



Welcome to preschool

A family guide





What you'll find inside this booklet

This booklet is designed to help make the start of your child's early learning journey a positive and happy one.

You'll find handy hints from early childhood teachers and parents to make it easier for you and your family to get your child ready for preschool. It will also reassure you that you've made the right decision in sending your child to preschool.

Going to preschool

The idea of preschool can be a bit daunting for many parents. You may feel like your little one is growing up too fast. Don't worry! Preschool is a time when your child will have lots of fun with children their own age.

Preschool helps to develop and broaden the way children experience education, encouraging them to become confident, eager and enthusiastic learners who are looking forward to starting big school.

Getting prepared

Have you met the preschool teacher?

The preschool teacher is an important person to get to know. The teacher will be able to tell you about what happens at preschool and help answer any questions that will help your child settle in.

The preschool has a range of policies and procedures to promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all children. These include arrival and departure, food and nutrition, education and sun protection.

If you would like more information on our preschool policies, talk to the preschool teacher. For more tips on going to preschool, visit education.nsw.gov.au/preschool.

Allergies, health conditions and additional needs

Before your child starts preschool, it's important to let the preschool know if your child has any allergies, health conditions or any additional needs. This will give the preschool time to make any necessary arrangements for your child.

Make sure your child's immunisation schedule is up to date. Preschools cannot enrol a child unless they either:

- are fully vaccinated for their age
- have a medical reason not to be vaccinated
- are on a recognised vaccination catch-up schedule.

Label everything!

Clearly label all of your child's items such as their clothes, bag and lunch box. There will be a lost property box at the preschool.

Make sure your child's name is not visible on the outside of anything they'll be wearing to and from preschool.



Tip:

The preschool will ask you to sign a register at the beginning and end of each day or session. Make sure you sign this register, which you can usually find at the preschool entrance.

Checklist

Here's a list of things your child will need:

- ☐ a bag
- ☐ a lunch box
- ☐ lunch
- ☐ snacks for morning or afternoon tea and a drink
- ☐ a change of clothes, including socks and underwear
- ☐ a hat
- ☐ a sheet and/or blanket for rest time.





Tip:

Pack food that you know your child likes and will eat. Help your child learn how to unwrap their food and eat it on their own.

**healthyschoolcanteens.
nsw.gov.au**

Food at preschool

Eating at preschool is an important part of the daily program, and we promote healthy eating habits. Our preschool staff will also help your child during meal times by reminding them to wash their hands. Staff will encourage them to finish their food and not to share their food with friends.

You will be asked to provide healthy food for morning tea, lunch and perhaps afternoon tea. Talk to your preschool teacher to get an idea of what to pack for your child each day.

healthykids.nsw.gov.au



Care with allergies

Anaphylaxis is a severe and sudden allergic reaction to certain allergens, such as nuts or shellfish, or insect bites. You must let the preschool teacher know if your child is allergic to foods or is at risk of anaphylaxis.

allergyfacts.org.au

Learning at preschool



Your child's learning at preschool will build on what you have taught them at home. Children learn through play. Your child's interests will direct the learning experiences the teacher plans for your child through play.

Through these learning experiences, your child will explore and experiment. They will develop their skills in solving problems, communicating and socialising. They will also develop self-esteem, confidence and the foundations for their formal learning.

The learning program in preschool is guided by the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.

mychild.gov.au

Preschool activities for learning

- Puzzles and playing with blocks
- Painting, drawing, cutting and pasting
- Reading books and listening to stories
- Talking and listening
- Dressing up and playing in the 'home corner' or cubby house
- Listening to and playing music
- Dancing and drama
- Climbing on equipment, balancing, running and jumping
- Using computers
- Playing with clay, play dough, sand and water



What should my child wear to preschool?

Dress your child in comfortable, practical clothes that are safe and easy for them to manage on their own, including sensible shoes for playing and climbing.

While teachers try to avoid children staining their clothes, paint and dirt are all part of having fun and learning.

Children will be expected to wear a hat to play outdoors. Encourage your child to get used to wearing a hat when they are outside.



Supporting your child's learning



Children learn best when parents and teachers work together. You know your child better than anyone else, so you can help the teacher understand your child by sharing information about their interests and any additional needs.

Ways to support your child at preschool

- Find out as much as you can about the preschool, such as the routines and what your child needs to bring to preschool.
- Get involved in your child's preschool, such as volunteering as a helper.
- Talk with preschool staff about activities you can do with your child at home, such as reading with your child.
- Talk with staff about your child's learning.
- Talk with your child each day about what they did at preschool.
- Connect with other parents on Facebook and Twitter.

A good start

A nutritious breakfast will help set your child up to have the best day possible at preschool. It will help them to concentrate and give them energy to play. It will also help them develop good eating patterns for the rest of their life.

A good night's sleep

Children need a good sleep each night to be able to cope with the adventures and fun of preschool.

A good sleep will help your child to:

- pay attention and concentrate
- problem solve and think of new ideas
- play sensibly and enjoy their day.

Getting ready for big school

Your child's preschool will support you and your child in getting ready for school. Preschools and schools often run a transition to school program, which will give you handy information and tips about their first big day at Kindergarten and help you to become familiar with the exciting things school life offers. Being involved in your child's schooling will help them to have a successful start to the rest of their learning journey.



When your child is sick

Call the preschool early in the morning if your child is sick.

Some illnesses may be infectious. To stop these infections spreading to other children, see your doctor and keep your child at home for the advised time.

What to do if your child is sick

If your child has the following symptoms then it's best to consult your doctor and keep your child at home:

- a fever of 38°C or above
- vomiting or diarrhoea
- severe cold or flu symptoms
- rashes of an unknown origin.



For more information about infectious diseases that may affect your child, contact NSW Health on 02 9391 9000.

health.nsw.gov.au

Some typical infections

Chicken pox – a slight fever, runny nose and a rash that begins as raised pink spots that blister and scab.

Measles – fever, tiredness, runny nose, cough and sore red eyes for a few days, followed by a red blotchy rash that starts on the face and spreads down the body and lasts four to seven days.

Conjunctivitis – the eye feels scratchy, is red and may water. Eyelids may stick together during sleep.

Impetigo (school sores) – small red spots change into blisters that fill with pus and become crusted. Usually on the face, hands or scalp.

Ringworm – small scaly patch on the skin surrounded by a pink ring.

Head lice

Don't be alarmed if an outbreak occurs. Head lice can be very annoying, but thankfully they will not harm your child's health and have no bearing on a child's personal hygiene.

Preventing head lice

- Regularly check your child's hair.
- Keep long hair tied back or braided.
- Keep a fine-toothed comb in the bathroom and encourage your family to use it when they wash their hair.

Treating head lice

Daily combing with a white hair conditioner using a fine-toothed comb will help get rid of head lice and their eggs (nits).

health.nsw.gov.au/environment/headlice

Useful websites

NSW Department of Education

education.nsw.gov.au

Translated school information

education.nsw.gov.au/going-to-a-public-school/translated-documents

Aboriginal Education Consultative Group

aecg.nsw.edu.au

Allergies

allergyfacts.org.au

Early childhood

mychild.gov.au

earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

Health

health.nsw.gov.au

Immunisation

immunise.health.gov.au

Parenting

raisingchildren.net.au

Disability, learning and support

education.nsw.gov.au/disability-learning-and-support

Road safety

education.nsw.gov.au/road-safety-education

kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au

Name of preschool:

Operating hours:

My child's
preschool sessions:

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