Welcome to preschool

A parents guide to starting preschool







NEW SOUTH WALES
DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION
AND TRAINING

ENGLISH



What you'll find inside
Welcome to preschool

Welcome to preschool has been designed to help make the start of your child's early learning journey a positive and happy one. Inside, you will find handy hints given by early childhood teachers and parents to make it easier for you and your family in getting your child ready for preschool. It will also give you reassurance that you've made the right decision in sending your child to preschool and an insight into how valuable it is for your child's development.

If you have any queries or would like to make any suggestions please email us at **parents@det.nsw.edu.au**

Going to preschool	**3**
Getting prepared	**3**
Food at preschool	**4**
What should my child wear?	**5**
Learning for little ones	**5**
Supporting your child's learning	**6**
Getting ready for big school	**6**
When your child is sick	**7**
Head Lice	**7**
Useful websites	**8**

Going to preschool

The idea of preschool can be slightly 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 your child experiences education, leaving them as 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 assist in answering any questions that will help your child settle.

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

If you would like more information on our preschool policies please talk to the preschool teacher. For more tips on going to preschool please go to **www.schools.nsw.edu.au/gotoschool/preschool/adjusting.php**

Tip: The preschool will ask you to sign a register at the beginning and end of each day or session. Please ensure you sign this register, which is generally found at the preschool entrance.

Checklist

At a glance here's a list of things your child will need:

- a bag
- a lunch box
- a change of clothes, including socks and underwear
- a hat
- snacks for morning or afternoon tea and a drink.

If preschool is for a full day your child will also need:

- lunch
- a sheet and/or blanket for rest time.



Allergies, medical conditions and special needs

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



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, and encouraging them to finish their food and not to share it with other 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 on what to pack for your child each day. You can also visit our Healthy Kids website to get more ideas on snacks and lunches.
Go to: **www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au**

Tip: Pack food that you know your child likes and will eat. It's also a good idea to help your child learn how to unwrap their food and eat it on their own.

Care with allergies

Anaphylaxis is a severe and sudden allergic reaction to certain foods such as nuts or shellfish or to insect bites. You must let the preschool teacher know if your child is allergic to foods or is at risk of anaphylaxis. Some preschools have a nut-free policy, ask your preschool teacher about it.
Go to:
www.allergyfacts.org.au
https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/language-support/documents/anaphylaxis/parentinfo.htm









What should my child wear to preschool?

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

Children will be asked to wear a hat to play outdoors. Encourage your child to get used to wearing a hat when they are outside. Most preschools have a 'no hat, play in the shade' policy.

Tip: Leave good clothes for going out or parties. While teachers try to avoid children staining their clothes, paint and dirt are all part of having fun and learning.

Label everything!

There will be a lost property bin at the preschool but to save time and frustration please clearly label all of your child's items such as their clothing, bag and lunch box.

Learning for little ones

Your child's learning at preschool will build on what you have taught them at home. During play your child will use their imagination, learn to get along with others, plan and listen.

Our preschool teachers are fully qualified in early childhood studies. The learning experiences your child takes part in through play will be carefully planned by the teacher and directed by your child's interests.

Preschool activities for learning

- Puzzles and playing with blocks
- Painting and 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

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



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.

Ways to support your child at preschool

- Find out as much as you can about the preschool e.g. the routines and what your child needs to bring to preschool
- Get involved in your child's preschool e.g. volunteer as a helper
- Talk with preschool staff about activities that you can do with your child at home e.g. reading with your child
- Talk with staff about your child's learning
- Talk with your child each day about what they did at preschool

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 support them to 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 school routine and the exciting things that school life offers to families. 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

Your child will get sick from time to time. Please 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, please see your doctor and keep your child at home for the advised time.

Some typical infections are:

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.

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 T: 9391 9000.

Go to: **www.health.nsw.gov.au**

Head lice

Preschool may be your first experience with 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 they have no bearing on a child's personal hygiene.

The best thing you can do is help to manage head lice by:

- regularly checking your child's hair
- keeping long hair tied back or braided
- keeping a fine-toothed comb in the bathroom and encouraging your family to use it when they wash their hair
- daily combing with a white hair conditioner using a fine tooth comb to get rid of head lice and their eggs (nits).

Want to know more about managing head lice? Go to: **https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/languagesupport/documents/headlice/infosheet.htm**

Useful websites

Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG)
http://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au/

Allergies
www.allergyfacts.org.au
https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/languagesupport/documents/anaphylaxis/parentinfo.htm

Bullying
www.det.nsw.edu.au/antibullying
www.racismnoway.com.au
www.bullyingnoway.com.au

Early childhood
www.schools.nsw.edu.au/gotoschool/preschool/adjusting.php
www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au

Healthy eating
www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au

Health
www.health.nsw.gov.au
https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/languagesupport/documents/headlice/infosheet.htm

Immunisation
http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/PublicHealth/Immunisation/index.asp

Parenting
www.abc.net.au/parents
http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/parents_carers_and_families/parenting.html

Road safety
www.rta.nsw.gov.au

Translated school information
https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/languagesupport/index.htm

NSW Department of Education & Training
www.det.nsw.edu.au
www.schools.nsw.edu.au

Name of preschool

Operating Hours

My child's preschool sessions

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