



WOMBATS PLAYSCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK



www.wombatsplayschool.org

STREET ADDRESS 28 MACADAM ST PAGE ACT 2614

PH 02 61624017

POSTAL ADDRESS P.O BOX 4254 HAWKER ACT 2614

What your child needs to bring to Wombats:

(These items are required at every Wombats session and please ensure that all items are clearly labelled with your child's name).

- A Playschool bag/backpack
- A drink bottle containing water
- For morning tea - A piece of fruit & a small healthy snack
- For lunch – A lunchbox containing a sandwich or wrap etc, some fruit & a healthy snack.
- A sun hat (and warm hat in Winter)
- A spare change of clothes in a plastic bag (pants, shirt, underwear & socks).
- Please apply your child's sunscreen each day prior to coming to Wombats.

Food & Snacks:

-At Wombats we encourage the children to eat healthy nutritious foods.

-Please only send food that your child is familiar with and 'likes'. Also only send the amount of food that you expect your child to eat.

-Please try to avoid sending packaged, processed, unhealthy foods such as lollies, chocolates, chips, sweet biscuits etc.

-Healthy food options will give your child's body & mind the energy needed for our busy day.

-We do not have the facility to refrigerate your child's lunchbox, so a little icepack will keep their food fresh.



Please remember....Due to children with life threatening allergies

WOMBATS IS A PEANUT-FREE ENVIRONMENT

Toileting:

- Children need to be toilet trained and out of nappies before starting Wombats Playschool.
- If not, arrangements will need to be made for a parent or carer to stay at Wombats with your child until they are fully toilet trained.



Clothing:

- At Wombats we spend a lot of time outdoors. It is important that your child is dressed in comfortable season appropriate casual clothes.
- It is best to avoid pants with button & zips, belts or braces, stockings, tights or overalls.
- Children need to be able to get on the toilet (very quickly sometimes) so pants or shorts with an elastic waist are usually the easiest.
- It is a good idea to send your child to Wombats in old clothes because we love to do lots of messy craft & painting. We play with clay, playdough, and slime. We also cook and play with coloured water and we roll down the grass hills and dig the dirt in the vegetable garden.
- It is a good idea to keep their good designer clothes at home so that your child can just enjoy having fun without having to worry about getting dirty!
- Comfortable, sensible shoes (for running and climbing)...no crocs or thongs please.



Wombats Hats & T-shirts:

- Wombats Playschool does not specify a uniform for children, however we do have Wombats hats and t-shirts printed with our logo.
- Your child will receive a free Wombats hat.
- T-shirts can be purchased from our Wombats staff for \$12.50 each (cash only).
- Shirts and hats come in a variety of colours (blue, green, red, orange and pink).



Saying 'Goodbye':

- This can be difficult (more so for the parents than for the children) but it doesn't have to be.
- Please don't make a big deal out of saying 'goodbye'!
- Try to arrive at Wombats on time and sit quietly with your child for the first 10-15 minutes doing puzzles or perhaps read your child a book.
- This morning routine will help your child feel relaxed before you leave.
- Being consistent will help your child settle faster.

- We will ring the 'pack-up bell' at approximately 9.25am....this is a great time for you to say goodbye.
- Keep it short & sweet!
- “Have fun, love you, I will pick you up after lunch”, a quick kiss & cuddle – leave.
- Please do not tell your child how much you will miss them, please do not let your child see your own anxiety.....you can shed a tear or two once you reach the carpark!!
- We will call you if your child has not settled.

Car Park:

- The number of car park spaces in front of Wombats is very limited and Macadam St is too narrow for cars to be parked along the curb.
- For the safety of your children, parents are encouraged to use the Church car park located next door to Wombats.



Parent Roster:

- We like parents to volunteer as a 'Parent Helper' throughout the year, once a term if possible.
- A new roster is put up at the start of each term.
- Having an extra set of hands is a huge help to the staff and the children love to show off their parents to their new friends.
- It's also nice for you to see your child interacting with the teachers and other children in the playschool environment.
- All parents/carers who are planning on volunteering with us will need to register for their 'Working with Vulnerable People Card').



Communication between Parents and Staff:

Communication between staff and parents may take place in both formal and informal ways. Some of the ways we communicate at Wombats Playschool include a:

- Program posted on notice board
- Sign In book.

- Information Evening held in November of the year preceding enrolment.
- Orientation sessions held at beginning of the year.
- Emails.
- Newsletters each term
- Telephone calls.
- In person before drop-off and at pick-up time.
- Where a longer parent-teacher interview is required, a meeting should be scheduled.

Discussions will focus on the positive and Teachers will deal with any concerns by working with parents to find a caring and sensitive solution, and to form a positive action plan together. Staff must make every effort to build strong working relationships with parents. Informal discussions can take place on days when Parents are on Roster Duty, in moments of free time before and after the session.



‘ALL WEATHER PROGRAM’

What is it you ask??

We now own 22 Splash Suits, which the children can wear over their clothes and play outside in all-weather; we also have 22 sets of gumboots.

This program is optional if children would like to go outside and play when it is raining with full supervision. They also have the option of staying inside with supervision. Children will be brought inside if there is lightening or thunder.

We value the outside environment at Wombats and know the importance it is in a child's wellbeing. How special is it to hear the rain on your head and feel the mud on your hands, also to have the opportunity to run and splash in puddles with your friends. We are very excited about this addition to our program and look forward to our engagement in the outdoors and all that it brings to our children's development and appreciation of the environment.



Family Involvement:

Any positive contributions which families can make to the life of the Playschool are welcomed. Ways in which parents can help include:

- Sharing knowledge and expertise of craft, cooking, gardening, music, storytelling, etc.
- Helping with the daily program
- Participating in Playschool meetings
- Becoming part of the Parent Committee
- Working bees
- Being a classroom volunteer
- Helping in an administrative capacity
- Fundraising and much more

Staff will make every effort to share decision-making, problem solving and organising with willing parents. To make families feel part of the Playschool and to develop reciprocal information exchange, Wombats Playschool will:

- Treat all families equally and welcome them regardless of their cultural or religious beliefs or social background
- Encourage families to actively participate in the Playschool's planning, programs and operation
- Encourage information exchange about children's development
- Ensure the families rights to privacy and confidentiality.
- Give parents the right to be a member of the incorporation.



Contact Details:

- Please ensure we have your current contact details especially phone numbers and email address.
- Please check your email address regularly for correspondence and fee invoices.

Fees:

Invoices will be emailed (to your preferred email address). Fees are charged per term and payment is due two weeks prior to the start of each term.

- Overdue fees will incur a late charge of \$15.00 every 7 days.
- Consistently late fees will jeopardise your child's position at Wombats.

Pick Up Time:

- Please let our staff know (and leave a note in our 'sign in book') if your child is being picked up by someone else or if you have made arrangement for them to go home with another child.
- Ensure your child knows who is picking them up each day.
- To avoid anxiety, please be on time and waiting outside the classroom at 1.30pm to collect your child.

Illness:

- To avoid spreading germs, it is imperative that parents keep sick children at home.
- If your child becomes ill while in our care, you will be contacted to make arrangements for your child to be picked up.



Communication:

- We aim to establish a positive partnership between parents and teachers for the benefit of your child.
- It is important to keep the lines of communication open between home and Wombats staff.
- If you have any questions or concerns regarding any aspect of your child's time at Wombats, please do not hesitate to speak to our staff.



Preparing your child for Playschool:

To help prepare your child for playschool, you may like to consider helping them learn some of the following skills prior to starting at Wombats.

- Recognise their name when called.
- Recognise their name in writing (is a bonus but not essential of course)!



- Recognise their own belongings (bag/lunch box & drink bottle etc).
- Open and close their own drink bottle/lunch box & snack containers etc.
- Healthy food choices - practice eating sandwich/wrap etc 1st, fruit/ yoghurt/cheese etc 2nd, healthy snack foods (if any) to be eaten last.
- Packing up and zipping up own lunch boxes and bags.
- Wash & dry own hands & face (practice using just one squirt of soap).
- Flush toilet & wash hands (with

soap every time they use the toilet).

- Visit the toilet unassisted (and adjust own pants).
- Nose blowing and wiping (and throwing away used tissues).
- Wearing a hat while outdoors (we follow the No Hat – No Play policy)
- Put on own socks and shoes (shoes on the correct feet is an obvious bonus)!
- Turn book pages gently.
- Enjoy listening to stories.
- Sitting, legs crossed & listening for short periods of time (5-10 minutes max).
- Help out with little tasks (help pack away toys, help clear the table etc).
- Using manners (please & thankyou).
- Saying 'goodbye' to parents (Mum & Dad.....you need to practice this as well)!

Our staff will help your child develop and use these skills (and many more) on a daily basis.

We will encourage your child to become even more independent throughout the year in preparation for their transition into preschool the following year.

The Wombats Playschool program will offer your child a stepping-stone to independence in a supportive and stimulating environment. Our main aim is to provide opportunities for your child to enjoy belonging to their own social group, to interact cooperatively with peers, and to take responsibility for belongings and equipment.

At Wombat's Playschool, play is the manner in which your child will exercise their physical, creative and cognitive resources. Play is the major means by which children explore and come to understand their world.

Wombats Playschool aims to provide an environment that encourages in each child a sense of security, trust and acceptance of themselves and others. Our staff will provide genuine care and concern to ensure your child feels happy, safe and comfortable. Individual developmental needs and interests will be respected.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to share our Playschool program with your child, and we look forward to enjoying a fabulous year together!!

Drop Off and Pickup Policy:

Parents are required to be punctual with the drop off and pick up of their child. Parents are not to leave their child before the starting time. The teacher and assistant teacher will be busy preparing for the session, and will not be able to take responsibility for children



who are dropped off early. Equally, it is important that you are on time to pick your child up.

If you have arranged for another adult to pick up your child please ensure that this is clearly stated on the sign in sheet and the teacher or assistant teacher is verbally informed. It is also very important your child is aware of the change in pick up arrangements.



Behaviour Management Policy:

The children are encouraged to accept basic guidelines that respect each other's safety and feelings, and to care for their physical environment. Should a child not follow these guidelines the educators will assist them by explaining them again and redirecting their behaviour in a positive way.

At no time will the use of smacking or negative reprimand be tolerated. Parents on duty are advised to refer to the teacher in the case of challenging behaviour. Time out behaviour management will only be used at the teacher's discretion, in extreme cases, in consultation with the parent.



Health and Safety Policy:

Children must bring their own hat to every session and it should be clearly labelled. A sunhat/beanie is worn all year round in line with Preschool policies. Hats may not be shared or placed in a common basket/box so as to eliminate the risk of transferring head lice. In the event of head lice, the child will be excluded until appropriate treatment has been carried out and the head lice have disappeared.

Any accidents or incidents must be recorded. The parent must be notified and sign the appropriate documentation

The child must not attend if they have any communicable disease. A notice is in place on the notice board, of all excludable diseases as per ACT Health Department instruction.

To maximise optimal health standards in the kitchen/craft sink areas please use the correct coloured sponges as per the chart on the wall for cleaning surfaces.

Absenteeism Policy:

If enrolled families will be away for any length of time during the term, it is their responsibility if they chose, to advertise their position availability within the Wombat community (i.e. that the replacement must be a currently enrolled Wombat student that takes up the position). It is then an arrangement between these families for this replacement and the payment of fees. Wombats Committee structure has no input in to arrangement.

Cultural Inclusion Policy:

Wombats Playschool does not at any time discriminate children of diverse cultural background. Wombats Playschool does not discriminate between the genders of children. Wombats Playschool also includes children of all denominations, no matter what their religious or spiritual backgrounds.

We implement the inclusion of ALL children through example, and by educating ALL Wombats about the world round them through:

- Storytelling
- Guest Speakers
- Excursions
- Role-playing
- The Arts
- Show-and-tell
- Discussion
- And openly accepting and teaching about the various relevant differences.



Policy and Programming for Equity and Inclusion:

The Playschool Staff and Management will make every effort to create an environment that supports, reflects and promotes equitable and inclusive behaviours. All Staff, children and families will be treated equally regardless of race, culture, beliefs, religion, values, disabilities, gender, size, and colour or socio- economic status. The Playschool includes children of many denominations and ethnic origins, and all are welcome, no matter what their religious or spiritual backgrounds. The Inclusion and Equity Policy will be implemented through the Program using the different strategies.

Immunisation Policy:

There are no specific ACT Department of Education policies and procedures for enrolment of children in Playschools in the ACT. All ACT Playschools are autonomous and operate under their own rules and guidelines on the matter of enrolments. The policy described in this section has been altered to bring into line with ACT Preschools.

Children attending Wombats Playschool are encouraged to be fully immunised for their age.

Children who are not fully immunised must be notified to the Teacher in charge. In the event of an outbreak at Wombats Playschool of a notifiable condition subject to the vaccination schedule, any unimmunised child must be withdrawn from the school for a set period as advised by ACT Health, for their own protection.

Wombats Playschool accepts no other liability for unimmunised children, and parents choosing non-immunisation must be made aware of that limitation.

Wombats Playschool will not refund sessions fees for a child temporarily withdrawn due to their lack of appropriate immunisation.



On behalf of the Wombat Committee and Staff we look forward to meeting you and getting to know your future Wombat!!!