other than picking up or dropping off a child must sign in as a visitor in the office.

Upon entering our premises all visitors agree to abide by our code of conduct. Behaviour that is in breach of the code of conduct or deemed by our staff to be potentially harmful to children and staff will result in the visitor being asked to leave the premises.

The code of conduct is displayed on both our front door, the office door and our visitor register. Please take time to read it carefully.

### **Managing Emergencies & Incidents**

We take a proactive approach to managing emergencies and unexpected incidents by regularly practising emergencies and evacuations with children.

We talk about emergencies and how to respond to situations as part of our program and empower children with skills to be able respond safely to emergencies and unexpected incidents.

In the event of an emergency where we are required to evacuate, we would try to gather at the 'Peace Garden' which is the small rockery garden to left (facing the school) of the Tahmoor Community Centre building.

If that area is not being safe for us to remain at,



or the emergency is prolonged we would then evacuate to Tahmoor Public School.

As soon as we were in a safe position we would contact families as soon as is practicable to inform them of where to safely access their children. Where internet is available, a post would also be on Kinderloop and Facebook.

Further information about emergency practices and evacuation procedures can be located in our Emergency and Evacuation Policy in the Policy and Procedures folder in the foyer, and on our evacuation charts displayed at each of our exits.

## CONFIDENTIALITY & PRIVACY

### Confidentiality

Information collected about your child and family remain confidential. Enrolment forms and accompanying documentation are stored in a secure, locked location.

A copy of our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy is in the Policy & Procedures folder in the foyer for families to view freely.

### Privacy Statement

A copy of our Privacy Collection Statement is included in this enrolment pack along with the Consent to Disclose Child's Personal Information form.

Due to reporting requirements of the government agencies that fund our service we are obligated to provide details of the children enrolled in the service. Without a signed Consent to Disclose Child's Personal Information form we may not be able to offer you enrolment in our service. Please see the Director if you have concerns.

### Photography & Use of Cameras

We understand that families enjoy taking photos and video of their child in our service and at excursions and special events however we ask that families be respectful and considerate of other children and families when taking photos and videos.

Please only photograph or video your own child.

If you want a photo with another child please seek permission from their family first. Our educators can help you with this. Please also be careful of other people in the background of your photos and video.

We also ask families not to post photos or video on the internet and social media sites where another child or family may be part of the photo or video, either in the shot or in the background. Please do not post images and/or tag people without consent from their family.

In regard to the documentation we display in our service or photos posted to Kinderloop, we ask families not to photograph or screenshot images.

We know how important documenting your child's experiences is. With family's support being respectful towards others in regard to photos and videos we hope to continue to allow families the use of cameras within our service.

Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate – NSW Department of Education

Website [education.nsw.gov.au](http://education.nsw.gov.au)

Email [ececd@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:ececd@det.nsw.edu.au)

### A "Cheat Sheet" of Important Points

We acknowledge that this handbook contains a lot of information for new families, so here is a 'cheat sheet' of the most important points to remember:

- Children need a hat every day of the year.
- Apply sunscreen to your child in the morning every day.
- Pack healthy foods like sandwich, wrap, leftover as well as cheeses, yogurt, fruit and vegetables for lunch.
- Pack a separate Munch & Crunch snack of fruit and/or vegetables.
- No nuts in children's lunchboxes.
- Water only in children's drink bottles.
- Pack a spare set of clothes every day, no matter how old your child is.
- Sign your child in and out on the Attendance Record every day.

- Pack a towel in your child's bag for rest time in case it's needed.
- Keep unwell children at home.
- Let us know if your child is unwell, especially if they have an infectious illness.
- Hand medication to an educator, do not leave in children's bags.
- Let of know about any changes to your contact details or family arrangements.
- We enjoy sharing experiences with families, talk to us about how you can be a part of experiences.

Thank you for entrusting us with the education and care of your child. We look forward to a successful relationship with your child and family.