



WEETANGERA HANDBOOK INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES



Principal's Message

Weetangera School is situated in Belconnen in the north of the Australian Capital Territory. The school community consists of approximately 280 families (415 students, Preschool to year 6) and just over 30 staff are employed to cater for the needs of our students. The Weetangera School community shares the vision that "Our students will learn and achieve to their potential. They will acquire skills that allow them to lead productive and responsible lives."

Weetangera School has a commitment to excellence in a caring, cooperative and inclusive environment. As a community we share the common values of respect, responsibility, resilience, honesty, inclusion and doing your best. We explicitly teach these values to our students and recognise people who display such qualities and are positive role models and citizens in our community.

Our teachers set high standards and strive to establish respectful working relationships with all members of our school community. As professionals, our teachers willingly reflect upon their own practice and share their knowledge, resources and skills with colleagues.

It is the belief of our community that we are all responsible for the academic, social, emotional and physical well being and development of the children in our care. We believe that the partnership between home and school is the most important relationship of all and we do all we can to ensure the strength of this partnership.

Our students continue to achieve high standards through the strong literacy and numeracy programs which operate at the school. The school also provides outstanding arts, special needs, science, cultural and sporting programs.

I am privileged to be the Principal of the school and invite you to visit us online or in person. Enjoy interacting with our website and learning about the characteristics that make us such a successful school community.

James M. Barnett (Principal)

BSc (Hons), PGCE, MEd (Hons)

Preschool Educators Message

As the preschool educators at Weetangera School, we strive to provide a caring and nurturing environment that develops the whole child. We collaborate with parents and carers to ensure their involvement in decisions regarding their children. Programs reflect the needs and interests of children and include planned and spontaneous teaching. Indoor and outdoor play includes a wide range of planned activities, as well as independent, creative play. All programs are displayed for parents and carers and show clear links to the Early Years Learning Framework.



Weetangera School Contact Details

- Principal: Mr James Barnett (Nominated Supervisor)
- Deputy Principal: Ms Danielle Hoogland
- Preschool Staff: Mr Rob Panozzo (Teacher / Educational Leader)
Ms Virginia Hambly (Teacher)
Ms Katrina Van Der Sterren (Assistant)
Ms Sally Allen (Assistant)
- School Phone Number: 62057488 School Fax Number: 62057487
- Preschool Unit Phone: 62056670 Preschool Fax Number: 62056670

Department of Education Contact Details

Education and Training Directorate Contact Details

- 13 2281 (62070494 TTY)
- www.act.gov.au

Weetangera School Vision Statement

Our students will learn and achieve to their potential. They will acquire skills that allow them to lead productive and responsible lives.

Weetangera Preschool Philosophy Statement

We provide a caring and nurturing environment where we aim to develop the whole child. We build strong partnerships and collaborate with parents and carers to ensure their involvement in decisions regarding their children. Our students will learn and achieve to their potential and they will acquire skills that allow them to lead productive and responsible lives. We respect the views and feelings of each child and ensure planned and spontaneous activities are reflective of the needs and interests of all children. The preschool is a child-centred and stimulating environment, incorporating a play based approach to learning where we aim to actively engage all children. We create a respectful and inclusive culture where differences are valued.

Weetangera Values

Honesty, excellence, fairness and respect

Secure, Respectful and Reciprocal Relationships

At Weetangera Preschool, the educators

- Ensure family members are welcomed into the classroom in a variety of roles
We encourage parents and carers to assist with the daily program and to share their knowledge and skills with the children



The children observe this as:

My family are welcome to come and see me and my friends at preschool anytime during the day

We have family picnics

My family come in and do puzzles with me in the mornings

My family come in and share our interests, culture and things that are important to us

- Ensure that the interests, abilities and culture of every child and their family are understood, valued and respected
We provide a wide range of open-ended experiences in order to cater for children's interests and stage of development
We provide a wide range of culturally diverse resources and experiences to promote cultural awareness

The children observe this as:

My family show the other children how to cook the food I eat at home and then we can eat it

My family teach the other children songs in my language and how to make things, like masks, that are special to us

My parents tell my teachers how to say hello and goodbye in my language

I bring in things that are important to me, like new toys and things I make

- Encourage children as active participants for sustainability, influencing the quality of life now, and for future generations.
We implement sustainable practices in the school e.g. recycling and composting
We provide learning experiences to develop the students understanding of the importance of caring for their environment

The children observe this as:

We put our paper scraps and hard plastic in the recycling bin

We put our food scraps in the composting bin

We play recycling games

We bring in boxes and containers from home to use in craft

We have Nude Food Days

- Initiate warm, trusting and reciprocal relationships with children and respect the views and feelings of each child
We spend time interacting and conversing with each child
We deal with each child with empathy and respect in all situations

The children observe this as:

The teachers play with me

The teachers help me with things I find hard to do

The teachers listen to me and what I am saying

The teachers help me when I feel sad and make me feel better

- Provide safe and stimulating environments for children.
We provided a learning environment that is safe for the children



We check the physical environment each day to ensure its safety
We monitor student's behaviour and play throughout the day
We promote and implement effective hygiene practices
We plan learning environments that are stimulating and with appropriate levels of challenge that meet students' needs and interests which are based on our daily observations and documentation

The children observe this as:

There are lots of interesting things to do

I am always busy

I have lots of choices and I am included in making decisions about what I would like to play with

- Build on children's prior learning and experiences to build continuity for their learning and development.

We use the information parents have provided on the questionnaire, and conduct interviews at the beginning of the year, to acquire knowledge on their child's interests, skills and needs

We observe and record children's interests, skills and needs and use this to guide future planning to extend their learning

The children observe this as:

There are lots of interesting things to do

I can do things that I am interested in

- Promote positive relationships between school leadership and preschool educators

There is regular and positive communication between preschool staff and school leadership

School leaders work with preschool educators in decision making on various aspects of the preschool program and facilities

School leaders meet regularly with preschool staff to discuss progress in the program, students with needs and support required



Partnerships

At Weetangera Preschool, the educators:

- Work with families to support children's learning and development at home and in the community

We regularly talk to families about their children's learning and progress and direct them to or contact appropriate agencies when extra support is required

We give families strategies and ideas to incorporate into home life that will support their child

We liaise with other educational settings and agencies the children attend

The children observe this as:

I sometimes visit the speech therapist or physio therapist. These people also visit me at preschool

My teacher talks to my family. We do activities at home that my teacher has talked to my mum and dad about

My teacher visits me at child care

- Use families understanding of their children to support shared decision making about each child's learning and development
We have formal and informal interviews throughout the year where parents can talk about their child and any areas of strength/concern
We incorporate information from parents into the preschool program
We ask parents to comment on our program in the Program in Photos book

The children observe this as:

We do things at preschool that I am interested in

I can bring in things from home to share at preschool

I am able to share information at preschool about things I do with my family and places I have been

- Create a welcoming and culturally inclusive environment where all families are encouraged to participate in and contribute to children's learning and development experiences
We incorporate materials and equipment into the program that are culturally diverse
We acknowledge each child's culture and incorporate aspects of these cultures into the Preschool program
Parents are encouraged to share their culture with the children

The children observe this as:

There are puzzles and dolls showing children that look like me

We say hello and goodbye in my language

We use different languages to count the candles on birthday cakes

My family come and share things about the country I come from and cook the foods we eat at home

There is a map in the classroom that shows everyone where I come from

- Are transparent and objective, and provide families with information about their children's learning and development, and about what they can do to further support their children.
We keep ongoing records of the children's learning and development that can be shared with families
We encourage families to come and talk to us about concerns they may have about their child
We provide a weekly program that is always accessible to parents and families
We provide regular newsletters and information about the program

The children observe this as:

I get to share what we do each week with my family. We talk about the photos in the program book and my work hanging up in the room

- Actively engage families and children in planning children’s learning and development
We include a “family sharing book” that the parents can contribute to as part of our program
We send home information requesting families to contribute to things being done in the classroom
We incorporate knowledge and experiences that children and families have as part of our program

The children observe this as:

My teacher listens and responds to my requests for particular activities and experiences
My teacher listens to, and is aware of, things that interest me and things I have been doing. I can participate in these experiences at preschool.
We have special times where we can plan what we would like to do with our teachers

- Acknowledge the significance of transitions within and across early childhood services and schools, and ensure that children understand the process and have an active role in preparing for these transitions
We meet the children on an individual basis and commence the Preschool year with small groups as part of our transition to Preschool Program
We have an active, ongoing transition to Primary School that includes a Buddy system, regular visits to the primary school as well as visits to the Kindergarten rooms and canteen
We participate in whole school events such as the End of Year concert, and other whole school activities that are appropriate

The children observe this as:

I get to meet my teacher and visit the preschool before we start the year.
I have a special Primary School “buddy” that can support me when I go to Primary School next year
I already know lots of the teachers at the Primary school because they come and visit me at preschool
I visit the primary school during the year and I am familiar with the kindergarten room and know what it looks like

High Expectations and Equity

At Weetangera Preschool, the educators:

- Establish high expectations for all children’s learning and development
We aim to reach the full potential of each child in our care
We support children in their play, interests and needs through warm, caring interactions and conversations which scaffold children’s learning
We encourage and nurture each child to participate in the program, attempt new challenges, take risks and to build on their learning
We educate and encourage the children to independently make appropriate choices in their play and interactions and to show respect for others and their environment

The children observe this as:

The teachers play with me and talk to me about what I am doing

The teachers ask me questions about what I am doing
The teachers talk to me about things I could do to make my play even more fun or interesting and help me learn
The teachers help me when I am having problems with my friends or with making good choices

- Support children's learning and development through a combination of child-led and adult-led play based learning, as well as active teacher-directed learning
We provide a child-centred play based approach where children explore, communicate, create, solve problems, think and construct
We provide a wide variety of resources for the children to engage with independently and in small or large groups
Teachers use children's play as times for intentional teaching to take place
We ensure resources meet the needs and interests of the children by referring to detailed recorded observations of children's play experiences
We ensure that resources are easily accessible to students
When programming, teachers include a combination of child-led and adult-led play based learning as well as group times which are teacher directed

The children observe this as:

There are lots of different of things for me to play with and to use
I can choose to do things by myself or with my friends and I can choose to play inside or outside
We do activities together as a whole group

- Ensure that every child experiences success in their learning and development
We make detailed observations of learning and development and record this in their individual files
We use our observations to guide future planning for individual and group learning
We support students to meet their needs and develop the whole child

The children observe this as:

The teachers help me to do things I find hard
My teachers help me when I ask for help
The teachers help me when I have a problem with my friends



- Recognise that every child can learn, but some children require quite different opportunities and supports to do this
We are aware of all students with various needs and provide the necessary assistance and resources for each child to have success
Children with diagnosed special needs have their own Individual Learning Plan

The children observe this as:

My teacher uses pictures to help me understand what I have to do
My teacher wears a microphone so I can hear better
My teacher and friends get me a chair so I can sit comfortably with the group
My teacher helps me to complete the obstacle course

- Maximise opportunities for every child
We provide a variety of experiences and resources to cater for every child
We engage with, and work with, each child to build on their cognitive learning and social and emotional development

The children observe this as:

The teachers give us lots of different things to play with

The teachers help us to try new things, and play and learn in lots of different ways

My teachers join in our activities and games

- Provide physical environments that support a range of opportunities for learning and physical activity, both indoors and outdoors
We provide a program whereby the children have the opportunity to move between the indoor and outdoor environments
We consider the indoors and outdoors to be of equal importance to student learning and planning is given equal balance

The children observe this as:

We can choose whether we want to be inside or outside

There are lots of things to use both inside and outside that I like to play with

I can ask the teachers for things I want to use

- Encourage children to explore, solve problems, communicate, think, create and construct
We provide a variety of open-ended activities that promotes creativity, communication between peers, problem solving
We provide a variety of materials that can be manipulated by the children in any way the child decides, to explore various outcomes

The children observe this as:

When we play, we talk about what we could do with the equipment; how we could do it and then we do it together

My teachers talk to me and ask me questions that make me think about how and why things happen and help me to solve problems

- Use child-centred approaches to explicitly teach particular knowledge and skills
We teach particular knowledge and skills through explicit teaching, various forms of play and in ways the children enjoy and feel included

The children observe this as:

We do lots of singing, art and craft, drama, listen to stories or books with information in them and use the computers to learn new skills and find out answers to questions

I can put up my hand and share my answers or ideas with the whole group

Respect for Diversity

At Weetangera Preschool, the educators:

- Recognise bi and multilingualism as an asset and support these children to maintain their first language and learn English as a second language.

We encourage parents to speak and maintain the first language in the home

We are able to utilise the ESL teacher for strategies in order to support children from non-English speaking backgrounds

We have greeting signs in the various languages of the families in our preschool

The children observe this as:

My teacher talks to the group about where I come from and the language I speak

I am able to share words in my language that we can learn as a group

My family come in to preschool and share things about our culture and the other children learn by doing activities like art, craft, music and cooking

- Promotes cultural awareness in all children, including greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres strait islander ways of knowing and being

We provide culturally appropriate materials and resources with a connection to the Aboriginal people and their culture

We display the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags and talk to children about their meaning and what they represent

We invite local Indigenous families and people from the wider community to participate in the program

The children observe this as:

We learn Aboriginal songs and tryout Aboriginal art techniques at preschool

We listen to Aboriginal dreamtime stories and we talk about what they mean and why they are important to the Aboriginal people



Ongoing Learning and Reflective Practice

At Weetangera Preschool, the educators:

- Gather information that supports, informs, assesses and enriches decision-making about appropriate professional practices

We regularly attend Professional Development and report our learning back to our colleagues

We conduct Team Meetings each week to discuss professional reading and use this to evaluate our own practice

We liaise with other professionals in the Belconnen cluster

- Continually develop our professional knowledge and skills that enables us to provide the best possible learning and development opportunities for all children

We attend relevant Professional Development to build on our practice



We have team meetings to discuss best practices and share information on professional reading and PD we have attended

- Promote practices that have been shown to be successful in supporting children's learning and development
We provide information for parents and carers through information booklets, pamphlets, documentation on the noticeboard and through formal and informal interviews to inform them on best practices for children's learning
- Assess children's learning in ways that inform the educator's practice
We reflect on and assess children's play and behaviours in written form and verbally with colleagues
We assess children's play and interactions in terms of what is happening in their experiences, the communication between children and between children and adults, and the roles children assume in their play, and use this to plan future learning experiences that scaffold children's learning
- Use evidence to inform planning for early childhood experiences and practice.
We use our visual observations, photos and written documentation to reflect and assess, and to implement activities for individual, small group or large groups of children

Curriculum

The National Early Years Learning Framework for children from birth to five years is implemented at Weetangera School. The Early Years Learning Framework was developed to ensure each child receives quality education programs in their early childhood setting, as this is a vital time in their development.

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

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Programs/EarlyChildhoodEducation/Pages/default.aspx>

It is a guide for early childhood educators who work with children from birth to five years. Teachers will use the framework in partnership with families, acknowledging that parents and carers are children's first and most influential educators, to develop learning programs which are responsive to the 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.

Together with this national framework, educators in A.C.T can use 'Every Chance to Learn – Curriculum Framework for Australian Capital Territory Schools for Preschool to Year 10' to develop quality programs.

To view Education and Training Directorate policies visit <http://www.det.act.gov.au/>

Communication Avenues with Staff

Our school recognises the importance of positive parent/staff relationships. We encourage:

- Sharing knowledge to enhance the growth and development of your child.
- Developing positive relationships with families that are based on mutual trust and open communication.
- Developing a sense of belonging to the preschool for the children, parents and staff.

Important notices are placed on the noticeboard outside your child's classroom. In addition to this, you will receive information through notes that will be placed in your child's 'Take Home' pocket.

Newsletters

Newsletters are produced on a weekly basis by the school and sent out electronically. Hardcopies are also made available. Newsletters contain information about what is happening in the school, upcoming events and twice a term, news from each unit and the specialist teachers.

Parent Interviews

Formal parent interviews are held at the beginning of each school year prior to your child commencing and at the end of Term 2. Additional meetings may be requested by either parents/carers or the teacher. Teachers are available for informal discussions at the beginning and the end of the day.

Written Reports

Written reports will be completed for each child at the end of Term 2 and the end of the school year. The reports outline the child's development in a range of areas. Each child has an 'Individual Observation File' where teachers record observations of children's interests, interactions and learning, and use this information to guide future planning. Teachers use this information for report writing and interviews with parents. Parents may request to view the Individual Observation File at any time.

Teachers appreciate the opportunity to talk with parents and carers, both informally and in formal situations. This ensures valuable insights, and understandings, can be appreciated about a child's individual developmental journey. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask for an appointment to meet with the teacher.

Learning Journeys

Learning Journeys are held in Term 3 of each year and provide an opportunity for parents/carers to spend some time with their child in the preschool environment.

Hours of Operation

Monday, Tuesday (every 2nd Wednesday – weeks 1,3, 5, 7, 9) 9:00 am -3:00pm
Thursday, Friday (every 2nd Wednesday – weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10) 9:00am – 3:00pm

Enrolment Procedures

Children seeking to enter school at the preschool entry point should be four years of age on or before 30 April in that year.

Preschool enrolments open in May prior to the commencement of the preschool year. Enrolment forms for preschool or primary school can be downloaded from the Departmental Website . Go to:
www.det.act.gov.au.

School education

Choosing a School

Enrolling in ACT Public Schools

To be eligible to enrol, you will need to provide your child's birth certificate, immunisation details and proof of residence, i.e. utilities bill, mortgage document, lease or tenancy agreement. Once you have completed the on line enrolment a receipt will be forwarded to you.

Early Intervention: Early enrolment for children under compulsory education age is also available to children eligible for entry into Early Intervention programs (Special Needs Education). Children requiring Special Education support may be enrolled upon meeting certain eligibility criteria. An application may be made through the school counsellor or through the Student Support section of the Department. Full information will have to be provided to the Principal at the time of application. Further information is available on the Department's website at <http://www.det.act.gov.au/>

Voluntary Contributions

Public education is free. A school may offer or facilitate some specific optional items, activities and services for which parents may be asked to pay if they want their child to access them. Such activities may include excursions and class photos.

Schools do ask families to contribute a voluntary contribution to enable it to continue to provide a quality learning environment for our children. At Weetangera preschool, this is \$75 per term or \$280 per year.

Purchases of quality resources rely upon the commitment and generosity of our parent community.



Participation of Volunteers

Volunteers have a special place in schools and assist in many ways. This may include interaction with individuals and small groups of students in a range of different activities.

To assist schools in providing a safe environment and a positive educational climate, volunteers are asked to comply with the *Code of Conduct for Volunteers*. This code of conduct has been formulated to clarify the type of conduct that is expected of volunteers when participating in programs and activities in ACT Government schools.

- Observe similar standards of behaviour and ethical conduct to that required of staff. For example you are expected to act within the law, be honest and fair, respect other people (including students), and work to the best standard of your ability.
- Appreciate that teachers have a special duty of care for students that cannot be delegated or transferred to others. Appreciate also that the principal is the spokesperson for the school.
- Appreciate that students have rights and aspirations. Treat students with dignity and respect.
- Observe confidentiality in respect of all information gained through your participation as a volunteer. All information held by schools should be handled with care. Some information is especially sensitive. Sensitive and/or personal information requires additional caution in the way it is treated. For example, volunteers should not discuss nor disclose personal information about students, staff or students' parents/carers to others.
- Accept and follow directions from the principal/supervisor and seek guidance through clarification where you may be uncertain of tasks or requirements. You may need to familiarise yourself with the department's policies and guidelines on particular issues.
- Observe safe work practices which avoid unnecessary risks, apply reasonable instructions given by supervisors and report to the supervising staff and school administration any hazard or hazardous practice in the workplace.
- Report any problems as they arise to your supervisor including incidents, injury or property damage.
- Avoid waste or extravagance and make proper use of the resources of the school/department.



Contribution to Decision Making

Families are welcome to contribute to the decision making procedures of the school through the School Board or the P&C.

School Board

Each government school in the ACT is administered by a school board whose membership comprises the school principal, two elected staff members, three elected members of the parent body and a nominee of the Department of Education. Elected members normally serve for a two-year period.

The Board is the policy-making body of the School. Its major functions are to:

- determine the educational policies to be implemented at the School
 - assess, from time to time, the needs of the School in relation to the provision of buildings and facilities, equipment, funds and teachers and other staff, and make recommendations to the Chief Executive (of the Department of Education) with respect to the meeting of those needs
 - determine the purposes for which funds made available for the School are to be expended
 - make recommendations to the Chief Executive in respect of the use of the buildings, facilities and equipment of the School for purposes other than school purposes
 - develop relationships between the School and the community and between the School and community organisations
 - make recommendations to the Chief Executive on matters relating to the School
- Responsibility for the implementation of policies established by the Board rests with the Principal and staff.

Parents and Citizens Association

The Weetangera School P&C plays an important role within the School. Meeting dates are advertised in the school newsletter. All parents are encouraged to attend the meetings. As well as its more official activities, the P&C provides an informal meeting ground for parents and teachers, and serves a fundraising function for the school.

Participation in Preschool Activities

Families are welcome to share their special skills, interests and diverse family cultures with the preschool. Families are encouraged to participate in social activities to enable families to meet, develop new friendships and form a sense of belonging to the school.

Families can help in the following ways:

- sharing knowledge and expertise of craft, cooking, music, storytelling, job skills etc.
- interacting with the daily program
- assisting with laundry
- participating in the Weetangera P&C Association



Delivery and Collection of Children

Regular attendance is important as this allows the children to settle into routines and establish themselves as part of the group. In accordance with the National Quality Standard, collection of children must be by a parent or authorised nominee.

The preschool day begins at 9:00am. Please wait on the veranda until staff open the main doors. **Please note that children are not to be left unattended in the playground.** Children are required to wash their hands before entering the room. The day starts with parents settling their children into the day by doing puzzles together. If you are running late to collect your child, please telephone the school to advise us of your situation. Your child will remain inside with the teachers until you arrive.

At the beginning of the year, parents are required to complete forms authorising family or friends to collect their child. Any changes to the normal collection of children is required to be written down in the "Communication Diary" which is accessible to parents each morning and afternoon. It is also requested that you advise staff verbally of this change .

Changes to Details

Please keep staff and the school informed of any changes to address, home and work phone numbers, child care arrangements, medical information and emergency contact phone numbers, as soon as possible.

Medical Condition Management

Immunisation

The ACT Department of Health advises that all children attending school in the ACT should be immunised against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, measles, mumps, rubella and HIB (Haemophilus influenzae type b). We would ask that you check your child's present immunisation status to see whether it is complete for his/her age. ACT Public Health regulations require schools to request proof of up to date immunisation when enrolling. Failure to provide this may result in your child being excluded from school should an outbreak of an infectious disease occur. A copy of exclusion periods for students with infectious diseases is available. Parents are asked to adhere closely to these requirements unless medical advice to the contrary is provided in writing.

Medical and Accidents

It is important that sick children are kept at home for their own comfort, as well as the comfort of other children and staff. If a child becomes ill or is injured at school, appropriate First Aid will be given and if necessary, parents will be notified and asked to take their child home. If emergency treatment is required, parents will be notified immediately and the child will be transferred by ambulance to hospital. In such cases ambulance services and treatment are free. All students who have an ongoing condition (eg asthma, diabetes, epilepsy) must have a treatment plan completed by parents and their GP and lodged at the school. Plan proformas are available from the primary school front office, or from a staff member in the preschool.

Exclusion periods for infectious diseases such as mumps, German measles, measles and chicken pox are provided at the end of this handbook.

If a child is to take a **prescription medicine** while at school, written directions and medicine must be left with staff. Staff will provide the appropriate documentation to be signed by parents, giving authorisation to administer medication. Information on a child's health status e.g. epilepsy, diabetes, should be given on enrolment or on diagnosis. If the health problem is serious, please provide an up-to-date photograph of the child so it can be placed on our Medical Alert board.

Head lice are extremely contagious but easily eradicated. Children with either eggs or live lice are not permitted at school until written evidence of treatment is produced.



Food – Provision is made for the children to eat during the preschool session. Parents/carers are urged to provide children with healthy snacks and lunch which will enable the staff to assist in the development of lifelong healthy eating habits. All children will need their own drink bottle with water only. *Please note Weetangera Preschool and Primary School sites are both nut aware sites due to the inclusion of students with life threatening anaphylactic allergic condition.* Please refer to the preschool food and drink requirements for further information.

Birthdays are celebrated at preschool so please feel free to bring a cake or cupcakes to share with the group for your child's special day. If your child has special dietary requirements, an alternative "treat" can be brought from home and kept in the freezer to give to your child when birthdays are celebrated.



To view Education and Training Directorate policies visit <http://www.det.act.gov.au/> or access the Weetangera Preschool Policies and Procedures Folder which is located on the Information for Parents display.

Physical Activities

Physical activity is very important for children so educators provide opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity.

During the preschool sessions, your child will be involved with some hands-on experiences both inside the classroom and in the outdoor area. These activities can, at times, be very messy. Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately so that they feel confident to participate in all the challenges provided throughout the session. In keeping with our Sun Safe policy, children are provided with a hat which meets Sunsmart requirements. The hat remains at school to ensure children have a hat each day for outdoor sessions. The children will be challenging themselves on the climbing equipment so sensible footwear is essential and long dresses and skirts can be dangerous. Please label all of your child's clothing and pack a spare set in case of extremely messy play or accidents.



Information on Hygiene Procedures

Staff, children and volunteers must adhere to the hand washing procedures.

All children are required to wash their hands:

- on arrival
- before and after eating or touching food
- after toileting
- after blowing their nose and wiping tears and dribbles

All scratches and cuts must be covered prior to the preschool day.

Food Safety Tips for Homemade Lunches & Snacks

Healthy lunches and snacks are important for children and help with their concentration and learning. School lunches are particularly susceptible to food poisoning, especially in the summer heat. Parents and care-givers are reminded of a few simple food safety rules to prepare safe and healthy school lunches and avoid the growth and contamination of food poisoning bacteria.

- Before handling food, wash hands with soap and warm running water and dry thoroughly. Lunch boxes and eating utensils should also be washed thoroughly before reuse. Children should also be encouraged to always wash their hands before eating.
- Foods that are prepared the night before, such as sandwiches, should be frozen overnight and then taken out for each day's school lunch. Suitable foods to freeze are: bread, cooked meat, cheese, baked beans or vegemite.
- Because food is normally stored in a child's lunch box for several hours, the lunch box needs to be kept cool. This can be done by:
 - Choosing an insulated lunch box or one with a freezer pack, or include a wrapped frozen water bottle to keep the lunch box cool
 - Perishable foods such as dairy products, eggs and sliced meats should be kept cool, and eaten within about four hours of preparation. Don't pack these foods if just cooked; first cool in the refrigerator overnight.
 - If including leftover meals such as meats, pasta and rice dishes, ensure you pack a frozen ice block into the lunch box
 - Healthy drinks, such as water and milk can be frozen overnight and then stored in your child's lunchbox, helping to keep it cold.
- Educators ensure, that children's lunches are away from direct sunlight and other heat sources that facilitate the development of food poisoning bacteria.



Excursions

Excursions are part of the educational program at Weetangera Preschool. On enrolment, parents are asked to give permission for their child to go on incidental excursions e.g. to nearby oval. If children use any form of transport, parents will be advised in advance and asked to give permission in writing for the child to attend. The adult/child ratio is 1:4 on major excursions or less as required.

Emergency Management Procedures

The school policies and procedures on emergency management are located in the preschool unit. These procedures are required to be practised throughout the year.



Child Protection Practices

All employees in schools are mandated to report any case of suspected child abuse. Failure to notify suspected physical and /or sexual abuse of children is a criminal offence.

Staff will deliver lessons to children in protective behaviour and safe behaviours. Staff will also deliver lessons to enhance social and emotional skills.

Transitions

Once your child is enrolled in Weetangera Preschool, your child will automatically have a place (if desired) in Kindergarten in the primary school the following year. As with all transitions, the staff will ensure that the move from Preschool to Kindergarten is successful. To do this, we have implemented a transition program for our preschool children. This involves:

- visits to the primary school setting to see various aspects of the school e.g. library, canteen, Kindergarten Unit
- sessions with the Kindergarten teachers of the current year (note: these teachers may change the following year)
- Buddies Program – children will be assigned a buddy from Year 5 that will be their buddy the following year. The children engage in a variety of activities in Term 4 to develop positive relationships which will assist the children when they begin Kindergarten (e.g. eating lunch together, completing activities together)

For more information about this topic please follow the link to this website for some handy hints:

[Starting school - a guide for parents](#)

Student Welfare and Management

At Weetangera Primary School we value that everyone is an individual and that we all have the special qualities that make us who we are. It is important that students are treated with respect, and their uniqueness valued and important to the school. We provide a supportive, welcoming and culturally inclusive educational environment where students feel safe and happy. The school has a *Student Management and Wellbeing* policy that outlines the steps for addressing student welfare and management issues.

Parent Support

Parentlink www.parentlink.act.gov.au is a website which parents can use to access:

- parents guides, including electronic order forms
- a directory of local parenting services
- upcoming community events and parenting courses
- further readings in relation to the parent guides
- links to other useful websites.

Policies

Please refer to the Directorate website for the latest policies or refer to the Weetangera Preschool Policies and Procedures Folder which is located on the *Information for Parents* display.

http://www.det.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policy_a-z

Concerns or Complaints

If you have a concern about your child's education, please have a conversation with your child's preschool teacher. You are also welcome to make contact with the Principal at the primary school.

Should the need arise, the ACT Education and Training Directorate has a policy for complaints resolution, you can contact

Concerns, Suggestions and Complaints

Education and Training Directorate

Community Liaison Section

Phone: (02) 6205 5429

Email: DET.CommunityLiaison@act.gov.au

The policy can be accessed at: http://www.det.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policy_a-z

Diseases - Outbreak Procedures and Exclusion Periods

Personal hygiene measures such as hand washing, covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, covering weeping sores, not sharing food or drinks and not attending school when ill or suffering from diarrhoea are important means of limiting the transmission of a number of common infectious conditions.

The *ACT Public Health Regulations 2000* require children with the following conditions, and children who have been in contact with the following conditions, to be excluded from school, preschool, child care or family day care for the periods specified.

Condition	Exclusion of person with condition	Exclusion of persons in contact with condition
Amoebiasis (entamoeba histolytica)	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*Campylobacteriosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Chicken pox (varicella and herpes zoster)	Exclude until the last blister has scabbed over. The child should not continue to be excluded by reason only of some remaining scabs.	Not excluded Any child with an immune deficiency (eg with leukaemia, or as a result of receiving chemotherapy) should be excluded for their own protection and seek urgent medical advice and varicella-zoster immunoglobulin (ZIG), if necessary.
Conjunctivitis (acute infectious)	Exclude until discharge from eyes ceases.	Not excluded
*Cryptosporidiosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Diarrhoea	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*#Diphtheria	Exclude until— (a) at least 2 negative throat swabs have been taken (the first not less than 24 hours after cessation of antibiotic treatment and the second not less than 48 hours later), and (b) a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Exclude family and household contacts until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer.
Giardiasis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*#Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib)	Exclude until a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded
Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Exclude if— (a) child is unwell, or (b) child is drooling, and not all blisters have dried or an exposed weeping blister is not covered with a dressing.	Not excluded
*Hepatitis A	Exclude for at least 7 days after the onset of jaundice and a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded
Herpes (cold sores)	Exclude young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices while the lesion is weeping. Lesion to be covered by a dressing in all cases, if possible.	Not excluded

Impetigo (school sores)	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced and sores on exposed surfaces are covered with a watertight dressing.	Not excluded
Influenza and influenza-like illnesses	Exclude until well	Not excluded
*Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer.	Not excluded
*#Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after the rash appears.	(a) Immunised contacts not excluded. (b) Exclude non-immunised contacts until 14 days after the first day of appearance of the rash in the index case. (b) Non-immunised contacts immunised with measles vaccine within 72 hours after their first contact with the index case are not excluded after being immunised. (d) Non-immunised contacts who are given normal human immunoglobulin (NHIG) within 7 days after their first contact with the index case are not excluded after being given NHIG.
Meningitis (bacterial)	Exclude until well	Not excluded
*Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has commenced.	(a) Not excluded if receiving rifampicin or other antibiotic treatment recommended by the Chief Health Officer. (b) Otherwise, excluded until 10 days after last contact with the index case.
*#Mumps	Exclude for 9 days after onset of symptoms, or until parotid swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).	Not excluded
*#Poliomyelitis	Exclude for at least 14 days after onset of symptoms and until a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded
Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (lice), trachoma	Exclude until effective treatment has commenced.	Not excluded
Rotavirus	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*#Rubella (German measles)	Exclude for 4 days after the appearance of the rash.	Not excluded Female staff of child-bearing age should ensure that their immune status against rubella is adequate.
*Salmonellosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded

*Shigellosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the person has recovered or has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours.	Not excluded
*Tuberculosis	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer.	Not excluded
*Typhoid and paratyphoid fever	Exclude until a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	(a) Not excluded unless the Chief Health Officer notifies the person in charge of the school. (a) If the Chief Health Officer gives notice, exclusion is subject to the conditions in the notice.
*#Whooping cough (pertussis)	Exclude for 21 days from start of cough, or for at least 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the Chief Health Officer.	Exclude non-immunised household, home based child care and close child care contacts under 7 years old for 14 days after the last exposure to infection, or until 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the Chief Health Officer (whichever is sooner).
Worms (intestinal)	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded