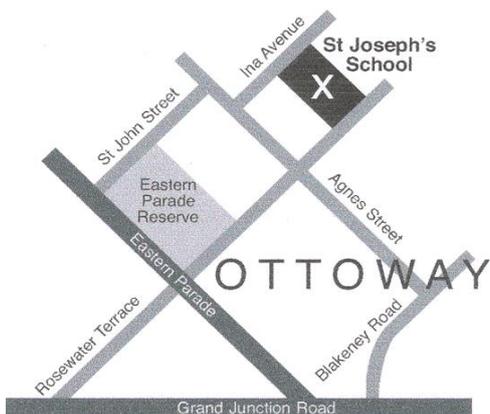




Preschool Family Handbook



St Joseph's School - Preschool
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Information, Guidelines and Policies

St Joseph's Preschool offers **three** sessions per week
Monday 8:45 am – 2:45 pm, **Tuesday** 8:45 am – 2:30 pm
and Wednesday 8:45 am – 12:00 pm

We, the staff and community at St Joseph's Preschool acknowledge our Catholic ethos and the importance of providing high quality preschool education that positively promotes and encourages the development of the whole child.

VISION

St Joseph's Preschool is a place where children and families feel a sense of *belonging, being and becoming*.

- *Belonging* is central to *being* and *becoming* as it shapes who the children are and who they can become. 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 the present and children knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life's joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life.
- *Becoming* emphasizes learning to participate fully and actively in society.

Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

At St Joseph's Preschool, we believe:

Each child is unique

Therefore we:

- Work closely with families to understand and best support children's learning and wellbeing
- Value children's different ways of learning
- Value children's home languages
- Follow, assess and report on children's individual learning paths

All children are competent learners

Therefore we:

- Look for what children *can* do and build on their prior knowledge
- Actively support children to see themselves as competent learners
- Establish a learning environment that maximizes children's potential for learning, through open-ended learning experiences

Developmental Play is the child's first language of learning

Therefore we:

- Plan a play-based learning environment
- Understand how children show their understandings through their play
- Extend children's understandings by listening, watching, reflecting and planning for their play
- Provide multisensory learning experiences

Children learn best when they are free to explore their environment, relationships and community

Therefore we:

- Broaden children's experience by planning outside school experiences and inviting community expertise to preschool
- Encourage children to play and learn with each other
- Plan for and encourage children to connect with nature
- Support children to take responsibility for sustainable actions
- Provide opportunities for children to develop learning dispositions such as problem solving, communication, persistence and involvement participation

Children benefit when their families are involved with their learning

Therefore we:

- Build positive relationships with families and communicate regularly
- Respect and involve family cultures in the life of the preschool
- Seek ways to increase family involvement in the life of the preschool

ADMINISTRATION

ABSENTEEISM

If your child is sick or unable to attend Preschool, please contact the Preschool/ School Office.

ACCIDENT PROCEDURES

In the event of an accident staff will provide first aid in accordance with their first aid training. In the event of a minor accident an accident report sheet will be filled out by the staff and the parent/carer collecting the child will also be required to sign the sheet. In the event of a serious injury or illness staff will contact the parent/carer immediately. Staff will seek assistance from St John Ambulance and if necessary the child will be transported to a hospital for consultation with a medical officer. Please ensure that you have Ambulance cover.

BEHAVIOUR EDUCATION

The development of a safe and supportive environment for all children includes the implementation of prevention and early intervention programs and practices to support respectful relationships

CHILDREN'S VOICE ABOUT BEHAVIOUR AT PRESCHOOL

- We listen
- We are kind
- We care about our room and keep it clean
- We put our toys away
- We water the plants to keep them healthy
- We wash our hands before we eat and after we have been to the toilet
- We don't hurt other children
- We wear a hat for outdoor play

CHILD and YOUTH HEALTH

All children in their Preschool year are entitled to a Health Screening by the Child and Youth Health Nurse.

CUSTODIAL ISSUES

If there is a custody dispute between parents of a child and there is any kind of legal documentation regarding this matter, it needs to be made available to the Principal and staff at the Preschool.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Parents are asked to notify the school office of any change of address or phone numbers and any change in emergency contacts, so those records are kept up to date.

CONSENT FORMS

Please return

- Medical form
- Excursion Medical form
- Language Survey form
- Local Area Consent form
- Images, Recording, Documents and or Artwork Consent form
- Volunteer forms
- Pick Up Arrangements and Medical information forms
- Personal Responsibility
- Collection of Information (Privacy Statement)
- Consent form for Online Learning Portfolio / Use of Language Program

ENROLMENT

PLAYGROUP

The Playgroup takes place from 10.00am to 11.30am in the Preschool every Friday afternoon. Playgroup is for children from birth to 5 years of age. A parent/ carer must accompany the child/children. Cost per family is a gold coin donation and is to be paid on the day.

PRESCHOOL

Children may start Preschool at the beginning of Term 1 or Term 3 each year. Children will spend a full year in Preschool; January – December or July - June.

If your child turns four on or before April 30, they will start Preschool on the first day of Term 1 in that year. If your child turns four between May 1 and 31 October they will start Preschool on the first day of Term 3 in that year.

ENROLMENT IN PRESCHOOL

Children born before 1 May begin preschool in Term 1 of the same calendar year. Children born on May 1 or after will commence preschool in the following calendar year. Children will receive four terms of preschool education.

The enrolment process for St Joseph's Preschool is separate from that of the school. Separate enrolment forms and processes are used for the preschool and entry to the preschool does not guarantee entry into St Joseph's School, nor overrides the principle of parent choice of school.

TRANSITION TO PRESCHOOL

In the term prior to your child starting Preschool you will be notified of the Preschool Transition Program. Times are available for your child to visit the Preschool, to get to know the teacher, other children, the environment and routines.

GENERAL INFORMATION

FIRE DRILL / LOCK DOWN: The preschool has a policy for evacuation of the preschool in an emergency. This is on display in all rooms. The procedure is practiced with the children at least once a term. There is also a Lock Down plan in place in case of a major emergency, e.g. chemical spill.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES: If parents/carers have an issue with any aspect of the Preschool program, please discuss it with the staff in the first instance and if you feel it remains unresolved then make a time to meet with the school Principal to discuss the matter.

HEALTHY EATING TIME: *Guidelines for staff and parents, designed to improve the health and nutrition of our children, so that they will learn to make their own healthy choices.*

At Snack and Lunch Time we will supervise and assist children to receive safe and nutritious food by:

- Passing on information we receive on good nutrition and health
- Providing water at all times
- Washing hands before eating
- Not allowing food and drinks to be shared
- Sitting together to help children if necessary, and to help facilitate a positive eating environment
- Teaching children about food and nutrition enabling them to make healthy choices

In light of media awareness on healthy eating, and advice from the CAFHS nurse, we would appreciate it if you could support these guidelines for eating.

Avoid sending

- Foods and drinks that are sweet and sticky and likely to contribute to tooth decay
- Foods high in fat and/or salt
- Foods that have minimal nutritional value
- Foods containing nuts

'Wise choice of food brought from home will not only help meet the nutritional needs of the preschooler but will provide a range of learning experiences as well.' (Caring for Children, Food and Nutrition Project, NSW Health Services).

JEWELLERY & TOYS: As we have many interesting activities in Preschool, precious jewellery and toys are best left at home. Bangles and necklaces can be caught on the playground equipment and cause injury. Children with pierced ears must wear studs only. Broken or lost toys cause tears. Please keep toys at home.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES: Parents are requested to notify the office if their child/children contract an infectious disease. They are also expected to keep their child/children home from preschool during the infectious period. This includes vomiting within twenty four hours.

LIBRARY: On Tuesday we take the children to the school library and they are encouraged to borrow a book which needs to be returned the following week. **Your child will need a Library bag.**

MEDICATION

Prescribed medications can only be administered on receipt of a written Health Care Plan. The medication must be in its original container. Only the staff member will administer the medication and dosage and time will be recorded in our First Aid record book.

NEWSLETTER

Newsletters contains important information relating to the program and to coming events. On some occasions the newsletter contains forms to be returned to the teacher. The school newsletter is translated into Vietnamese. Newsletters are available on the Skoolbag app and the school website.

NO DOGS ALLOWED

In the interest of our children's safety, no dogs are allowed on the Preschool or the school's property.

PARKING

Parents are asked to park in designated areas around Ina Avenue.

In bringing or collecting children from the Preschool, parents are asked to observe the road rules of not parking in driveways or double parking. Observation of speed limits near the school is expected. Please use the school crossing.

PROGRAM

This is guided by the *National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) embracing the principles of Reggio Emilia*. The aim of this document is to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school.

The Learning outcomes are:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators.

The Preschool program is available for parents to view on the parent information board.

PRESCHOOL ROUTINE

After you and your child have signed in, you are very welcome to sit with your child to do a puzzle or read a book together. To assist your child with their transition we ask that all parents and caregivers do leave by 9.15 am. This will also allow us to lock the Preschool door and gate.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

Quite often, children in a new environment find it difficult to say 'good bye' to their parents. This is quite understandable given their age and the stage of their emotional development. We also understand that under those circumstances, parents also find it difficult to leave.

Helpful Hints:

- You can assist your child to settle in by being positive and showing that you are confident that they will have an enjoyable day
- Try to remain happy so that your child sees that you know they will be taken care of
- Please make sure that you say goodbye to your child before leaving even if this upsets them
- It is important that your child knows that you are leaving and will return rather than discover that you have 'disappeared'!
- Preschool Staff will call you to let you know how your child is so that you feel reassured

SIGN IN/OUT

We require you to sign the roll at the beginning and end of each session. Please inform us of any changes with regards to pick-ups at the end of the Preschool session. If you have nominated someone else other than the immediate family members, staff will request this person to present a proof of identity to ensure we are handing your child to the right person at dismissal time. Safety of children is of paramount importance to us and we appreciate your support and understanding with this procedure. Please ensure that your child is collected on time and if you are late due to unavoidable reasons, please contact the Preschool so your child can be cared for appropriately until you arrive. You will be charged OSHC fee's if you are late.

SUN SMART POLICY

It is our policy that **bucket** hats must be available in children's backpacks every day. Please label your child's hat, and **ALL** clothing items. We ask that sunscreen be applied at home before preschool. Sunscreen will be provided again before outdoor play when required.

WHAT TO WEAR

Preschool polo shirt play clothes and enclosed shoes that are safe and comfortable, definitely no thongs. Hats are required for all outdoor activities.

WHAT TO BRING EACH DAY:

- Bucket Hat
- Water bottle
- Healthy snack and lunch
- Change of clothing (just in case)