



# Wombats Playschool Policy and Procedures Manual

Reviewed 2023

# Table of Contents

## [Introduction \(A1\)](#)

[Explanatory Notes](#)

[How to Use this Manual](#)

## [PART ONE OPERATIONS](#)

[The ACS Standards state that:](#)

[Part One - Contents](#)

[A2 Title, History and Licence](#)

[A3 Definitions](#)

[Centre Director](#)

[President](#)

[Controlling Person](#)

[Primary Contact Staff](#)

[Proprietor/Parent committee](#)

[Qualified Staff](#)

[Parents/Guardians](#)

[Playschool Policy and Procedures Manual \(PPPM\)](#)

[Playschool Parent Handbook \(PH\)](#)

[Constitution](#)

[Standards](#)

[Abbreviations](#)

[B Philosophy and Goals](#)

[C Management](#)

[1 Proprietor \(Parent Committee\) and Controlling Person](#)

[2 Managing Committee](#)

[3 Division of Responsibilities](#)

[4 Licensing Inspections and Contacts with Licensing Authority](#)

[5 Licence](#)

[6 Philosophy](#)

[7 Implementing Policies and Procedures](#)

[8 Updating Policies and Procedures](#)

[9 Insurance](#)

[\*D Partnerships and Communications with Families and Children\*](#)

[1 Information for Parents/Guardians](#)

[2 Communications between Parents and Management](#)

[3 Communication between Parents and Staff](#)

[4 Parent Questionnaire](#)

[5 Family Involvement](#)

[6 Classroom Volunteers / Roster Parents](#)

[7 Parents Association and Committee](#)

[8 General Meetings and the AGM](#)

[9 Partnerships with the Community](#)

[10 Grievances, Complaints and Conflict Resolution](#)

[\*E1 Records and Records Retention\*](#)

[1 Records and Records Retention Policy](#)

[2 Confidentiality](#)

[3 Staff Records](#)

[4 Children's Files](#)

[5 Health and Safety Records](#)

[6 Programme Files](#)

[7 Updating Files](#)

[8 Insurance Policies and Compliance Certificates](#)

[\*E2 Admissions\*](#)

[1 Admissions Register](#)

[2 Changes to Recorded Information](#)

[3 Booking of Places / Enrolment Process](#)

[4 Criteria for Entry](#)

[5 Priority of Access / Waiting Lists](#)

[\*E3 Attendance Records\*](#)

[Attendance Book](#)

[Authority to Collect a Child](#)

[Access to Children](#)

[Procedures for Collection of Children](#)

[Late Collection of Children](#)

[E4 Finances](#)

[Overview of Financial Operations, including Accounting and Auditing](#)

[Purchasing](#)

[Teacher's Resources](#)

[PART TWO STAFFING](#)

[The ACS Standards state that:](#)

[Part Two – Contents](#)

[F1 Requirements for safe child supervision](#)

[Safe Supervision Policy](#)

[Roster Parents' Children](#)

[Safety Awareness and Protective Behaviours](#)

[Relief staff](#)

[F2a Assessment of Fitness and Competence](#)

[Recruitment Policy for All Staff](#)

[Competency to work with young children](#)

[Continual Assessment of Fit and Proper Status and Competence](#)

[Complaints against the assessment of fit or proper status](#)

[Police Checks](#)

[Documentation](#)

[F2b Qualifications of Director – proposed for removal](#)

[F2c Qualifications of Teaching Staff](#)

[F2d Volunteers and Roster Duty Parents](#)

[Volunteers and Roster Duty Parents](#)

[F3 Recruitment Process: Interviews](#)

[Teaching Staff](#)

[F4 Conditions of Employment](#)

[Terms and Conditions of Employment](#)

[The Contract](#)

[F5 Wombats Expectations for Staff](#)

[Staff interactions with children](#)

[Staff Interactions with families](#)

[Staff Interactions with other staff](#)

[\*F6 Wombats Staff Training\*](#)

[Staff Induction and Training](#)

[Mandatory Reporting](#)

[Claims of Molestation](#)

[Professional Development of Teaching Staff](#)

[\*F7 Appraisal and Management of Staff\*](#)

[Management of staff](#)

[Self-Appraisal and evaluation of performance](#)

[\*F8 Staff Health\*](#)

[Staff Health Practices](#)

[Illness](#)

[Drugs and Alcohol](#)

[Smoking](#)

[Health Policies](#)

[\*F9 Replacement of teaching staff - relief staff\*](#)

[Short Term Replacement of Absent Qualified Staff](#)

[Short Term Replacement after Resignation of Qualified Staff](#)

[Long Term Replacement of Qualified Staff](#)

[Notifying the Licensing Authority and Parents](#)

[Relief Teacher Register](#)

[Unexpected Failure to Maintain Child : Staff Ratio](#)

[\*Part Two – Forms\*](#)

[\*PART THREE PROGRAMMING\*](#)

[The ACS Standards state that:](#)

[Part Three - Contents](#)

[\*G1 Planning for Children\*](#)

[Implementation](#)

[\*G2 Programming\*](#)

[Implementation](#)

[G3 The Learning Environment](#)

[Implementation](#)

[Creating an Inviting, Stimulating Learning Environment](#)

[Healthy environments](#)

[G4 Meeting the Needs of the Child](#)

[Implementation](#)

[G5 Evaluation](#)

[Implementation](#)

[G6 Routines](#)

[Implementation](#)

[G7 Equipment for Programme](#)

[Implementation](#)

[G8 Rest and Sleep](#)

[Implementation](#)

[G9 Behaviour Guidance](#)

[Implementation](#)

[PART FOUR WOMBATS HEALTH AND SAFETY](#)

[The ACS Standards state that:](#)

[Part One - Contents](#)

[H1 Health and Safety Introduction](#)

[H2 Public Health: Infectious Conditions](#)

[Immunisation Policy](#)

[Exclusion Policy](#)

[Head Lice](#)

[H3 Medical Records](#)

[Procedures in the Event of Accident or Illness Whilst Attending the Service](#)

[Records Required in the Event of Accident, Illness and Notifiable Disease](#)

[Medications Policy](#)

[The Parent Committee's Responsibility](#)

[Staff Responsibility](#)

[Parental Responsibility](#)

[Storage of Medicines](#)

Records Required For Administration of Medication

Medication Given With Written Permission

Medication given in Emergencies / With Verbal Permission:

Allergies

Medical Conditions

First Aid

Summary of Records Required

*H4 Wombats Hygiene*

Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases

*H5 Changing Soiled Clothes and Disposing of Wastes*

Nappy Change Policy

Policy for changing soiled clothes

Individual Toileting Policy

Disposing of Waste Material

Contaminated Laundry

*H6 Food*

Implementation

*H7 Wombats Water*

*H8 Sun Protection & Clothing*

Sun Protection

Inclement Weather

*J1 Wombats Safety Policy Goals*

Safety Policy

Implementation

*J2 Safety Standards for the Facility*

Compliance certificates

*J3 Wombats Hazard Identification and Correction*

*J4 Occupational Health and Safety*

Implementation

The Parent Committee's Responsibility

Staff Responsibility

Staff Strategies

*J5 Emergencies, Fire Drills and Evacuations*

Implementation

Accident or Injury

Death

Fire Emergencies

Bomb/Suspicious Object Threat

Intruders, Threats or Hostile Behaviour

Break-in

Lockdown Procedure

Incidents

Lost or Abandoned Children

Training and Drills

Emergency Procedure Records

Inquiries and Recommendations

*J6 Safety - First Aid*

Plan of Action for Accidents:

*J7 Excursions*

Implementation

Preparation

During the excursion

Parents/guardians/volunteers

*J9 Safety - Plants and Animals*

Animals

Plants



# A1 INTRODUCTION

## Explanatory Notes

*Why have a Manual?* The ACT Childcare Services Standards (ACS Standards) require that policies be in place to meet the needs of children in their care.

*Why this Manual?* The ACS Standards developed a Playschool Policy and Procedures Manual (PPPM) Template to ensure that individual Playschool operations could translate the ACS standards into a cohesive, comprehensive Manual that meets the regulatory requirements and presents policies in a logical, user-friendly format. Several record keeping and reporting documents are included in the Manual.

This *Wombats Playschool Policy and Procedures Manual* is based on the PPPM Template. The Policies and Procedures presented here represent an attempt to pull together a best practice interpretation of the ACS Standards. Wombats Playschool recognises the extraordinary assistance of Koala Playschool in assisting in the development of this material.

Playschool Managers should remember that some information may change over time, (e.g. if a Playschool has to relocate), and it is therefore advisable to insert time sensitive materials and references only in the opening pages, where they can easily be found and replaced if information needs to be changed.

This Manual will be reviewed every two years, this will be done 2023, 2025, 2027 etc, we will invite any feedback we receive from families (through our annual family feedback survey) as well as staff and any changes in standards that may affect our Policies and Procedures. This will be overseen by the Director of Wombats with additional help from staff and committee.

## How to Use this Manual

The Manual has been organised into the same four parts as the ACS Standards:

- Part One – OPERATING PROCEDURES
- Part Two - STAFFING
- Part Three – PROGRAMMING AND PLANNING
- Part Four – SAFETY, HEALTH AND HYGIENE

Each Part is subdivided into lettered Sections, and each section further divided into numbered subsections. At the beginning of each subsection of the Manual, the relevant ACS Standards is printed in blue (where applicable).

This manual should be printed and placed in an indexed binder and always made available in the Playschool Office as well as on the sign in table available for parents. (As per the ACS Standards).

# PART ONE OPERATING PROCEDURES

## The ACS Standards state that:

*The importance of effective operating procedures cannot be over-emphasized. The way in which a service is administered will affect all aspects of the service's operation. It will affect the quality of care offered to the children, the satisfaction of families and the wellbeing of staff and children. A well administered service is able to respond promptly to the needs of all stakeholders and sets clear understandings and expectations of the rights and responsibilities of stakeholders. Effective operating procedures including administrative processes and thorough policies ensure clear communication with stakeholders. They also ensure the Director / Coordinator / Teacher in Charge is free to provide professional leadership, supervision and mentoring to staff which directly impacts on the care and education of children.*

## Part One - Contents

- A2 Title, History and Licence**
- A3 Definitions**
- B Philosophy**
- C Management**
- D Partnerships and Communications with Families and Children**
- E1 Records and Record Retention**
- E2 Admissions**
- E3 Attendance Records**
- E4 Finances**

## A2 Title, History and Licence

**Name:** Wombats Playschool Inc

**Street Address:** Macadam Street, Page ACT 2614

**Postal Address:** PO Box 4254, Hawker ACT 2614

**Web address:** [www.wombatsplayschool.org](http://www.wombatsplayschool.org)

**Phone:** 02 6162 4017

Wombats Playschool began operation on 20 May 1991 under the name of Koala Playschool (Koalas). The Koala Playschool for 3 - 4-year-olds had begun operation a year earlier in the Aranda Preschool building, however Koalas was soon unable to cater for the large number of families on their waiting list. There was insufficient space in the Aranda Preschool building to allocate Koalas all the sessions required by the community.

The Aranda Preschool Parent Association granted Koalas permission to operate at two venues in 1991. In May 1991 Koalas began operating one session per week at Weetangera Preschool on Monday mornings, coordinated by Jane Dunlop.

In Term 4, 1991 Koalas increased to another morning session at the Weetangera Preschool site to cater for the demand for more student places. Due to the popularity of the Weetangera venue, the Koala Playschool committee, together with the Aranda Preschool Parent Association, decided to change the name of Koalas at the Weetangera site to distinguish it from the Aranda program.

The name of *Wombats* was chosen to begin the New Year in February 1992, for two sessions per week. In December 1992, the Weetangera Preschool Parent Association Constitution was changed to incorporate Weetangera Wombats Playschool as a subcommittee of the Weetangera Association, along with Weetangera Playgroup.

The Koalas and Wombats' committees continued to work very closely together for many years, including attending each other's committee meetings. Both committees employed the same teacher who taught two sessions per week at each Preschool site until the year 2000, when it was decided to employ a separate teacher for each Playschool.

On the advice of Canberra Preschool Society (CPS) Weetangera Preschool Association 2004 were asked to cease the use of a sub-committee and therefore any financial responsibility of said committee. To ensure that Wombats Playschool could still operate, CPS advised us that Wombats would need to become an Incorporation under the Registrar Generals Office (RGO). On 20 September 2004 Wombats became "Weetangera Wombats Playschool Inc." Registration Number A04178.

In October 2004 Weetangera Wombats Playschool Inc. (Wombats) applied for an Approval in Principle Licence under its new status from the Office of Child Care.

In October 2007, Wombats Playschool were advised by the Department of Education that the second classroom at Weetangera Preschool would be required for increased preschool enrolments caused by the closure of several schools and preschools in surrounding suburbs. Wombats was offered the old Page Preschool for three days a week for two years. Koalas at Aranda were similarly affected and had to split their two programs between Aranda and Page in 2008.

During 2008, Wombats Playschool settled into the new premises at Page, with two classes across the three days. The name of the association was changed to reflect the move, and to respect the fact that Wombats was now catering for students across Belconnen and Gungahlin rather than solely children from Weetangera. With a new permanent home, we have been able to really stamp our brand on the way we go about things. We have extended our learning opportunities to incorporate some new and exciting programs. In 2010 Koala's secured a permanent residence at the old Cook Preschool and moved out of the Page Preschool building, this then gave Wombats the opportunity to run a 5-day program, with 3 individual classes, we then hired a new teacher to run our Friday Program, Mel Wise and Liz Rebetzke ran the Mon/Wed program as well as the Tue/Thur Program.

It was in 2010 we also decided to employ an Office Manager to do a lot of the enrolment and finance work which was previously done by our parent committee, the parent committee then became a

fully volunteer based committee which assisted both the Director and the Office Manager with their tasks.

Wombats Playschool was approved as Child Care Subsidised Centre from April 2019, allowing families to apply for a Child Care Subsidy through Centrelink, allowing many more families to access our program who previously could not due to financial restraints.

As we grow and develop as a centre, we will undoubtedly provide more and more rich and diverse experiences for your child. These experiences will include the participation of the children's families. We hope you can play a part in the Wombats Playschool learning journey.

## A3 Definitions

### **Director**

The person in charge of the service who is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the centre-based care service. Their duties may include the professional leadership and supervision of staff, the implementation of the service philosophy, and administrative duties.

### **President**

The president is a representative from the Parent Committee who will ensure the smooth running of Playschool sessions and liaison with the Director.

### **Controlling Person**

Usually the Centre Director. This is a person who exercises control over the childcare service.

This is a person other than the proprietor, if the proprietor is not an individual, who exercises control or may exercise control over the childcare service. The nominated controlling person has principal responsibility for managing and controlling the childcare service in the proprietor's absence or on behalf of the proprietor.

### **Primary Contact Staff**

These are all the staff who are directly responsible for the care and supervision of the children.

### **Parent Committee/Proprietor**

The Wombats Parent Committee assist in the operation of Wombats Playschool and acts as the proprietor for our Incorporation. The parent committee meet once a term with the Director and the Office Manager.

### **Qualified Staff**

This is a person holding a specific qualification as described in the ACS Standards.

### **Parents/Guardians**

Legal custodian or custodians of a child. Hereinafter referred to as parent or guardians.

## Playschool Policy and Procedures Manual (PPPM)

Customised document published by each Playschool, outlining its own policies and procedures.

Customised document published by each Playschool, providing a precis of pertinent information for parents, summarising the salient points of the PPPM and also providing helpful information, relevant forms and other resources for parents. This document will be available on our website.

## Constitution

The legal document governing the Parent Association of the Playschool.

## Standards

The legal documents governing the operations and policies of Playschools: namely, the ACT Children and Young People's Act (2008) and the ACT Children's Services Standards.

## Abbreviations

The Act The ACT Children and Young People's Act (2008)

ACSS (or the ACS Standards): The ACT Children's Services Standards

PPPM Playschool Policy and Procedures Manual

H&S Health and Safety

# B Philosophy and Goals

## ACT Childcare Services Standards 1.22 to 1.26

*Wombats, is a Playschool for 3–4-year-old children and operates out of the community-based Page Preschool. It is organised by a volunteer parent committee and employs two qualified teachers.*

## Our Wombats Playschool Philosophy (updated 2023)

*Wombats Playschool offers children a stepping-stone to independence from a parent or carer in a supportive and stimulating environment. Wombats Playschool's main aim is to provide opportunities for the child to enjoy belonging to his or her own social group, to interact cooperatively with peers, and to take responsibility for belongings and equipment*

*At Wombat's Playschool play is the way children exercise their physical, creative, and cognitive resources. Play provides opportunities for physical activity, the development of skills for social interaction, flexible use of material, expression of feelings and ideas as well as the spontaneous use of language. 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. Genuine care and concern will be provided for each child so as they feel happy, safe, and comfortable. Individual developmental needs and interests will be respected.*

## *Our Program*

The daily program at Wombats Playschool includes a variety of learning experiences including story, music, games, dramatic play, construction, and outdoor play activities. The process of “observing, exploring and experimenting” is far more valuable than what the final product may look like. The joy is in creating!

Indoor activities include but are not limited to:

- Experimentation with paint and colour;
- Using manipulative and constructional toys, puzzles and blocks;
- Games to develop self-confidence and social interaction skills;
- Imaginative play in home corner;
- Early name, number, letter and shape recognition;
- Using materials and equipment that develop fine motor skills such as pencils, crayons, scissors, brushes, paper, paint, paste, play dough, scrap materials, fabric and fibres;
- Sorting and classifying objects;
- Daily exposure to singing, listening to music, looking at pictures and books, and listening to stories.

Outdoor activities include but are not limited to:

- Developing gross motor skills by using the variety of climbing equipment, including trees
- Running, jumping, skipping, hopping activities and games;
- Following small obstacle courses;
- Catching and throwing activities and games;
- Digging and imaginative play using sandpit toys and equipment;
- Creative activities using sand and water;
- Activities to develop muscular control and coordination;
- Exploration of the outdoors in all weather
- Gardening activities.

Wombats Playschool aims to provide an environment that encourages in each child a sense of security, trust and acceptance of themselves and others. Genuine care and concern will be provided for each child so that they feel happy, safe, and comfortable. Individual developmental needs and interests will be respected.

Children enrolled at Wombats Playschool are encouraged to become enthusiastic, inquisitive, and active learners in a creative and stimulating environment. A caring, supportive, and encouraging link between home and Wombats Playschool is important to each child. Parents can share in their child’s experiences at Playschool by talking about their day and by also participating the parent/carer roster.

Regular information about what is happening at Wombats Playschool is available on the noticeboard, in our regular newsletter, by attending parent committee meetings, or by talking to our teacher at the end of each session.

# C Management

**ACT Children and Young People Act 2008** (Division 20.4, Sections 743-777) states that:  
*The Proprietor has responsibility to the Chief Executive under the Children and Young People Act 2009 for all aspects of the operating licence and the operation of the school. If the Proprietor is not an individual person, then the person exercising control over the school is called the Controlling Person and has the same responsibility as the Proprietor. (Children and Young People Act, Sections 735 and 736).*

*When there is a change in Controlling Person, the Proprietor must ensure that the appointed Controlling Person is suitable as per the Children and Young People Act 2008, and the change of the nominated Controlling Person must be notified to the Manager of Children's Services within 30 days of the change. The Controlling Person has an ongoing duty to update their suitability information, and failure to do so within 7 days after any change as to suitability may be a criminal offence.*

## **ACT Children and Young People Act 2008 Requirements**

*Under the current Children and Young People Act, no Playschool in the ACT can operate without a licence. The licence and the terms of the licence are administered by the Office of Children's Services in the Department of Community Services. The licence must be renewed periodically and the Playschool inspected annually.*

**ACT Childcare Services Standards** 1.21 to 1.25 and 1.30 to 1.33

## **1 Proprietor (Parent Committee) and Controlling Person**

The Proprietor of our Playschool who legally holds the Licence is the Parents Committee (which is made up of parents of the Playschool enrollees and other interested community members). To ensure that the Playschool meets all ACS Standards, the Proprietor will nominate the Director of Wombats Playschool to be the Controlling Person. The Proprietor will also elect a Managing Committee, drawn from the Parents Committee to act as Management. The roles and responsibilities of these entities will be as follows:

### **a) The Proprietor's (Parent Committee) Role**

The Proprietor (The Parent Committee) holds the licence and has ultimate responsibility for all aspects of the running of the Playschool, including ensuring that the Playschool meets the requirements of the ACT Children and Young People Act and the ACT Childcare Services Standards, Australian Capital Territory and Commonwealth laws and regulations

### **b) The Controlling Person's Role**

The Controlling Person has the principal responsibility for managing and controlling the day-to-day running of the Playschool and is responsible to The Parent Committee for doing so. The Controlling Person must answer to the Child Services Inspector / Licensing Advisor when inspections occur.

## **2 Managing Committee**

The parents or guardians of every child enrolled at the Playschool automatically become members of the Parents Committee for the period during which their child attends the Playschool. People other than parents or guardians may apply to The Parent Committee to become members of the Parents Committee if they wish to be actively involved in the management of the Playschool.

The Managing Committee's role is to support the Proprietor/Controlling Person. As such it will be responsible for formulating, reviewing and updating policies, and assist in making decisions relating to finances, and purchasing, in partnership with the Director.

The roles and procedures of the Management Committee are defined in the Playschool Parents Association's Constitution. In accordance with the Constitution, nominations for Management Committee members may be made by any parent or guardian

The following positions make up the Wombats Playschool Management Committee:

- President
- Teachers (Vice Presidents)
- Treasurer
- Minute Secretary
- Membership Secretary (Office Manager)
- Social coordinators (1 per group)
- General Committee

Wombats Playschool cannot function without all positions being filled.

The Committee will meet once during each term. The Annual General Meeting will be held in February of every year.

An indexed master copy of the Wombats Playschool's Policies and Procedures Manual will be kept and maintained by the Director and additional copies will be made available for teachers, other staff and interested parents and will be on site at Wombats Playschool.

### **3 Division of Responsibilities**

Responsibilities will be divided between The President of the Parent Association/Controlling person and the Management Committee. The Parent Committee will nominate the President to act for it. Responsibilities will be assigned as follows:

#### **The President/Vice-President/Controlling Person will ensure that:**

- The president's role is to assist the Director when needed.
- To prepare and present a report at each meeting each term
- Ensure all committee members are doing their tasks.
- Liaison with families and parents.
- Assist with the Enterprise Agreement each 3 years
- Assist preparing the licencing paperwork with the Director every 3 years.
- Assist negotiating the Property Lease every 5 years with ACT Property Group.

#### **The Managing Committee/Director will ensure that:**

- The employed teacher/s are fully qualified and hold a current First Aid Certificate.
- The educational program provided by the teacher, including observation and evaluation records, is appropriate to the age group and meets the needs and interests of children enrolled in the Playschool program.



- Each child has opportunities for creative activities, developing language skills, imaginative play, using large muscles, using fine muscles, developing ongoing satisfactory relationships and developing concrete foundations for subsequent mathematical understanding, through the educational program provided.
- Each child is guided towards self-control and appropriate social skills, and is given positive reinforcement for responsible behaviour.
- All policies are relevant and implemented to reflect the values of the playschool service. The policies need to be known by all members of the playschool.
- Parents receive all relevant information regarding the operation of the Playschool at the time of enrolment.
- Parents are provided with regular notices (e.g. Newsletter, etc.) regarding the operation of the Playschool and specific safety issues.
- The status of each child's immunisation is recorded and is in their electronic enrolment.
- Children's Education and Care Assurance is advised of any apparently infectious illness, disease or condition persistently occurring in two or more children sharing the same playroom.

#### **4 Licensing Inspections and Contacts with Licensing Authority**

The legislation covering the Playschool licence is administered by Children's Education and Care Assurance (CECA) from the ACT Education Directorate. They can be contacted on 6207 1114.

#### **5 License**

The Director and Parent Committee will ensure that License Standards are met. In accordance with its License, the Wombats Playschool will operate for no more than six hours per session.

#### **6 Philosophy**

The Director and Parent Committee will develop a Statement concerning the service's philosophy outlining the values and beliefs underpinning the service's community. It will include the service's aspirational goals, their educational approach, the rights of children and other service values, and it will inform policy, practice, programming, and future planning. The Statement of Philosophy will be developed in consultation with staff, families, and other community members and be focussed on the best interests of children. This philosophy will be reviewed every 5 years and changed if necessary.

#### **7 Implementing Policies and Procedures**

The Director and Parent Committee will ensure that all policies are implemented and procedures are followed.

In the event of any feedback or complaint from parents or staff, a thorough investigation must be undertaken, and a review and amendment of policy as necessary.

If The Parent Committee or Director deems an area covered in the ACS Standards not to be applicable for the Playschool, then The Director and Parent Committee must write a policy stating the reason why it is not relevant, and seek approval from the licensing authority.

## 8 Updating Policies and Procedures

The Playschool Policy and Procedures Manual (PPPM) will be made available to parents and staff on the premises. It may also be available online or by email. In accordance with ACS Standards and to ensure that best practices in education, care and management are followed, the Staff and Parent Committee will meet annually to review and if necessary, update policies.

Whenever changes are made to Playschool policies during the school year, parents will be notified. A copy of the amended section of the PPPM will be placed on the notice-board, and another copy will be inserted into the PPPM which is kept on the premises.

An updated copy of the PPPM must be presented to the new Parent Committee each year, at the AGM. Accordingly, the old Manual will be examined, and notes made where changes should be made. The old version of the PPPM will be kept on file for 7 years.

Since it is desirable to make the new PPPM available to the parents of next year's children, in Term Four, it is suggested that the review and amendment process be complete by the end of Term Three or when necessary.

If an area covered in the ACS Standards is considered not applicable for an individual service by the Licensed Proprietor, the Licensed Proprietor must write a policy stating the reason why it is not relevant, and seek approval from the licensing authority.

## 9 Insurance

The following insurance policies will be kept current in respect of the service and its operation:

- worker's compensation
- public liability
- any additional insurance to cover volunteers and parents on roster, where appropriate
- other insurance policies as required by law.

Public liability policies will cover children attending the service, as well as those considered to be the general public. The Director and Office Manager will ensure that public liability insurance covers extra curriculum activities and activities away from the premises, such as excursions.

The Director and Office Manager will ensure that insurance policies and/or current certificates of currency can be made available within a reasonable time if requested by the licensing authority.

In addition to the above-mentioned insurance policies, there is a need for general business insurance to cover loss through fire, flooding, theft. The Director will ensure that the Office Manager is assigned to perform the task of ensuring all insurances are up to date and suitable.

The licensing authority will be notified if any of the above insurance lapses for any reason.

# D Partnerships and Communications with Families and Children

(ACT Childcare Services Standards 1.23 c, 1.26, 1.10 and 1.60)

## 1 Information for Parents/Guardians

The Director will ensure that following information is displayed at the Playschool for all families:

- A current Operating Licence
- Any licence amendments and temporary standards exemptions
- A Notice describing the Licensing Authority
- Contact details for the Commissioner for Children and Young People
- The Wombats Playschool Philosophy.

A current copy of the ACS Standards and the Act, and an up to date, indexed copy of *the Playschool Policy and Procedure Manual* (PPPM), will be available in the Wombats Playschool Office as well as on the sign in table. Parents will be advised that the Act and the ACS Standards are available online, and that a personal copy of the PPPM is available upon request.

## 2 Communications between Parents and Management

Emails, telephone calls, newsletters, the Wombats Playschool website, conversations, interviews, notice boards and orientation sessions will be used to ensure good communications between Parents and Management. Information will also be provided in the PPPM and with enrolment material. Where the internet is utilised, measures will be taken to ensure confidentiality, and accessibility by all families and potential families.

## 3 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 and photos of the program, in the program book.
- Sign In electronically by parents/staff
- Information session/Meet and Greet sessions will be held in December 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.
- Weekly display book with updated photos of children engaging in the program.

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.

#### **4 Parent Questionnaire**

The Parent Committee may undertake a poll of the parents from time to time, to satisfy itself that families' expectations are being met, and to allow parents to be involved in setting direction for policies, procedures, and program, which can be used to evaluate Playschool operations, or any individual areas of the operation, or events it chooses to host for its members. The Staff and Parent Committee will meet to discuss the outcome of the poll, and decide on any changes to be made to policies or practices for the future. The results of the poll will be circulated to the parents, together with the Staff and Parent Committee's comments and an announcement of any proposed changes.

#### **5 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
- 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 all parents the right to be a member of the Parent Committee

#### **6 Classroom Volunteers / Roster Parents**

Parent participation as classroom volunteers is encouraged. The Director will set up a Roster Parent Duty Schedule. Information regarding the duties of a parent volunteer is displayed at Wombats.

#### **7 Parent Committee**

Parents are encouraged to participate actively in the running of Wombats Playschool and join the Parent Committee to help formulate policy, assist with fundraising and grants.

Committee meetings are held once a term to discuss issues affecting the management of the Playschool. Parent input is encouraged and all parents will be notified as to the date of each meeting and invited to attend.

Parents are encouraged to contact the Committee if they have any comments or concerns.

## 8 General Meetings and the AGM

General meetings are formal meetings of the Wombats Playschool Committee. The Committee or a representation of members may call General Meetings at any time, if required, as outlined in the Constitution.

The Annual General Meeting of the Incorporation is held no later than the last day of February in each year to be convened on a such date and at such place and time as the Committee thinks fit each year to officially recognise and hand over to the new Committee and present the following mandatory documents to members: an audited statement of accounts; the Auditor's report, the Director's, President's, and Treasurer's Reports. The new committee is elected for the year, moved, and seconded.

## 9 Partnerships with the Community

The Playschool has partnerships with the following communities or organisations:

- The ACT Education Directorate
- The landlord of the premises, AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY, the body politic established by section 7 of the *Australian Capital Territory (Self- Government) Act 1988* (Commonwealth) (Licensor) represented by ACT Property Group
- Playschools ACT (an informal alliance of Playschools in Canberra)
- Informal relations with our sister schools - Koala Playschool, Possums Playschool, German Australian Playschool, Farrer Playschool, Duntroon Playschool, and Inner North Playschool.
- Local Page Men's Shed
- Local Aged Care Facility
- Local Mosaic Baptist Church

To build relationships with the community, the Playschool may:

- Invite community / extended family members to be part of the Association.
- Have events that are open to the Canberra community.
- Host sessions of like-minded associations meetings at the Playschool.
- Involve parents/guardians in the running of the Playschool by offering them the opportunity to become Committee Members.
- Invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and individuals of multicultural heritage to the Playschool program.

- Encourage and talk about the variety of cultural backgrounds that the families of the Playschool come from.
- Work with ACT and Federal government agencies to improve the Playschool.
- Develop relationships with other early childhood education and care organisations in the ACT.

## 10 Grievances, Complaints and Conflict Resolution

Parents and Staff will be encouraged to attempt to deal with complaints quickly and with the person involved, before lodging an official complaint. The complainant should not complain to people who cannot resolve the complaint. For example, where a complaint involves a difficult situation that has arisen regarding their child's time at Playschool, the Parent is encouraged to be prompt in discussing the matter with the Teacher so that a strategy can be put in place to resolve the matter speedily. Where the matter cannot be resolved directly in this way, an official complaint should be lodged with the Parent Committee or the Director.

Any official complaint made to the Wombats Playschool Parent Committee or Director will be recorded. Where the complaint involves a question of "Fit and Propriety" of a staff member, the matter must go straight to the Committee and be investigated immediately.

In all other cases, the Playschool President should attempt to arbitrate fairly and resolve the matter without reference to the Committee. An attempt must be made to hear each side of the case separately and then negotiate a solution. If the matter can be resolved to the satisfaction of both parties, no further action need be taken, except that the complaint and its resolution should be documented.

If the complaint cannot be resolved between the two parties with the assistance of the President, then at the discretion of the President, other appropriate resources, or Committee Members, including the Teacher, should be consulted to help solve the problem.

If the matter is still not resolved, then it must be brought to the attention of the Managing Committee, and under the guidance of the President, the Managing Committee must attempt to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of the complainant and the Playschool. The Managing Committee should attempt to hear each side of the case separately, clarify the issues and then negotiate a solution.

If the President is a party to the complaint, then someone else from the Management Committee must take responsibility for resolving the situation. If the President is the source of disputes and the smooth operation of the Playschool is being seriously or constantly threatened, the remaining members of the Committee should discuss the matter, being specific about the situation that is objectionable and specific about what remedial action they deem necessary. In the most extreme case, the Committee may ask for the President resignation.

At every step of the process, follow up should be scheduled to ensure that the matter has been, or is being dealt with. Follow-up must be made after resolution to ensure that the matter has truly been resolved.

Confidentiality should be observed regarding the complaint and its resolution unless it involves a matter of more general interest and benefit to parents. It may then be shared without naming names, and with the permission of both parties.

In addressing a complaint, it is recommended that calm and professional approach be used, with appropriate words and tone of voice, rather than aggression or bad language.

If the Playschool is unable to resolve the matter satisfactorily, the complainant may seek arbitration, e.g. through Conflict Resolution Service, Level 3, Griffin Centre, 20 Genge St, Canberra City ACT 2601, tel: (02) 6162 4050. If it involves a licensing matter, the complaint may be taken to the **Licensing Authority. (ACT Education Directorate, CECA ph: 6207 1114)**

### Children's Complaints

Complaints from Children should be treated with great respect. They present a wonderful opportunity to teach conflict resolution skills, and handled well can help enhance the child's feelings of self-confidence and self-worth.

Whenever possible, Staff should take the time to take the complaint seriously, to listen actively and help the child to express how they feel about the situation with empathetic comments such as "I bet that made you feel mad." Often when a child (or adult) has their feelings heard, it is enough for them to feel better about the situation, and no further action is required. The adult should therefore listen carefully and respond in an understanding and non-judgmental way.

When the child has finished their complaint, ask the child what they would like you to do and what they would like to have happen next.

## E1 Records and Records Retention

(ACS Service Standards 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.23 cvi.)

The ACS Standards require that records be kept for the following:

- Admissions Register 1.6;
- Daily Attendance Records 1.7, 1.8;
- Parental Access 1.9;
- Illness and Notifiable Disease 1.11;
- Children's Accidents or Injury 1.12 to 1.15;
- Medication Records 1.16 to 1.18;
- Emergency Records 1.19 and 1.20;
- All Written Policies 1.23;
- Staff Records 1.28;
- Compliance Certificates 1.29;
- Insurance 1.30 to 1.32;
- Safety, Health and Hygiene Policies 1.61 to 1.63 and 1.84, 1.86, 1.87;
- Emergency Procedures 1.75;
- Dangerous Goods 1.80.

## 1 Records and Records Retention Policy

The Director and Office Manager will keep complete and accurately maintained records for all children, staff, operations, and the facility as listed in the ACS Standards [above](#). To protect this information from misuse, loss or unauthorised access, modification or disclosure, the files will be kept online through our Child Care Subsidy platform, currently Smart Central.

## 2 Confidentiality

Only Authorised Personnel will have access to personal records of any kind. Emails that involve sensitive information should be carefully considered and a password protection be placed on any attached files.

The Proprietor/controlling person will make all decisions regarding accessibility of files. Staff will be trained in the procedures for security and confidentiality.

Upon termination of employment for any reason, Staff members will relinquish keys and other Playschool materials, and be reminded of their continuing obligations regarding confidential information. Passwords to electronic databases, email accounts, key combinations, and the like to which the staff member had access must be changed.

Records will be available for inspection by the Chief Executive (from the relevant ACT government office) upon request. The Privacy Act must be adhered to, where applicable to childcare services. Refer to the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for more information.

## 3 Staff Records

Staff records must be kept up-to-date and stored securely as above.

## 4 Children's Files

A child's records including personal details, enrolment information, health information, learning records, behavioural assessments & notes and other sensitive issues will be kept in our computer system when the child has been enrolled electronically through our online platform of Smart Central. Only staff have access to this information.

Details of any Care and Protection Order made under the Children and Young People Act 2008 or equivalent interstate legislation, and/or any parenting order or registered agreement made under the Family Law Act 1975 are to be kept securely in a safe/locked files the Playschool Office, with tightly restricted access.

Observations, reports, and notes recorded about children must be accurate and free from biased comments and negative labelling of children.

Enrolment files are only to be viewed by Wombats Playschool Staff. They are not to be viewed by casual staff, floaters, or volunteers working at the Playschool. The Playschool Staff will not disclose information where it deems it not to be relevant.

The Playschool Staff may not give out information regarding a child and/or their family without the prior written authorisation of the parent. Exceptions may apply regarding information about children when subpoenaed to appear before a court of law.



## 5 Health and Safety Records

A separate report must be completed by the Teacher, as soon as possible following every incidence of illness, accident, or near miss, emergency event or incident at the Playschool. Copies of Health and Safety Reports will be kept in the Health and Safety Register which will be kept securely in the Office. Health and Safety Records will be archived, and kept for seven years. In addition, the Committee will require the Director to keep records of all checks, audits and reports made on Health and Safety (H&S) matters at the Playschool. The Director should also keep records of resulting meetings and discussions, decisions and corrective actions taken.

## 6 Program Files

It is the responsibility of the Director and Teachers to ensure that Program Records (observations, program planning and evaluations) are kept.

## 7 Updating Files

To ensure that children's records are kept current, a reminder will be issued to families at the beginning of each term asking them to notify the Playschool of changes to their child's personal details, contact information, health information, and authority to pick up children and the like. Parents can edit their online enrolment form through Smart Central.

## 8 Insurance

The Office Manager will verify with the Insurance Company how long Insurance Records must be kept. A note will be attached to the Insurance File to ensure that Insurance Records are kept for the required amount of time. Compliance Certificates should be kept for the life of the certified item.

# E2 Admissions

ACT Childcare Services Standards 1.6 and 1.23c

## 1 Admissions Register

The Office Manager will collect all the information required by the ACS Standards 1.61 (a to m), by means of the Enrolment Form.

A copy of the child's Immunisation Record (which is attached to each child's online enrolment form) must be checked by the Office Manager, if a child is identified as not being immunised when an outbreak occurs the child will be sent home immediately. All information collected will be treated as confidential and kept with Smart Central for online access only. Details of any Care and Protection Orders and/or any parenting order or registered agreements will be kept held on file with restricted access.

## 2 Changes to Recorded Information

When information entered on the Admissions Record must be changed, parents need to contact the Office Manager to ensure our information is the most current available information about the child

enrolled at Wombats. Parents can now change information electronically through their Smart Central portal.

### **3 Booking of Places / Enrolment Process**

Parents can submit an Enrolment Form from 1 July of each calendar year. Enrolment details and forms are provided on the Wombats Playschool website ([www.wombatsplayschool.org](http://www.wombatsplayschool.org)). A non-refundable administration fee is to be paid at the time of applying for enrolment.

Parents of children successful in gaining a position for the following year will be invited to attend an information/meet and greet session in December, where the operation of the Playschool will be discussed. Parents and families will be sent electronically an enrolment pack with all information regarding Wombats Playschool.

### **4 Criteria for Entry**

Wombats Playschool can take up to 22 children at each session. The program is appropriate for children who have turned three by 30<sup>th</sup> of April of the year they are attending Wombats. Where a child in attendance is under the age of three, the Playschool Licence requires that a parent or carer must accompany the child for the whole session, until such time as the child attains the age of three. Enrolments are filled on a 'first in' basis, children who have their enrolment forms filled out and application fee paid will be placed onto our enrolment list in order of our Office Manager receiving their information.

Children attending Wombats Playschool are expected to be fully toilet-trained as resources are lacking to handle children who are not toilet-trained. A child who is not yet toilet-trained may be accepted into the Program if a parent or carer accompanies the child for the whole session until that child is toilet trained.

We do not discriminate based on gender, cultural or ethnic background, religion, or ability. All children who are of the right age are welcome. Decisions on children enrolling who requiring extra support will be up to the director and parent committee.

Wombats Playschool are happy to include children who have physical disabilities, such as being restricted to a wheelchair, if CEAC and the ACT Government are prepared to include building updates, such as a ramp, wheelchair accessibility and disabled toilet, etc. This of course would need to be discussed in affiliation with the Playschool and other associated parties.

### **5 Priority of Access / Waiting Lists**

When demand for places exceeds supply, children's names will be placed on a waiting list, in the order that the Enrolment Forms were received. Parents will be notified when a place becomes available. Note that children on the Waiting List are not guaranteed a position at the Playschool. If we are unable to offer a position within a reasonable timeframe, the enrolment application fee will be refunded.

# E3 Attendance Records

ACT Childcare Services Standards 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.23 c. iv.

## Electronic sign in and out on iPad/Computer

On the child's arrival and departure from Wombats Playschool all children will be signed in and out through our Smart Central online provider. If parents are unable to sign child in, this can be completed by the staff.

The first Staff member who arrives at Wombats, will be responsible for performing a grounds check, and will ensure the safety of the playground and its surroundings. (The grounds should be checked for any safety hazards such as sharps, or damage that may have occurred during the night).

When a person other than the parent / guardian or a person nominated on the Enrolment Form is to collect a child, the parent / guardian must give authorisation. Parents will be advised to remind Staff on the day that someone else will be collecting their child and include the authorised pick-up person's relevant details. Authorised pick-up persons should be advised that they maybe required to show ID on pick-up of the relevant child.

Contact information, collection authorities, medical information and emergency contact information for every child and staff member will be kept on our electronic files, which will be used in the event of Emergency Evacuation.

## Authority to Collect a Child

The Teacher will be provided with a list of names and phone numbers of parents / guardians authorised to collect a child; this will be on the child's online enrolment form. In the days before the first day of school, and on the first day of term, the Teacher will try to familiarize herself with the faces of parents delivering children, and persons authorised to collect children from the Playschool. At collection time, the Teacher may request ID of the person collecting the child, and check it against the list, as verification of their authority.

## Access to Children

Parents and/their appointed nominees have the right to always have access to their child.

## Procedures for Collection of Children

At the end of each session, children are required to sit on the mat until the Teacher identifies the parent or authorised collector, and releases the child to them. Parents will be informed that they must make staff aware that they are collecting a child, and must not permit the child to run to them without permission. Parents or staff will sign out the child on our electronic device and enter the time of departure on it. The child then becomes the responsibility of the parent.

## Late Collection of Children

There is a penalty for late collection and parents will be informed of this at Enrolment. If a child is left at the service after the session is over, under the legislation two Responsible Persons must wait with the child, and attempt to contact the parent / emergency contact to come and collect the child.

A late collection fee of \$25 will be charged in the event of a child being left longer than 15 minutes after the end of a session.

## E4 Finances

**ACT Childcare Services Standards 1.23 c**

### **Overview of Financial Operations, including Accounting and Auditing**

General Wombats Playschool accounts are paid by the Office Manager and reviewed once a term by the Treasurer.

#### **Fees**

A fee schedule and payment information will be sent to all parents prior to the commencement of term 1. This will include the due dates for each term's fees. Payment is prior to the start of each term.

All sessions must be paid for, regardless of attendance. Fees are not applied to Public Holidays and can be paid by electronic funds transfer.

Non-payment of fees will result in loss of place. The Office Manager reserves the right to apply a \$25 fee (every 7 days) to accounts when payment is not received by the due date.

If there is any difficulty in paying on time, parents may discuss a payment plan with the Office Manager. Any special arrangement will be treated confidentially.

#### **Childcare Benefits**

Information regarding assistance will be made available to parents on enrolment.

<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy>

#### **Non-refundable Administration Fee**

A non-refundable administration fee will be charged when a request for enrolment is completed. The scale of this fee will be determined by the Parent Committee at the time that the enrolment forms become available. This fee will be on the Wombats website with the enrolment form.

#### **Holding Deposit**

A holding deposit equivalent to 4 weeks of full fees will be required when an offer of enrolment is accepted. This holding deposit is payable in November of the year before commencement. This deposit will be deducted from the term 4 fees when they become payable.

#### **Extra Charges**

A late collection fee of \$25 will be charged in the event of a child being left longer than 15 minutes after the end of a session.

### **Cancellations, Withdrawal from School**

A minimum of 4 weeks' notice in writing/email to our Office Manager is required if a child is leaving the Playschool at any time throughout the year. Families, who are to be away for an extended period but wish to reserve a place in their absence, must continue to pay fees whilst they are away in order to do so.

### **Purchasing**

Requests and suggestions for purchases should be directed to the Director and for larger purchases to the Parent Committee (an email to the President /Treasurer is sufficient). Once approval is given, the actual purchasing can be done by the Director or the Office Manager.

### **Teacher's Resources**

The Teachers will be provided with a budget per year for craft supplies, staff amenities, printing and stationery, cleaning supplies and photos. Teachers will have access to a business credit card account for this purpose and receipts will be collected so accounts can be checked. Approval for larger purchases (above \$1000) must be obtained through the Parent Committee.

# PART TWO STAFFING

## The ACS Standards state that:

*There is significant evidence to show that staff: child ratios, group size and staff qualifications directly impact on the provision of quality care and positive long term developmental outcomes for children. Smaller groups enable children to form caring relationships, engage in meaningful shared experiences and discovery through play. The delivery of high-quality care and education is dependent on staff being qualified, equipped with appropriate skills and education. Specialised training results in higher quality. Continuity of staff should be a priority when replacing absent staff for any period of time.*

## Part Two – Contents

- F1 Requirements for safe child supervision**
- F2a Assessment of Fitness and Competence**
- F2b Qualifications of Teaching Staff**
- F2b Volunteers and Roster Duty Parents**
- F3 Recruitment Process: Interviews**
- F4 Conditions of Employment**
- F5 Wombats Expectations for Staff**
- F6 Wombats Staff Training**
- F7 Appraisal and Management of Staff**
- F8 Staff Health**
- F9 Replacement of teaching staff - relief staff**

## F1 Requirements for safe child supervision

**ACT Childcare Services Standards** 1.23b, 1.23diii, 1.39, 1.40, 1.41, 1.42, 1.43, 1.44, 5.1

### Safe Supervision Policy

The Director/Committee will ensure that no more than 22 children are enrolled for any one session of the Playschool, and that a Teacher and a Teacher's Assistant are always supervising along with the option of a rostered parent. This provides for a minimal staff: child ratio of 1:11.

At least one of the teachers present must be qualified and nominated to be in charge. The Director will also ensure that at least one staff member who holds a current Provide an emergency first aid response in an education and care setting is always on the premises when child / children are present. The Director must ensure that certificates are current and on file.

Ideally teaching staff should be actively engaged with the children's play and learning experiences. They should always be aware of where children are both inside and outside the building. Teaching staff may guide the parents/careers when on duty to where their assistance would be best placed in learning environment.

## Roster Parents' Children

Roster Parents may bring younger siblings of children enrolled at Wombats Playschool, to accompany them when they are on duty. However, the supervision of siblings always remains the responsibility of their carers, and roster parents will be reminded that the playschool environment is geared towards three and four-year-old children, and that the equipment and materials may pose a risk to younger children if they are not carefully supervised.

## Safety Awareness and Protective Behaviours

It is important that staff develop protective behaviours and safety awareness. Staff must be able to anticipate situations where a child might get hurt. For example, staff must be prompt to remove tripping hazards, unsafe toys, or equipment in need of repair for example. Staff must also try to anticipate unsafe behaviours or unruly games, and potentially dangerous situations and step in to avert trouble promptly.

## Relief staff

See **Section F9**.

# F2a Assessment of Fitness and Competence

**ACT Childcare Services Standards** 1.23, 1.34, 1.38, 2.8

## Recruitment Policy for All Staff

The Director will ensure that all persons employed at or involved in the operation of the Playschool are Fit and Proper Persons, as defined by the ACS Standard 1.34. Prior to starting work at the Playschool all applicants are required to provide the following information and undergo and interview:

- Current Working with Vulnerable People Card (updated every three years)
- Reference checks including employment
- Employment history and suitability for the job
- Verification of qualifications - original sighted and copy signed for file.

## Competency to work with young children

All Staff employed at Wombats Playschool (including permanent and relief staff) must be assessed as being *Fit and Proper* as per ACS Standard 1.34. In addition to this, Staff must provide proof of their competency to work with young children, as outlined in ACS Standard 1.38. Questions at interview will be asked to ascertain whether the candidate is suitable to work with young children.

## Continual Assessment of Fit and Proper Status and Competence

The assessment of a person's *Fit and Proper* status and competence is continual. The Wombats Committee and Director has a duty of care to monitor the standards of care provided by all Staff, including Volunteers and Relief Staff, at the Playschool.

### **Complaints against the assessment of Fit of Proper status**

Any complaints about the standard of care provided by any staff member must be logged with the Parent Committee. Since the matter involves a question of Fit and Properness, the President must launch an investigation and discuss the matter with the Director and Parent Committee, who will decide on an appropriate course of action to be taken. When the concern can be alleviated through additional staff training and development, this will be the preferred option. When a complaint continues to arise despite additional training and development opportunities, or additional training is not deemed appropriate, the Director/President or Parent Committee may deem the staff member not to be a Fit and Proper person. In this situation, the staff member will be immediately dismissed. In view of the seriousness of a Fit and Proper Complaint, documentation of all proceedings must be thorough and accurate, and all decisions must be scrupulously fair. Participants at meetings should read the minutes and sign to confirm that this was their understanding of what was discussed and the conclusions that were drawn.

### **Police Checks**

President and treasurer are required to have an up-to date Australian Federal Police (AFP) Check. Details on the process and fees, including application forms, are available at [www.afp.gov.au](http://www.afp.gov.au) or from AFP Criminal Records: Locked Bag No. 8550, Canberra City ACT 2601. The information must come directly from the Australian Federal Police (AFP), after obtaining the applicant's permission, to ensure that the information received is up to date and accurate.

A Police Record Check is valid if it is less than three years old.

### **Working With Vulnerable People Checks**

All Staff, Parent Committee members and parents intending to volunteer at the Playschool are required to have a Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) card. Information on how to obtain a card can be obtained at [www.ors.act.gov.au](http://www.ors.act.gov.au) A copy of the WWVP card is to be provided to the Office Manager to place on file.

### **Documentation**

Documentation gathered during the Recruitment process must be kept as set out in the Record Keeping Policy for the Playschool. Copies are kept of Working with Vulnerable People Card; First Aid Level 2 Certificates; approved qualifications; documentation to validate a staff member's progress towards an approved qualification; driver's licences, if applicable; training certificates; mandatory reporting and emergency equipment training, if applicable; and the cultural background of the staff member (if provided).

It is an ongoing requirement that Staff remain qualified for their positions, and accurate records must be kept regarding Staff qualifications. This is the role of the Director to check at the start of each year.



# F2b Qualifications of Teaching Staff

**ACT Childcare Services Standards state that:**

## Qualifications Required for Teaching Staff

*1.47) Positions requiring a qualified person must be filled by an adult who holds one of the following qualifications:*

- *a Diploma in Community Services (Children's Services) or equivalent;*
- *a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education;*
- *an equivalent 3 year full time tertiary qualification specialising in early childhood from a university;*
- *a recognised overseas equivalent of any of the above qualifications;*

**OR**

*an adult who:*

- *has completed the certificate three component of a Diploma qualification as described above or in school age care specific standard 3.3, or*
- *has completed half a Degree qualification as described above or in school age care specific standard 3.3; and*
- *demonstrates continuing progress toward completion of the qualification and is approved to work in the position by the licensing authority.*

*1.48) The qualifications of any staff member must be provided when requested. Documents which may be requested include;*

- *qualifications held by staff in qualified positions; and*
- *first aid certificates for staff holding current first aid certificates.*

In addition to meeting the general requirements for all Staff, Teaching Staff must be properly qualified for the positions they hold. The Director and Committee will use the strategies given in **Section F3 Interviewing**, to gain an accurate assessment of the character and the qualifications of candidates for the positions of Office Manager, Teacher, and Assistant Teacher.

The Teacher must be qualified in accordance with Standard 1.47 of the ACS Standards above. The Assistant Teacher must either be qualified as per Standard 1.47, or must be working towards completion of a relevant qualification, or have an appropriate background and/or interest in early childhood education.

The qualifications of the staff will be documented and recorded

Both the Teacher and the Assistant Teacher must hold a valid First Aid Level II qualification. First Aid qualifications should be updated every three years to ensure compliance and, in the interests, and safety of the children. The Playschool will pay for this training.

## F2c Volunteers and Roster Duty Parents

### **Volunteers and Roster Duty Parents**

For Wombats Playschool to operate effectively and give families the opportunity to participate in the education of their children, it is essential that parents volunteer their services to Wombats Playschool. Parents and Careers are encouraged to volunteer some of their time to help in the Playschool as a volunteer on roster (Roster Parent).

Volunteers must be eighteen years or older, and deemed competent to work with children. They must provide the Playschool of a copy of their Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) card.

All Volunteers and Roster Parents should be made aware of Mandatory Reporting Requirements; Health and Safety Policies, and Security and Confidentiality Policies.

## F3 Recruitment Process: Interviews

The Parent Committee/Director must ensure that staff are sufficiently qualified for the post they hold, and that staff have an appropriate level of knowledge regarding child development, (or the ability to gain this knowledge), for their position. After the interview, references and qualifications must be checked and an AFP police check obtained and a copy WWVP card obtained. If appropriate, an offer for employment is made and/or unsuccessful applicants advised.

### **Teaching Staff**

a) Resumes from Applicants will be examined by the Parent Committee before calling anyone to an interview. Note should be taken of any discrepancies in the Resume, such as years unaccounted for, that might give rise to suspicions about the reliability, fitness, or properness of an Applicant. Qualifications listed should be examined and compared against the Standards.

b) Interviews will be set up with the most suitable candidates. Committee Members responsible for recruiting, and the President will conduct the interviews with support of Committee Members and / or other Staff. The teacher who is leaving may also attend and offer an opinion on the suitability of candidates.

c) During the interview, care must be taken to ask open ended questions, so that more information can be gained. Information must be shared with the candidate regarding the Playschool, its philosophy, the facility, the working conditions, and the children in the program, the Parent Committee's expectations, salary, and conditions of employment.

In addition to the regulated requirements, other factors to consider regarding teaching staff may include:

- Attitude to working with 3–5-year-olds;
- Attitude to taking direction from a Parent Committee, and dealing with parents;
- Previous experience;
- Comments from referees;
- Communication skills;
- Attitude towards teamwork, and supporting other staff and parents;
- Work habits, e.g. punctuality, organisation, personal responsibility;
- Affinity with the aims and philosophies of the Playschool.

d) Permission to obtain an AFP police records check must be obtained.

e) A copy of the candidate's WWVP card must be obtained.

f) The candidate will be required to supply two professional references.

g) Originals of all documentation must be sighted and copied for the Playschool's files.

h) Following the interview, the Director/ Parent Association will check References by calling Referees personally and discussing the Applicant's aptness for the job to be offered.

i) An offer of employment may be made only with the understanding that it is subject to a satisfactory police check and, if appropriate, obtaining a suitable qualification in First Aid. Employment is at the discretion of the current year Director/Parent Committee.

j) Both successful and unsuccessful applicants are advised.

k) New staff are provided with the current Enterprise Agreement. The successful applicant must fill in forms giving tax number and personal information such as emergency contact details

## F4 Conditions of Employment

[ACT Childcare Services Standards 1.23 d \(vi\)](#)

### Terms and Conditions of Employment

Prior to starting employment:

- The staff member must have been given a copy of the position description;

- The qualifications of the appointee must have been checked;
- A copy of the appointee's WWVP card must be obtained;
- The referees of the appointee must have been contacted;
- The Director/ Parent Committee must approve the appointment;

The Director/Parent Committee will make every effort to provide Staff with the following:

- A clean, safe, and secure working environment;
- Support in carrying out their function
- An adequate supply of teaching materials;
- Fair and unbiased performance appraisals;
- Regular and accurate payment of salary and superannuation;
- Help, when necessary.

## F5 Wombats Expectations for Staff

### **ACT Childcare Services Standards 1.23 d (iv)**

Staff will maintain positive, professional interactions with children, families and other staff members.

#### **Staff interactions with children**

- Act appropriately and be positive role models for the children;
- Work to build respectful relationships by communicating effectively;
- Ensure the health, safety, and well-being of each child through quality practices and act as an advocate on behalf of the rights of each child; and
- Provide guidance to children who hurt others or themselves, damage property, infringe the rights of other children or otherwise exhibit challenging behaviour.

#### **Staff Interactions with families**

- Communicate factually and respectfully with parents and other family members regarding operation of the Playschool, the program, their children, special dates and events, and any other matters of concern;
- Staff will communicate individually and/or collectively with families through informal chats, newsletters, bulletin boards and emails;
- Provide copies or access to the Wombats Playschool policy and procedure manual and other relevant documents and forms; and
- Maintain confidentiality.

#### **Staff Interactions with other staff**

- Support the goals of the Playschool by working effectively as a team and promoting a positive and respectful working environment;
- Any issues between staff should preferably be dealt with professionally and respectfully.

See section D Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy and Procedures.

# F6 Wombats Staff Training

## Staff Induction and Training

The following should occur on employment of a new staff member:

- safety training, including emergency procedures
- familiarisation with the layout of the buildings, the locations of smoke detectors, firefighting equipment, emergency routes, first aid kits, EpiPens, and other health and safety concerns;
- reviewing of their roles, duties, and expectations and any other materials which will help the person to carry out their duties;
- providing copies of policies, with instructions to read and understand the policies of the Playschool;
- providing relevant sections of the Children and Young People Act 2008 and the current ACS Standards; information about the licensing authority, including contact details; a list of information that a parent or guardian is entitled to receive; and other written material relevant to the performance of their duties

In addition, in the ACT there is the Reportable Conduct Scheme Information, which requires staff to report staff transgressions and abusive staff to the ACT Ombudsman. It is a legislative requirement.

Regulation 84 of the ACECOA National Regulations outlines that the approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that nominated supervisors and staff members of the service who work with children are advised of the existence of application of current child protection law and any obligations that they may have under the law.

## Mandatory Reporting

**ACT Childcare Services Standards** 1.23d vii. and 1.23 b xvi., 1.27

*1.49) Proprietors must ensure that all staff mandated to report suspected child abuse have the appropriate knowledge about their responsibilities under the current ACT legislation.*

*Abuse of a child means-*

- *physical abuse; or*
- *sexual abuse; or*
- *emotional abuse (including psychological abuse) if the child has experienced the abuse or is experiencing the abuse in a way that has caused or is causing significant harm to his or her wellbeing or development; or*
- *emotional abuse (including psychological abuse) if-*

*(i) the child has seen or heard the physical, sexual or psychological abuse of a person with whom the child has a domestic relationship, the exposure to which has caused or is causing significant harm to the wellbeing or development of the child or young person; or*

*(ii) if the child has been put at risk of seeing or hearing abuse mentioned in subparagraph (i), the exposure to which would cause significant harm to the wellbeing or development of the child or young person.*

The Director/ Parent Committee will ensure that all staff are both up-to-date with their training and are aware of the most recent mandatory reporting requirements. A copy of the current version of this leaflet is available in the office and on the Staff Notice Board. This leaflet is provided to new staff as part of their induction and staff are required to acknowledge that they have read and understood it as part of their induction. As part of their training, the information in the "Keeping Children & Young People Safe" report published by The Office of Children, Youth and Family Support will be discussed with staff.

Reporting is necessary when the person believes on reasonable grounds that a child has experienced, or is experiencing sexual abuse or non-accidental physical injury; and the person's reasons for the belief arise from information obtained by the person during, or because of, the person's work.

If a staff member suspects a child is being abused or neglected or at risk of abuse or neglect the person **must** report the belief or suspicion and to the Care and Protection Services Centralised Intake Service on 1300 556 728 or email them [childprotection@act.gov.au](mailto:childprotection@act.gov.au).

A report must be made to the Chief Executive as soon as practicable after forming the belief that abuse is occurring, the child's name or description, and the reasons for the person's belief. It is a courtesy but not mandatory for the reporter to advise the President of the matter. Child Safe Standards

### **Claims of Molestation**

Staff and volunteers are made aware through the Roster Duty guidelines and Staff Induction that a child molestation claim, even if untrue, could have serious ramifications. To minimise any such claims, adults should follow some simple strategies such as letting another adult know if a child must be taken to the toilet; remaining as visible as possible, and after assisting a child, standing back a short distance while the child is on the toilet. Try to avoid being alone with a child.

### **Professional Development of Teaching Staff**

Management will encourage staff to attend professional development courses along with Playschools ACT meetings and any other professional meetings. Where possible, staff should be encouraged to attend relevant conferences.

The payment of costs for such courses or seminars will be subject to negotiation between Staff and the Committee, and factors such as length of service and expected length of tenure will be considered. It will be expected that when Staff are released from duty to undertake Professional Development sessions, that at the next Staff Meeting, they report on what they learned and share the knowledge gained with other Staff and Committee members.

## F7 Appraisal and Management of Staff

**ACT Childcare Services Standards 1.23 d v.**

### Management of staff

The Director has responsibility for the management and control of the professional activities of contact and non-contact staff. Each staff member within the Playschool has identified roles and duties and the Director will hold them accountable for their duties.

Staff are encouraged to raise any issues, concerns, or recommendations relevant to their management and performance, throughout the year with the Director.

Procedures to follow in the event of complaints by or against a member of staff are set out in Sections D Complaints and Grievances, and F2 Complaints Regarding Fit and Properness.

### Self-Appraisal and evaluation of performance

Each teaching staff member will be expected to conduct a self-appraisal once per year. This appraisal will need to identify their strengths and weaknesses, achievements during the previous period, goals for the upcoming period and identify any training requirements or actions to be taken.

## F8 Staff Health

**ACT Childcare Services Standards 1.23b (iii), (iv), 1.50 a. to g., and 1.61a .**

### Staff Health Practices

Staff should provide a good role model for children to encourage a healthy lifestyle choice. Staff will be trained in the hygiene routines and procedures. Staff should wear sun hats when outside and sun-lotion will always be available.

### Illness

Wombats Playschool does not allow staff to come to the centre when they are suffering from an infectious disease, impaired with a medical condition, or a reliance on any substance that affects their ability to care for children.

### Drugs and Alcohol

Being under the influence of, or consumption of alcohol or drugs, (so-called recreational drugs), on the premises, will not be tolerated and will initiate instant dismissal. Smoking of cigarettes will not be tolerated in and around the premises or in the presence of children.

Any staff member or parent who comes to our playschool whilst adversely affected by drugs or alcohol will be asked to leave the centre immediately. If necessary, police would be called to assist in this matter. In the case of a drugged or drunken parent, staff will then contact another parent/guardian or authorised collector of the child (nominated in the affected child's enrolment details) to collect the child after the session.

## Smoking

Wombats Playschool provides a smoke free environment. No staff member or parent is allowed to smoke in the grounds or building of the centre. Any smokers are encouraged by staff to smoke more than 10 metres away from the entrance gate, outside the centre.

## Health Policies

Updated health and hygiene information is provided by ACT Health or the Licensing Authority and passed on from the representative of the proprietor to the staff. The Director should check this information against the current playschool procedures and, if necessary, amendments must be made. Staff must be notified of any amendments and the new information leaflet is displayed at the centre.

# F9 Replacement of teaching staff - relief staff

## **ACT Childcare Services Standards *Short Term Replacement of Absent Qualified Staff***

5.2) If a qualified staff member is absent from the service for leave:

- the service may nominate an unqualified staff member (*as per Playschool Specific Standard 5.3*) to work in the qualified position for up to two weeks (10 consecutive working days);
- the service must notify the licensing authority prior to the appointment of an unqualified person to a qualified position; and
- this standard may only apply if *Core Standards 1.40 and 1.41* are complied with.

5.3) The service must be able to demonstrate to the licensing authority that the unqualified staff person;

- *meets the requirements of Core Standard 1.38;*
- has demonstrated their capability of performing the professional duties of the proposed position.

## **Short Term Replacement After Resignation of Qualified Staff**

5.4) If a qualified staff member resigns from the service:



- the service may nominate an unqualified staff member (as per *Playschool Specific Standard 5.3*) to work in the qualified position for up to four weeks (20 consecutive working days) whilst recruitment of a suitably qualified person is undertaken;
- the service must notify the licensing authority prior to the appointment of an unqualified person to a qualified position; and
- this standard may only apply if *Core Standards 1.40 and 1.41* are complied with.

### **Long Term Replacement of Qualified Staff**

5.5) If a qualified staff member is absent from the service for more than two weeks, other than for *Playschool Specific Standard 5.4*, the service must fill the position with another suitably qualified person.

5.6) If the service is unable to fill a qualified position with a qualified staff member they must notify the licensing authority of the action taken to fill the position and a *Temporary Standards Exemption* must be sought.

### **Short Term Replacement of Absent Qualified Staff**

If a qualified staff member is absent or on leave, the Director should try to find a qualified Relief Teacher to assume the qualified Teacher's place for the session. The Director will therefore keep a list of qualified Relief Teachers on file for this eventuality.

If a qualified Relief Teacher cannot be found, the Director or President may nominate an unqualified staff member to work in the qualified position for up to two weeks on the following conditions:

- There must always be two members of staff present, at least one of whom has a current Level 2 First Aid Certificate;
- The unqualified staff member must possess the basic Childcare Worker Competencies, as required by Standard 1.38;
- The unqualified Staff member must have demonstrated that they can perform the duties involved;
- The Licensing Authority must be notified prior to the commencement of the new arrangement.

If a qualified Relief Teacher is unavailable, and if no unqualified Staff member can be nominated as the qualified team leader for the period, and then session/s will have to be cancelled.

### **Short Term Replacement after Resignation of Qualified Staff**

If a qualified staff member resigns, the Proprietor may nominate an unqualified staff member to work in the qualified position for up to four weeks whilst recruitment of a suitably qualified person is undertaken, under the following conditions:

- There must always be two members of staff present, at least one of whom has a current Level 2 First Aid Certificate;
- The unqualified staff member must possess the basic Childcare Worker Competencies, as required by Standard 1.38;

- The unqualified Staff member must have demonstrated that they can perform the duties involved;
- The Licensing Authority must be notified prior to the commencement of the new arrangement.

### **Long Term Replacement of Qualified Staff**

If a qualified staff member is absent beyond the two weeks above, the Director or President must fill the position with another suitably qualified person.

Where a suitably qualified replacement cannot be found then all sessions will be cancelled until a qualified Teacher is recruited, and all paperwork and induction processes are complete.

If the Parent Committee needs more time to find and recruit a qualified Teacher, the Licensing Authority must be informed and a Temporary Standards Exemption must be sought.

### **Notifying the Licensing Authority and Parents**

The Parent Committee/Director is responsible for keeping the Licensing Authority and parents fully informed of all changes to staffing. Where a qualified Teacher is to be absent on short notice, a phone call to the Licensing Authority as soon as possible is acceptable. The President/ Office Manager will also advise parents (in advance if possible) via the notice board when a Relief Teacher is to be present at any session, in what capacity they will be acting and the likely timing for the situation to return to normal. Parents must also be notified of any cancelled session(s) (in advance if possible) via the notice board or a telephone call.

If an unqualified person is to be appointed to a qualified Teacher's position, the Parent Committee or President are responsible for notifying the Licensing Authority prior to the appointment. Parents will be notified of any Temporary Standards Exemptions. Where a new recruitment process is to be undertaken, parents will be kept informed and told when to expect the process to be completed. Once a suitably qualified person has been recruited and inducted and a satisfactory police check obtained the Parent Committee or Office Manager are responsible for notifying parents by telephone (as soon as possible) of the resumption date of sessions.

### **Relief Teacher Register**

The Director will be responsible for creating a list of potentially qualified and suitable relief staff. Relief Staff must provide sightings of originals and copies of Qualifications, current First Aid Certificates and WWVP cards. Once all the documentation is in order and the Applicant has been interviewed, their name may be added to the Register. A copy of the completed Relief Staff Register will be given to the Teacher in Charge and must include contact details, qualifications, and availability; and their banking details should be forwarded to the Treasurer/Financial Officer.

In the event of an absence, the Office Manager or Teacher-In-charge will be responsible for contacting a Relief Staff member; for opening the Playschool and referring the Relief Staff duties which are posted on the wall in the office and relevant safety and health policies, such as the Anaphylaxis friendly policy and Fire Drill information. On arrival, if it is the first time that the relief staff person has worked at the Playschool, then they must complete an 'Employment Declaration' which includes their professional, contact and banking/Superannuation details, as well as including their Tax File Number.

Staff will also advise parents (in advance if possible) via the notice board when a relief teacher is to run any session.

### **Unexpected Failure to Maintain Child: Staff Ratio**

If a staff member needs to leave a session, on short notice, for any reason, leaving insufficient staff, if there are still children on the premises and a temporary/relief staff member cannot be found, a parent volunteer (not a junior), may fill in as a temporary staff member, provided that there is a qualified teacher and a Staff member who is sufficiently qualified in First Aid. If no temporary staff member is available, then the Playschool session must be cancelled, and parents contacted to collect their children.

# PART THREE PROGRAMMING

## The ACS Standards state that:

High quality programs adopt a holistic view of children's development and wellbeing, and enable staff and services to be flexible in pedagogical approaches rather than focus on narrow objectives.

Learning and knowing are understood as cooperative, communicative and interactive activities where together, adults and children make sense of the world. As they move among many relationships, experiences and opportunities, children are provided with the tools and resources for exploring, problem solving and making meaning.

Pedagogies based on relationship and collaborative dialogue exhibit the true nature of developing cognition and serve to foster optimal learning for children.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises play as one of the basic human rights of children (Article 31). If we are to influence the fulfilment of this right, we must recognise that play is not just about providing safe playgrounds and organised play activities. It is fundamentally about protecting children's freedom to explore, discover and interact with the physical and social world around them. We must be vigilant in protecting the child's right to play.

## Part Three - Contents

- G1 Planning for Children**
- G2 Programming**
- G3 The Learning Environment**
- G4 Meeting the Needs of the Child**
- G5 Evaluation**
- G6 Routines**
- G7 Equipment for Program**
- G8 Rest and Sleep**
- G9 Behaviour Guidance**

# G1 Planning for Children

## ACT Childcare Services Standards state that:

### 1.23 e) Planning for Children

- programming, implementation and evaluation;
- child participation in planning and evaluation;
- parent / guardian and staff participation in planning and programming;
- excursions and incursions;
- cultural relevance of the program;
- individual developmental needs of the children;
- child self-reliance and self-esteem;
- children with additional needs;
- guiding children's behaviour; and

- equity and inclusion of diversity.

## Implementation

### a) Programming, Implementation and Evaluation

The Philosophy of the Playschool and the Goals of the Playschool program are as follows.

At Wombats Playschool, play is the way children develop their physical, creative, and cognitive skills. Play provides opportunities for physical activity, the development of skills for social interaction, flexible use of material, expression of feelings, and ideas, and spontaneous use of language. Play is the major means by which children explore and come to understand their world.

The daily program at Wombats Playschool includes a variety of learning experiences including story, music, games, dramatic play, construction, and outdoor play activities. The process of “observing, exploring and experimenting” is far more valuable than what the final product may look like. The joy is in creating!

It is the responsibility of the Director to ensure that a program designed to meet these objectives is developed by the Teacher, with parental and child participation, and that it is implemented in a manner consistent with the Philosophy of the Playschool.

Evaluations of the program will take place at the end of each term in our staff meetings. Assessment of the program will inform future planning. Staff reflect daily on the program and practices which have been carried out and notes taken and programs altered or changed accordingly.

A timetable of routines must be developed cooperatively between parents and Staff, to provide a framework for the implementation of the program.

### c) Child Participation in Planning and Evaluation

Staff must ensure that children participate in the planning and evaluation of the program. Children can be asked what they enjoy exploring/learning about. Effective observation of the children’s play and interaction with them will provide the staff with the information they need to develop a targeted, engaging program.

### d) Staff, Parent and Child Participation in Planning and Programming

The Playschool Teacher with support from the Assistant Teacher, will plan and implement a written session plan for each Playschool session, incorporating the daily routines, and with reference to the Playschool philosophy, and long-term goals for the group.

Staff will participate actively in the delivery of the program, leading activities; role modelling and instructing; sitting at floor level, and involving children at their own level, with puppets, singing, physical movement, games, stories.

Parents may participate as Classroom Volunteers, leading small groups, assisting individual children, and generally facilitating program delivery. Parental involvement in planning and implementation, comments and feedback are always encouraged, and are used to inform future planning.

The Playschool Staff and Management will encourage families to actively contribute to the program. Parents and family members are welcome to be involved as classroom volunteers, guest speakers, and special activity supervisors.

The children's interests, strengths and ideas are considered when planning the program. The program must include individual, small group and whole group activities, and children will be offered a variety of choices of educational materials, goals, and activities, to encourage self-direction and involvement in their own learning processes. Shy children will be encouraged to participate with encouragement to undertake simple activities in which they cannot fail.

#### **e) Excursions, Incursions**

The Playschool may from time-to-time plan excursions and incursions throughout the year. Any excursion undertaken must relate to the program and the developmental and educational needs of the children. The excursion should reflect or be presented in a way to stimulate the children's interests. The excursion must be evaluated to inform future programming. See **Section J7 Excursions**.

Guest speakers are invited in from time to time, to talk to the children and lead activities that will enrich the program.

#### **f) Cultural relevance**

The Playschool program will be rooted in the traditions and culture of Australia. It is important that the children understand and appreciate the values and culture of the country and society in which they are growing up. The Playschool program will therefore include activities relating to traditional Australian customs and observances, Australian flora and fauna, and icons such as the flag, as far as these are age appropriate.

The Playschool program will also reflect the diversity of cultures present in our community, so that the children may benefit from a broader knowledge of other cultures. Subject to the specific needs and relevance to the mix of Playschool children present, the Playschool will integrate activities relating to other cultures into the program. Parents are encouraged to discuss their ideas on the topic with the Teacher and/or Committee.

#### **g) Individual Developmental Needs**

The program must provide for individual developmental needs. Some children may need extra practice at large muscle activities, while others need more opportunities to develop social skills. There must be flexibility so that activities can be modified to meet the needs of each child as an individual. For example, in a cutting and pasting activity, developmentally ready children may be asked to extend their learning by counting how many items they pasted onto their paper and tracing the number, while for other children the activity may be simplified and marks put onto the page to show them where to paste the required shapes.

#### **h) Child Self Reliance and Self Esteem**

The Playschool aims to provide a warm, positive and supportive environment, in which children are encouraged to be responsible for their own actions; and their confidence and self-esteem is nurtured. For example, children will be encouraged to be responsible for caring for their personal belongings and putting these items in the right place. Every effort will be made to encourage

children to dress themselves and undertake other activities independently, in order to foster feelings of self-reliance and self-worth. Observations such as “I see you did that by yourself, Mary. Well done.” will be used to provide encouragement. Every child will be encouraged to participate at their own level within the group. The aim will be to provide a supportive environment in which the child can enjoy success, and have a sense of belonging.

The Playschool program must be based on recognised principles of early childhood development which include the importance of play as a learning experience, and the provision of a learning environment designed to foster the development of individual children within a group setting. It is the aim of the program to empower each child to develop their own social, physical, emotional, intellectual, linguistic and creative abilities, at their own pace of learning.

#### **i) Children with Additional Needs**

Parents will be requested prior to enrolment, to contact the service to discuss the placement of any child who does not meet the Playschool's criteria for attendance or who has special development needs. It is very important that any difficulties children are experiencing are discovered quickly and parents are made aware of the early intervention possibilities available to them. If a teacher identifies a special need, it will be discussed with parents and our qualified staff can then assist with referral procedures as appropriate. Where possible the Playschool Staff will enlist the support of specialists as needed. Parents will be encouraged to discuss concerns with the Teacher. All discussions will remain confidential.

Where necessary, staff will seek to maintain access to pre-existing support services used in the community by the child and family to provide a familiarity and continuity in goals and programs. e.g. physiotherapy, speech pathologists, family support groups, inclusion support agencies, etc.

Families with special needs children will be encouraged to contact ACT Inclusion support or ACT Education Child Development Team.

The Playschool program may need to be adjusted to cater for children with special needs or disabilities

While Wombats supports the inclusion of all children including those with physical disabilities, accommodation of such needs is dependent on government funding for building updates (e.g. ramps, wheelchair accessibility and disabled toilets). Special needs should be discussed with the Director prior to enrolment who will endeavour to gain the support and funding required to cater for the child.

#### **j) Guiding Behaviour**

The Program must provide opportunities for each child to be guided towards self-control and appropriate social skills, and to be given positive reinforcement for responsible behaviour. See Section G9 for the Playschool's Behavioural Guidance Policy.

#### **k) 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,

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.

## G2 Programming

**ACT Childcare Services Standards state that:**

### ***Programming and Planning***

1.51) The proprietor must ensure that the service has a documented program which:

- is child centred and reflects the best interests of the child;
- promotes the dignity and rights of each child at all times;
- utilises the service philosophy to guide practice;
- is informed by current theoretical perspectives and approaches;
- includes play as essential, valued and meaningful learning;
- is flexible and suited to the age and abilities of the children in each group;
- is based on the ongoing observation of children;
- recognises and incorporates routine times as part of the child's learning and development;
- is inclusive of the diversity of all families using the service;
- respects children's preferences and involves children in decisions about their participation in experiences;
- caters for the individual needs of all children;
- involves all families wherever possible;
- provides both indoor and outdoor experiences;
- is documented to ensure any staff member is able to set up and implement planned experiences;
- ensures staff are available to facilitate the program; and
- is displayed for children and families to access.

Programs can take many forms with many theoretical perspectives. It is acknowledged that this will vary between services, and vary between staff responsible for programming within the same service. It is however, essential that all programs address these aspects.



## Implementation

### 1. Documentation

A daily timetable of routines and activities must be prepared, and parents must be informed in advance about the program and timetable for the session. This information should be displayed for all parents to see. Also, documentation on what children have done should be shared in many ways with families, i.e. Through portfolios, photos, or day books.

### 2. Child Centred Programming

Wombats Playschool implements a curriculum that is meaningful to children, will engage their interest and help them to gain an understanding of the world around them. At our Playschool, the Teacher will develop and implement a meaningful, child-centred program that is designed to meet the needs of all children in the group. Activities may then be modified to suit the needs of individual children, either by extending and enriching the activity for more able children, or by simplifying it as needed for those less able.

Children will be allowed to choose their level of participation in activities. While their decision in this regard will be respected, children may be gently encouraged to participate in activities that would help the individual child to develop more of their potential.

Topics which may arise and be of interest to the children which are not deemed to be age appropriate or in their best interests will not be pursued.

### 3. Promoting the Dignity and Rights of Each Child

Human rights are those basic standards without which people cannot live in dignity. To violate someone's human rights is to treat that person as though she or he were not a human being. The Playschool Program will set out to teach children by example and content that everyone must be treated fairly and with dignity. This will be achieved through treating children with kindness, through discussion about appropriate behaviour, through stories and games.

Rights are also about having the opportunity to be involved and included on matters that affect us. Rights ensure that everybody is treated equally and fairly. Rights are the foundation of democratic society. The Playschool Program will demonstrate the principles of Democracy in its delivery, by allowing children to have a say in matters that affect them, (for example by having class votes for activities, and by allowing free choices of activities), and by ensuring fair play and respect for everybody.

### 4. The Program and the Playschool's Philosophy

The Playschool values the right of every child to be educated in a safe and caring environment that fosters personal development. The Playschool Program will be delivered in a manner consistent with this philosophy. The Playschool Staff will make every effort to create a safe and happy learning environment where staff and parents work cooperatively to provide a developmentally appropriate play-based program for the children in our care, and where every child and family's rights and values are respected.

## 5. Current Pedagogy

Teachers must be involved in on-going professional development so that they understand the most recent studies on Early Childhood Education. Staff will be encouraged to keep themselves up to date through the Cooperative Self-Evaluation and Goal Setting Program for staff development. **See Section F6 Staff.**

## 6. The Role of Play in the Playschool Program

### *The Benefits of Play:*

Play builds brain connections. It is an essential part of a child's education because while they are playing children are learning. It is also important in developing social skills.

Children need opportunities both to play with other children and to play on their own. When two or more children are together, children will be learning how others behave and how to mix easily with them. At other times, children need to play on their own and without interference in order to experiment and direct their own learning.

Play enables children to find out about themselves and the world. A child who is absorbed in play is likely to be a happy child, as play produces feelings of satisfaction and achievement.

Play helps prevent boredom. Preventing a child from being bored is very important, as boredom can quickly lead to bad temper, irritability and destructiveness.

Children use play to help reduce stress. The acting out of stressful situations can help them to seem more familiar and therefore less frightening. It can also help divert aggressive instincts. Using a hammer to nail pieces of wood together to make a 'boat' is preferable to using the hammer to hurt someone or destroy property.

Through traditional game playing children learn about the rules and values of their cultures. This is particularly significant for Australia's multicultural society where playing traditional games can be used to promote inter-cultural acceptance and understanding of others.

Play is a child's way of learning and growing. Without it a child will be disadvantaged and will not show adequate development.

### *Different Types of Play*

Children like variety and during the day will change from one type of play to another. Sometimes they use the same toy. More often they use different toys because changes stimulate different types of play. Six types of play can be recognised and each forms part of a child's total development.

- **Discovery play** (exploring play) enables a child to find out about things: what they are like - their size, shape, texture, colour; how they are made; what she can do with them, for example playing with water or sand. The child will also discover that things can be broken, and this can help to teach her to take care of her possessions.
- **Physical play** (exercise) takes place when a child is actively moving around - running, jumping, climbing, crawling, balancing, swinging, and throwing a ball, and so on. A by-product of their energetic and tireless play is the enhancement of co-ordination, balance and a range of motor skills.

- **Creative play** can be observed when children express their own ideas and feelings, while making something which is original, for example, a picture, an animal in modelling dough, a house in building blocks, and so on. A young child is able to express feelings and ideas more easily by painting and drawing than by using words. As the child becomes more skilled with words, she may then be able to write a story, poem or play. Rhymes, jokes and chants assist children to develop their language skills and enhance their memory.
- **Imaginative play** is 'pretend' or fantasy play. The child imagines that he or she is someone else or an animal such as a rabbit or dog. Children imitate the ways of adults when they play in a pretend house or play 'shopping'. Attempting to behave like someone else helps the child to understand more clearly the ways other people behave.
- **Manipulative play** involves skilful use of the hands. During manipulative play the hands, eyes and brain are being trained to co-ordinate, that is, to work smoothly together. Babies become increasingly skilful with their hands as they play with rattles, soft toys and other objects. Later on, they benefit from playing with such things as modelling dough.
- **Social play** takes place when children play together. It teaches them to co-operate, to share, and to be honest. It also teaches them that antisocial behaviour, like cheating, leads to isolation and loss of friendship. Children often quarrel and in doing so learn about each other's reactions. Social play fosters important social skills, including sharing, turn taking, and developing and consolidating friendships. It is an essential arena for the expression of children's feelings, anger, love and joy.

Play provides children with the opportunity to be in control and make their own choices, without the direction of adults. Young children spend most of their time playing and it is through play that children discover the world around them and have fun doing it. Play is essential to every aspect of children's development: social, physical and cognitive. The Playschool Program will include play as essential, valued and meaningful learning.

Staff will discuss with children the value of physical exercise and encourage them to engage in active play and physical activity, through including it on a routine basis in the Program, and through role modelling and example, having children join them in exercises and games involving lots of physical movement.

The Program will provide the opportunity for many types of play:

- Indoor activities where the children need to share toys, equipment, and physical space with their peers
- Outside play where they learn not only to share and take turns, but build, construct, and further develop their gross motor skills
- Art and craft activities - pasting, painting, play dough, threading, etc., to enhance creativity, confidence, and fine motor skills
- Music and movement, dramatic play, story time (listening, questioning, and concentrating)

Each session will incorporate the following

- Puzzle time
- Craft, painting activities
- Fine motor skill development
- Use of manipulative/construction toys
- Play dough (or similar) play
- Gross motor activities
- Sand and/or water play
- Music and singing
- Story time
- Language and social development activities
- Lunch period
- Quiet time

### **7) Correlated Indoor and Outdoor Experiences**

Children must be allowed the opportunity to explore and learn in both indoor and outdoor settings. When weather, facilities and staffing levels permit, the playground may be thought of as an extension of the classroom, so that things learned and experienced outdoors can be reinforced and explored further indoors, and vice versa. The Playschool Program will use both environments to extend learning. For example, if the theme under study is Australian animals, children may be invited to make a model of a kangaroo at the modelling table during indoor play, and may use water and a paint brush to make a picture of a wombat on the Playschool walls outdoors. A child may bring leaves from the playground inside to use in a craft activity, or similarly, imaginative play in the house-keeping centre may spill continue outdoors when the occupants of the house take the "baby" for a walk in the pram outside. The Program must incorporate a balance of indoor and outdoor activities daily.

### **8) Planning Ahead**

The Teacher's Day plans must be sufficiently well documented that any member of staff would be able to take over if necessary and successfully deliver the Program if the Teacher is unable to teach.

### **9) Information for Parents**

Information for parents regarding the Program, including daily plans, upcoming incursions/excursions and special events are available at the sign in desk, on the notice board, in our termly newsletter; by attending parent committee meetings, or by talking to the Teacher at the end of each session. Displays of children's work will be posted to show parents what has been achieved and to give children a sense of pride in their accomplishments and a feeling of self-worth.

Parents may also request information regarding the developmental progress of their child, and may set up a meeting with the Teacher at any time to discuss this and any concerns they may have.

### **10) Health and Hygiene**

It is important that staff always provide a role model for children. The ongoing teaching of health and hygiene practices should be evident in planning and programming for children.

Teachers will ensure that daily routines include regular hand-washing and other opportunities to learn good hygiene and healthy habits. The value of healthy foods, protection from the sun and safety consciousness should be taught and role-modelled for the children.

### 11) Documentation

It is important to note that a teacher's program is a living document which will be adapted during the term according to the needs and interests of the children, and input from interested parents.

Every teacher's program will vary in appearance and format. However, the Playschool's documented Program must address all aspects of Standard 1.51.

Reflections on the program are regularly noted and information is gathered from staff, families, and children.

## G3 The Learning Environment

### ACT Childcare Services Standards state that:

#### 1.52) Programs shall take into account:

- group size and composition;
- expectations of children and their families;
- the weather and physical environment;
- suitable materials, toys and equipment required to support the program; and quiet/active times and settings.

### Implementation

The Teacher must consider the size of the group when planning activities for children. Children must have the opportunity to engage in solitary play and participate in activities in both small and large group settings. The group size for any one activity should be appropriate for the activity and for the space available. Teachers must also take the weather into consideration when planning activities. For example, if it is raining, what provision will be made for large motor activities? If a room is too hot, can activities easily be moved outdoors into shade?

The size and makeup of the class should also be considered when selecting activities for the Program. If the group consists largely of boys for example, allowances must be made for this, and the interests of that particular group. There must be enough toys and activities to engage all children. The average age of some groups may be lower, and these younger children as a group may require more large muscle activity than others. By observing individual children and the group, the Teacher should be able to understand and cater for their needs within the Program.

In planning the daily timetable, care must be taken to ensure that children are not required to sit still and be quiet for too long. The normal attention span for a three-year-old to sit and listen is about 8-

9 minutes. This will increase to about 10-12 minutes by the end of the school year, as the child turns four. Daily plans should allow for alternating quiet and active times. The Teacher must be observant and responsive to the needs of the group, and be prepared to be flexible in moving from one activity to another. For example, if children become restless at circle time, the Teacher should quickly engage them in movement, or move on to the next activity. Similarly, if a group becomes too noisy and active, the Teacher should have some engaging, calming techniques which can be used effectively to make a transition to the next quiet period. The mix of quiet and active times and the time spent on each will change as the year progresses and children demonstrate the ability to concentrate for longer.

Different areas of the playschool room should be designated as quiet ("soft") areas and others as noisier areas. For example, a quiet area with a rug, cushions and soft toys might be set up in the "Library corner" where children can snuggle up with a book, well away from the noise of the home corner or big blocks areas. All activity areas must however be arranged so that children can easily be seen by the supervising adults in the area.

Suitable toys and materials must be available to support the program. Teachers should make sure that a variety of toys and materials are offered, rotating toys and puzzles for example, to constantly bring new interest into the Program.

Most children come to school excited and eager to play and to learn. The Teacher should allow plenty of time for free play, and provide stimulating activities to challenge their minds and bodies. Families too have expectations and the Program must be flexible to allow for input from families to meet their expectations as much as possible.

As far as it is possible within the constraints of the facility, the Learning Environment must be structured to accommodate all the different activities and groupings required by the Program.

### **Creating an Inviting, Stimulating Learning Environment**

The Teacher and assistant should consider the following ideas in setting up a classroom that will support the Program effectively.

#### **Physical and Cognitive Space**

Taken from <http://www.schoolzone.co.uk>

The Learning environment must be envisioned in terms of both a physical space and a cognitive space. The physical space of the classroom is managed as the teacher prepares the classroom for the children. Is the space warm, light and inviting? Does the room arrangement match the teacher's philosophy of learning? Do the students have access to necessary materials? Are the distracting features of a room eliminated? Attending to these and similar questions aids a teacher in managing the physical space of the classroom.

The cognitive space is based upon the expectations teachers set for students in the classroom and the process of creating a motivational climate. Effective teachers set expectations (i.e., rules and procedures) and create a motivating, stimulating climate.

#### **Classroom Management and The Use of Space**

Taken from <http://education.stateuniversity.com>

**Space to move:** The use of space is vital in its flexibility and ease of movement. It is very important that children don't feel squashed and uncomfortable. Just think about when this happens to you as an adult and how uncomfortable it feels to have another person encroach on your space – for example, on an aeroplane. Yet we often expect this of children on a daily basis.

There should be enough space for children to move past and be beside one another without bumping into their fellow pupils. There should be sufficient space for every child to sit comfortably during story time and ideally sit in a circle with at least 5-10 cms between each child for circle time activities.

**Space for identity:** Every child is assigned a locker and a hook for their personal belongings.

### **Working spaces that fit the individual**

Furniture should be selected that is the right size for the age group of children and has flexibility of function. Each piece of furniture should have a clear purpose and be used regularly otherwise it should go. Do you, for instance, really need a teacher's desk in the classroom – exactly what function does it fulfil?

Each child should have enough room to work so that their arms do not bump into one another. In the case of left-handers, they should be sat at the left-hand corner of the table with their left arm having room to move. Left-handers may also need to sit at a different angle to their work and they need space to do this.

### **Teaching organisational skills**

As children develop, you should expect a greater degree of autonomy. This can be reinforced by the layout of the room and storage so that pupils can increasingly "help themselves." These are very important life/organisational skills and are particularly pertinent for children with Special Needs.

### **Healthy environments**

There is evidence that many classrooms are unhealthy places to be especially in the winter. Ventilation is vital for young busy children.

Research has shown that many children in schools are often very dehydrated. They should have access to drinking water and be allowed to drink whenever they choose. This has great benefits for their present and future health. The teachers should be drinking water too.

Finally, an uncluttered space, well placed furniture, organised materials, simple and clear displays, and carefully considered seating arrangements will all assist in keeping the environment clean and healthy. And most importantly they will all enhance the teaching and learning of all those working there.

In short, the whole environment should be dedicated to promoting feelings of well-being and therefore motivation to learn and focus.

# G4 Meeting the Needs of the Child

**ACT Childcare Services Standards state that:**

1.53) Programs must offer children the opportunity to:

- build relationships and interactions which are responsive, reciprocal, positive and encouraging;
- explore a variety of experiences;
- utilise the indoor and outdoor environment each day;
- pursue their own interests;
- be spontaneous;
- freely choose activities, solve problems and have access to learning experiences;
- safely explore their spaces and environments;
- learn strategies for active exploration, taking risks, thinking and reasoning;
- practise autonomy and independence; and
- learn and practise life and social skills.

These aspects are essential to ensure children have the opportunity to participate. Evidence of these opportunities must be available upon request, and upon observation of children, written programs and evaluations.

All children both need and want to take risks in order to explore limits, venture into new experiences and develop their capacities, from a very young age and from their earliest play experiences.

## Implementation

The Director will ensure that the Program provides opportunities to participate in all of the learning experiences listed in Standard 1.53.

# G5 Evaluation

**ACT Childcare Services Standards state that:**

## *Program Evaluations for Childcare Centres*

1.54) The proprietor must ensure that program evaluations:

- occur regularly;
- inform future programming;
- inform staff practices;
- take into account the views, interests and choices of children; and
- are available to parents.



An increasingly contemporary approach to assessing quality in an early childhood setting is to focus on the 'emotional wellbeing' and the level of 'involvement' of children in peer groups.

Evaluations need to consider these elements along with other individual capacities.

## Implementation

The Teacher will report on the program of the week. Evidence of how well the Program met its objectives, and an assessment of how successful it was must be examined. The Teacher should report on the interests of the children and direction the Program should take in response; this can be noted through reflection by the staff at the end of daily sessions as well as in the evaluation section of the program book.

# G6 Routines

**ACT Childcare Services Standards state that:**

1.55) A flexible schedule / arrangement for planned routine and rituals must be evident.

Given the importance of consistency for children, routines and rituals (both group and individual) should be predictable and consistent in approach. Their implementation should be flexible, with priority given to quality interactions and unpressured time for play.

## Implementation

### Routines and Rituals

Studies have documented that schedules and routines influence children's emotional, cognitive, and social development. For example, predictable and consistent schedules in preschool classrooms help children feel secure and comfortable. Also, schedules and routines help children understand the expectations of the environment and reduce the frequency of behaviour problems, such as tantrums and acts of aggression. Activity schedules that give children choices, balanced and planned activities (small vs. large groups, quiet times vs. active times, teacher directed vs. child directed, indoor vs. outdoor), and individualised activities result in a high rate of child engagement. In addition, the duration of the play period can affect children's social and cognitive forms of play (a play period that is longer than 45 minutes leads to higher levels of social and cognitive play).

<http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/learning>

The Program will be structured to give consistency and a sense of security to the children. Routines and rituals will form a basic part of the Program, with allowances made for some flexibility as needed to meet the demands of the day. Priority will be given to allowing adequate stretches of time for quality interactions and unpressured time to play.

# G7 Equipment for the Program

**ACT Childcare Services Standards state that:**

1.56) There must be adequate equipment to support the program. The equipment must meet the age appropriate needs of the children, and ensure there is flexibility in choice, spontaneity, and variety across the service.

## Implementation

### Equipment to Support the Program

The Proprietor will ensure that there is enough suitable equipment to support the Program as described in Regulation 1.56. A budget will be set for new and replacement equipment and materials which will be ordered following consultation with the Director, President, the Committee, and the Teachers.

### All Weather Program

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 lightning 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.

# G8 Rest and Sleep

**ACT Childcare Services Standards state that:**

5.7) Where the service offers extended sessions or sessions that occur over usual rest periods (for children in this age range), the service will:

- include an appropriate rest / sleep period in the program;
- make parent / guardians aware of this requirement; and
- meet the needs of children's individual sleep / rest requirements.

Also refer to the definitions section of this manual for definitions of 'sessional care', and a child's 'usual rest period'. Also refer to the Programming and Planning section of the Core Standards (1.51 - 1.60).

## Implementation

### Sleep, Rest and Comfort Policy

The above sleep policy is not currently relevant to the Wombats Playschool environment as children are only in our care for 4.5 hours daily.

# G9 Behaviour Guidance

## ACT Childcare Services Standards state that:

### 1.57) Behaviour guidance practices must:

- ensure guidance towards acceptable behaviour, with encouragement freely given;
- respect the values of each child's family;
- guide children to positively understand their emotions; and
- support children to appropriately manage their own behaviour.

Section 741 of the Children and Young People Act 2008 describes the offence of unreasonably disciplining a child.

### Unreasonable discipline is (but not limited to):

- humiliating, threatening, intimidating or labelling a child;
- using physical, verbal or emotional punishment such as smacking or yelling;
- extended periods of restraint, sensory deprivation or exclusion; and
- denying a child access to food, water, sleep, clothing or basic comforts such as heating or cooling.

### 1.58) Management of inappropriate behaviour must:

- maintain the dignity and rights of the child at all times precluding the use of humiliation, threats, intimidation or negative labelling;
- preclude the use of physical, verbal or emotional punishment;
- not deny children access to food, water, sleep, clothing or comfort; and
- not isolate children without supervision.

### 1.59) Children must not be required to wait unoccupied for extended periods.

Routines and activities must be planned and reviewed to ensure children do not have to line up for significant periods of time and resources are available when required, so children can commence activities when they are ready.

## Implementation

Having realistic expectations is important. As three- to five-year-old children are still developing their language and social skills, it is inevitable that some inappropriate behaviour will occur as they share materials, space, and adult attention. However, every child has the right to feel safe and to be

treated with respect. Methods used to guide children will vary according to the child's developmental level, but the underlying goal is the same for all children: to keep them safe; to help them develop self-control and to have them learn more acceptable ways of expressing themselves and playing with others. Bullying and physical aggression towards others will not be tolerated.

- This means that in the Playschool environment, staff will endeavour to:
  - Encourage children to respect the rights of others and to respect property;
  - Encourage children to observe simple limits and guidelines (e.g., Walk inside; listen when someone else is speaking, showing respect to all);
  - Encourage children to use their words and tell other children and adults if they have a problem, rather than expressing their anger/frustration physically;
  - Avoid problems by anticipating them and have children help problem solve;
  - Try to understand what is behind the child's behaviour. (May include talk with parents);
  - Focus on the child's behaviour; do not make general statements that judge the child;
  - Help the child to understand how their actions cause a problem;
  - Stop behaviour that is dangerous immediately and firmly so that children learn to respond automatically when they hear tone of voice (Calm and firm);
  - Notice when children are restless and give them a way to release their energy constructively; and
  - Acknowledge the child's feelings.
  
- If a child is hurting another child or themselves, damaging property, or infringing on the rights of other children:
  - Explain why the behaviour is inappropriate (giving reasons) and give clear positive guidelines of what behaviour is expected;
  - Redirect the child to another activity if the inappropriate behaviour continues;
  - Have the child 'Sit and watch', aside from the group (not isolated) with the teacher, who will discuss with the child the appropriate behaviour. Let the child see the appropriate behaviour modelled by the other children, and allow the child to return to the group when s/he feels able to behave appropriately; and
  - Discuss any ongoing concerns regarding a child's behaviour with their parent or guardian in an effort to agree on a suitable approach. Determine if other factors are influencing behaviour, co-operatively assist to overcome the problem and keep them informed of progress.

- Children who are withdrawing from activities should be monitored. As much as possible, investigate why they are withdrawing. If a child is disinclined to participate in group activities try to draw them back in to the activities. Alternatively, settle them in a quiet area with an individual activity they can do happily for a while, before trying again to draw them back in to the activities later.
- Parents on duty are advised to refer to the teacher in the case of challenging behaviour.
- If concerns persist, the teacher may liaise with the Management or Parent Committee regarding individual situations, ensuring the needs of all the children are taken into account. In consultation with the parent/s or guardian/s external advice may be sought from Children's Education and Care Assurance (CECA) other relevant support agencies.

# PART FOUR WOMBATS HEALTH AND SAFETY

## The ACS Standards state that:

*Personal safety is a priority in childcare services. It is the responsibility of the proprietor, in conjunction with staff, to ensure that every precaution is taken to protect children and staff from hazards likely to cause harm or injury. Maintenance and careful planning of the childcare service is important to reduce the risk of harm or injury.*

*When assessing for safety, it is important to take into account the need for children to be able to consider risk and make sound supported judgements about taking and exploring risk, as well as the potential and actual risk of harm for children and staff.*

*Hygiene measures to reduce the risk of cross infection are important when groups of children are together. Staying Healthy in Child Care should be considered a valuable resource for all services in that regard.*

## Part Four - Contents

- H1 Health and Safety Introduction**
- H2 Public Health: Infectious Conditions**
- H3 Medical Records**
- H4 Wombats Hygiene**
- H5 Changing Soiled Clothes and Disposing of Wastes**
- H6 Food**
- H7 Wombats Water**
- H8 Sun Protection & Clothing**
- J1 Wombats Safety Policy Goals**
- J2 Safety Standards for the Facility**
- J3 Wombats Hazard Identification and Correction**
- J4 Occupational Health and Safety**
- J5 Emergencies, Fire Drills and Evacuations**
- J6 Safety - First Aid**
- J7 Excursions**
- J9 Safety - Plants and Animals**

## H1 Health and Safety Introduction

### ACT Childcare Services Standards 1.61

1.61) *There must be in place written procedures which ensure that:*

- *staff observe strict health, hygiene and sun protection practices that have regard to current community standards, and in accordance with relevant government guidelines;*
- *a parent or other responsible person is advised of any matter concerning the child's health and wellbeing that comes to the notice of the service director or staff while the child is attending the service;*
- *children are encouraged to follow appropriate safe, healthy and hygiene practices;*
- *compliance with health and safety regulations is maintained; and*
- *the service follows current guidelines for safe environments and equipment.*

The Director will oversee all of the policy and procedural requirements for Health and Safety (H&S). The Director will monitor practices and conditions at the facility, conducting periodic spot checks, and report to the Committee at meetings.

The Director will ensure that:

- The facility and equipment are being maintained in a hygienic and safe manner and that all H&S policies and procedures are being implemented correctly and on a regular and on-going basis, including immunisation policy and procedures
- Current guidelines are being followed
- Staff and parent education and training are offered regularly
- The program for children includes education in H&S practices
- Staff provide a good role model for children
- Staff, parents and children are periodically involved in awareness raising activities and programs that are fun and educational
- Good hygiene practices are followed conscientiously
- Reports are made to the Committee when concerns arise
- A careful record is kept of all audits and checks and resulting corrective action that was taken
- An exemption is sought if the Playschool is unable to meet a requirement of the ACS Standards.

When the PPPM is audited annually, the Director will check to discover if there have been any changes to the ACT Children and Young People Act, Childcare Services Standards and the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations to determine if there have been any changes affecting guidelines for safe environments and equipment, and if so, implement the necessary changes and update this Manual.

In the event that the buildings or grounds are unable to meet building standards, e.g. through renovation or extension, the Director will see to it that plans for mitigation of the deficiencies are prepared and submitted to the licensing authority for approval.

# H2 Public Health: Infectious Conditions

## ACT Childcare Services Standards

- 1.61 d. 1.23 **a) *Infectious Conditions and Immunisation***, 1.23 b viii , 1.84 a & b. and 1.85

### Immunisation Policy

Families submit their child's immunisation record on Medicare when they complete their online enrolment form.

Immunisation plays a key role in the prevention of infectious diseases. The Director will receive updated information regularly from ACT Health in regards to immunisation, and will share this information with all staff and parents. The Director will also ensure that the original Immunisation Record form of each child is viewed when parents enrol their child at the Playschool.

The Proprietor will encourage Staff to maintain their immunity to preventable diseases through immunisation, and will provide Staff with up-to-date information relating to their immunisation status at the start of each school year.

### Exclusion Policy

The Director will comply with all ACT Health Regulations and will advise and seek advice from ACT Health Communicable Diseases (Phone 6205 2155) if there is an outbreak or suspected case of a vaccine-preventable disease at the Playschool.

The Director will further ensure that families, staff and visitors are notified of a diagnosed infectious illness or disease at the Playschool. Families and visitors will be notified by means of relevant fact sheets on the entrance door , on the Welcome table and by email.

Children must not attend Playschool if they have any communicable diseases. If a child or sibling who regularly visits the Playschool contracts a communicable disease e.g. measles, chickenpox, Covid 19 etc. parents are asked to advise a staff member so that a notice can be posted on the Playschool door informing other families, in a manner that respects the dignity of the family concerned.

If a vaccine-preventable disease is present or suspected, children who are not immunised or have incomplete immunisation records will be excluded. Persons at risk will be informed immediately by telephone where necessary. The Playschool retains the right to exclude any child not well enough to cope with the group situation, for the good of the child concerned.

Families will be informed upon enrolment of the Exclusion Policy relating to immunisation.

The Director will receive updated information from ACT Health in regards to immunisation regularly, and will provide this information to all staff and parents.



## Wombats Playschool Covid 19 How to Stay Safe Guidelines

If there is an outbreak of Covid 19 in the community, Wombats Playschool will follow local legislation and regulations, this may involve lockdowns and regulated rules to follow when children are in our care. Information and direction will be sought from ACT Health, Australian Department of Health and our local regulators Children Education Care Assurance.

### Communication:

- All families and staff will be given all information that they will need to follow Covid Safety Guidelines. This will be through a variety of different methods, including emails, notes and signs around our facility.

### Drop off:

- Parents/Carers will drop children at the room door to a staff member, after helping children hang up coats, hats as well as placing bag, lunch, drink and fruit into their locker. Once child has entered the room, Parents/Carers are encouraged to exit Wombats as quickly as possible, remembering social distancing with other people dropping children off at Wombats.
- Staff will sign children in as they arrive electronically.
- Once child arrives the child will be asked to go to the bathroom and wash hands and then join the group on the mat for our morning routine.

### Pick up:

- Parents/Carers will arrive and social distance while waiting for their child to be sent out of the room to their parents/carers at 1.45pm.
- Parents/Carers will collect their child's personal belongings and their child and exit Wombats as quickly as possible.
- Staff will sign children out electronically once they exit the room.

### During our Day:

- Children will be spoken about and encouraged to not touch their faces/mouths while at Wombats and regularly wash their hand.
- Children will also be encouraged to stay at home when not well and to cough into their elbow and use tissues appropriately and dispose of them appropriately.

### Cleaning:

- Staff will regularly clean touch points throughout the day with disinfectant alongside our regular cleaning protocol.

We will follow Safe Work Australia's guidelines for Early Childhood Education throughout the Covid 19 pandemic.

## Responding to a Pandemic.

### Infection control during a pandemic.

#### Intent

The intent of this policy is to ensure best practice is implemented to protect the centre/service community during a pandemic. The policy is based on current ACT Health Directorate advice.

#### Objective

The following policy aims to ensure the safety and protection of all stakeholders accessing or using an education and care facility or a school age care service during the COVID - 19 pandemic.

The policy will address who maintains the lead in the critical situation, the key protection strategies that must be in place, communication that must be maintained, and actions required should a case of COVID-19 infection occur.

- **The Lead**

Government planning to meet the changing circumstances posed by the COVID - 19 pandemic can happen rapidly. In order to remain aware of changes and to adapt procedures to meet changes all services should check ACT Health Directorate daily. Useful links include: -

[ACT Health Directorate](#)

[Australian Government Department of Health](#)

[ACT Education Directorate](#)

[Australian Government Department of Education Skills and Employment](#)

[ACECOA](#)

Services should note they **must not** discriminate against or exclude families from accessing the centre, based on a parent or guardian's occupation.

- **Protecting students, children, educators, auxiliary staff, families and community members.**

This set of suggestions should be used as a guide in the development of procedures that will be unique to each context, covering the requirements outlined below.

*Supplies check:* Before opening each day, the service must comprehensively check supplies of all essential PPE and general hygiene supplies. This includes but is not limited to – gloves, sanitizer, cleaning materials and disinfectant, nappies if required, thermometers, anti-bacterial floor cleaning products, toilet paper and tissues. ***A service with inadequate supplies should not open.***

*Adequate cleaning:* High traffic areas of the service must be comprehensively cleaned every two hours. This includes door handles, doorknobs, coded door entry pads, exit buttons and so on. Every toy and every surface require cleaning twice a day. In the case of infant areas mouthed toys should be removed immediately the child is no longer engaged with the item. ***Additional staff, or staff deployed from other roles within the service, must be responsible for undertaking the cleaning requirements – not the educators who are working directly with the children.***

*Hygiene:* Hand washing is critical and should be conducted on entry to the centre, before and after consuming food and drink, after going to the bathroom, after cleaning children's faces. **On the hour every hour hand washing of all children and staff should occur.**

*Social distancing:* Limits should be placed on the number of children in a room to best reflect the 4 square metre per person requirement. In school age care settings, any additional space that can be used should be used to reduce the number in each group in each space to a maximum of 10 children. Children's use of outdoor areas should be on a rotational basis. Where possible children's start times should be staggered to allow for some measure of social distancing. Transitional mealtimes must be put in place to allow for social distancing. Parents and guardian's arrival and departure routines must be modified to maintain social distancing, and to reduce the number of contacts children are exposed to across the time they are in care. **Centres must not discriminate against or exclude families from accessing the centre, based on a parent or guardian's occupation.**

- **Communication**

*Contact details:* Contact details of each child's parent/guardian/authorised emergency person, must be recorded for **each** day a child is in attendance, to ensure that a **person will be available** to collect the child at any time across the period of care being provided. Contact details for ACT Health, the Regulatory Authority and emergency services must be kept on hand in case of a critical situation.

*Updates:* Services must ensure that all stakeholders are immediately informed of any changes that may be notified to them by the Lead authorities. A communication plan must be developed to ensure this is possible.

- **Action in the event of a case**

*Closure:* The service must close immediately if a Covid-19 infection has occurred in the setting. Immediately contact ACT Health and the Regulatory Authority. Follow the advice given by the Lead authorities.

*Communication:* Inform all families and staff of the situation and any precautions they should undertake as advised by the Lead authorities.

*Cleaning:* A registered industrial cleaning company must be brought in to do a comprehensive clean of the centre to make sure it is virus free. Advice on this process will be given by ACT Health.

*Re-opening:* The centre will re-open only after approval from the Lead authorities has been given.

Information about general infection control in education and care services can be found in the National Health and Medical Research Council publication-

<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/staying-healthy-preventing-infectious-diseases-early-childhood-education-and-care-services#block-views-block-file-attachments-content-block-1>

## Head Lice

In the event of an outbreak of head lice, affected children will be excluded until appropriate treatment has been carried out and the head lice have disappeared. If a case is discovered at Playschool, the parent will be discreetly notified. As with illness, an awareness notice will be put up notifying playschool parents that a case of head lice has been identified and for all parents to check children and treat if necessary.

# H3 Medical Records

**ACT Childcare Services Standards** 1.11 (a to g) and 1.16 (a to f), 1.17 (a to f), 1.18, 1.61 (b), 1.62(a), 1.86 (a to f), 1.88(a and b), 1.89 (a & b), 1.90

Also refer to Core Standards 1.88 - 1.90.

Wombats Playschool will make every effort to ensure the well-being of the children in its care. The Playschool will also keep careful records regarding the health of the children in its care, any medical conditions, and the administration of medications.

## Procedures in the Event of Accident or Illness Whilst Attending the Service

The Teacher will ensure that the following procedures are followed if a child becomes ill or has an accident during a session.

- Parents should be informed at pick up time, if their child has sustained minor injuries or felt mildly unwell during a Playschool session.
- If a child has a head injury, other serious injury, or is running a high fever and /or is seriously unwell, Staff are to make every effort to contact the parent immediately.
- The child must be kept under adult supervision until he / she recovers, or parent / guardians or an emergency contact takes charge of the child;
- In the event of a serious injury other children should be moved to another area.
- Every reasonable effort must be made to secure the consent of the parent / guardian before administering immediate medical aid.
- The Parent / guardian or an emergency contact must be notified, the same day, of any first aid treatment or medication administered to a child.
- If ambulance attention, transport or medical attention is provided, a parent / guardian must be notified.
- If a child's temperature is 37.5 or over Staff will attempt to contact the parents and request that the child be picked up, and advise them to seek medical advice. If Staff cannot contact parents' staff will take the following steps to reduce the child's temperature and call emergency contacts.

- Sit or lay the child in area with good air circulation.
- Remove main clothing.
- Sponge the child with cool/not cold water.
- Fan the child manually.
- Give sips of cool water to avoid dehydration.

## Records Required in the Event of Accident, Illness and Notifiable Disease

An illness or accident record must be completed immediately following each incident or illness that occurs to a child during a Playschool session. The Playschool must also keep a record of all children's illnesses, including notifiable diseases, reported by a parent. This Form must be completed by the Teacher in Charge (with information obtained from relevant parties) as soon as practicable following the incident / notification / observation of symptoms. The information recorded will include:

- the child's first and surname and age;
  - the date and time the symptoms were noticed;
  - symptoms, but not a diagnosis, unless identified by a doctor;
  - any action taken for the wellbeing and comfort of the child whilst at the service;
  - record of persons notified and by whom;
  - whether the service was notified by a parent / guardian; and
  - provision for the parents to sign that they have been advised of the child's illness
- The Parent / guardian must be informed and must sign the form when the child is picked up, as confirmation that they were informed of the illness or accident. The completed form should be kept in the child's file and a copy should be kept on file. The parent may be given a copy of the completed Form on request.

## Medications Policy

Medication can only be administered to a child on the written authorisation of a parent and/or a doctor and administered in accordance with the written instructions. Medication must be in its original packaging and prescription medication can only be administered to the child for whom it was prescribed, from a container bearing the child's name, and within the current expiry time. It is the parent's responsibility to provide written authorisation, check the expiry date on the packaging, and replace outdated medicines as needed. A record must be made each time medication is administered.

Medication will not be administered unless under instruction from a medical practitioner. Parents must give written consent and complete and sign a Medication Permission Form.

## Staff Responsibility

Staff must ensure that at no time do children have access to the area where medications, including any brought by the Staff, are stored. Staff must wash their hands before and after giving medication. Staff will administer medication and verify dosage with another staff member present, and both must ensure that all necessary records are completed.

## Parental Responsibility

Parents should try to administer medications before and after Playschool sessions if possible. Parents are required to keep their child at home for 24 hours when the child starts new medication (including antibiotics), in case the child suffers a reaction.

Parents/guardians are required to inform staff if their child has had any medication during the night or before arriving in the morning. The parent will also be held responsible for giving the packaged medicine to a Staff member / placing their child's medication in the fridge in the kitchen, while a member of staff is present. Medication is not to be left in the child's bag.

## Storage of Medicines

Medicines stored at the Playschool must be in original, labelled containers; and stored according to manufacturer's instructions.

## Records Required for Administration of Medication

Written permission is required for administering any prescribed medications to be given to a child, including medicines such as cough mixtures and homoeopathic medicines. All doses of medication administered to a child whilst attending the service must be recorded. Where children have special requirements in relation to their medication, it is essential that staff are familiar with these requirements, and where necessary, with the method of administration of the medication and the equipment used. In emergency situations only, medical treatment may be given with verbal consent from a parent or if the parent / emergency contact cannot be reached, then from a medical practitioner.

## Medication Given with Written Permission

If a child requires medication while in the care of the Playschool such medication may only be administered if signed parental consent is in the child's file. Whenever medications are administered a Form must be completed by the teacher in charge. The record must include:

- the first and surname of the child;
- the name of the medication;
- the date / s, time / s and dosage to be administered;
- the time the medication was last administered before the child was placed in care;
- any doctor / pharmacist's instructions relating to its administration and / or storage; and
- the parent / guardian's signature authorising the medication to be administered to the child.

A separate form must be completed every time medication is administered. The Teacher must give the medication in the presence of a witness and both the Teacher and the witness will then complete and sign the record.

Alternate forms will be made available in the case of ongoing medication requirements e.g. asthma plans.

### **Medication given in Emergencies / With Verbal Permission:**

Where there is no written authorisation of the parent / guardian, *such as in an emergency*, then the Director/Teacher in Charge may elect to obtain verbal authorisation and have the record signed by the parent / guardian as soon as practicable. A record of the administration of the medication must be made and must include the first and surname of the child; the name of the medication; the date and time the dosage was administered; the dosage administered as per the doctor / pharmacist's instructions; the name and signature of the person who administered the medication; and the name and signature of the person who witnessed the administration of the medication. The information is the same as listed in Written Permission Policy

It is the responsibility of the Teacher in Charge to ensure that parents are advised when collecting their child of any administered medication during the session and that the parents sign the Verbal Medication Permission Form, to acknowledge that they have been informed, must also be completed, and signed by the parent to confirm notification. The parent may request a copy of the completed form, which will be filed in the child's file.

### **Allergies**

- **What is Anaphylaxis?**

An anaphylactic reaction (or anaphylaxis) is a severe allergic reaction. It is the body's reaction to a foreign substance. The foreign substance can be some food such as nuts, shellfish and cow's milk, insect stings such as a bee or ant sting, or some medications. The reaction can be life threatening and causes shock or an inability to breathe. The air passages can become so severely swollen that suffocation can occur. The reaction begins and proceeds very rapidly. It must be treated with the medication "epinephrine" immediately.

A child presenting with early symptoms of anaphylaxis may have (in no order):

- Itchy palms and soles
- Faintness
- A feeling of generalised warmth, flushed face
- Tingling in the mouth
- Throat or chest discomfort
- Unusual taste in the mouth
- Breathing difficulties
- Red watery eyes & runny nose
- A sense of foreboding, fear or apprehension

As the reaction progresses a child may exhibit (in no order):

- Swelling of the face
- Hives
- Gasping, choking, coughing, wheezing i.e. breathing difficulties & difficulty swallowing
- Vomiting
- Dizziness
- Loss of consciousness
- Diarrhoea
- Cramping
- Drop in blood pressure, pale complexion

#### (b) Prevention

- All children who have had a previous anaphylactic reaction or a suspected reaction must be clearly identified at the time of enrolment at the Playschool. The child's allergy must be discussed with the Teacher/Office Manager at the time of enrolment. Additionally, the Teacher will hold confidential discussions with the parents.
- Parents must provide clear documentation, including:
  - Diagnosis and management plan from a doctor which details the likely cause of a reaction;
  - The expected symptoms;
  - Course of action to be followed if exposure to a trigger occurs whilst the child is at the Playschool;
  - A photo of the child
  - Emergency contact numbers.

This will be known as the ACTION PLAN. The Teacher, Assistant Teacher and Roster Parents must be aware of the children who are at risk of anaphylaxis. The child's Action Plan will be permanently displayed. near the kitchen, and all staff will be instructed in its use.

- Avoiding known triggers: The Playschool will require all parents and staff abide by the following food procedures:
  - Parents of all enrolled children will be informed verbally and in writing which foods they are not allowed to provide for their children. These foods will always include nuts and, depending on the foods that may trigger an anaphylactic reaction in a child, may also include but not be limited to eggs, wheat, dish, shellfish, fish and milk. Appropriate opportunities for providing this information are on Enrolment Forms, at the Parent Information Evening and regularly in the Playschool Newsletter.
  - Avoidance of nuts and other foods that may trigger an anaphylactic reaction (including but not limited to eggs, wheat, dish, shellfish, fish and milk) also extend to foods supplied voluntarily for group consumption at events such as Playschool Parties and when sending birthday cakes to the Playschool. The contents of food brought in for a special event should be clearly identified.  
***Parents need to be aware that labelling food with casein, livetin or hydrolysed***



***vegetable protein indicates the presence of milk, egg and peanuts respectively. Foods labelled "may contain traces of nuts" should also be avoided.***

- Where certain foods are not excluded from a food (such as in cupcakes bought in for a birthday celebration) the parent of the anaphylactic or allergy prone child may choose to supply their child with an alternative 'treat'.
- Parents are asked to wash their children's hands and faces before bringing them to Playschool (especially if peanut butter or Nutella is on the breakfast menu at home).
- There should be no trading or sharing of food, food utensils and food containers.
- All children with severe food allergies should only eat lunches and snacks that have been prepared at home. A special seat for meal times, near a supervising adult will be allocated to the child at risk.
- Surfaces such as tables, toys, etc should be washed clean of contaminating foods prior to contact by a food allergic child.
- The use of food in crafts and cooking classes may need to be restricted. Care should be taken when making play dough to use appropriate nut-free oil and avoid any known colouring agent triggers.

#### **(c) Recognition of Anaphylaxis**

All staff, (in this case the Teacher, Assistant Teacher and rostered parents) should be able to recognise if a child is having an anaphylactic reaction. This is especially important in young children, who may be unable to communicate effectively that they are having a reaction.

The Action Plan provided by the parents, and displayed in the Playschool kitchen, will list the reaction likely to occur. The Teacher, Assistant Teacher and roster parents should make themselves familiar with this at the beginning of the year and check the Action Plan frequently in case it has been adjusted.

#### **(d) What to do in the Event of an Anaphylactic Reaction**

The Teacher is the nominated First-Aid attendant at all times at Playschool.

- The Teacher will administer adrenalin by EpiPen as soon as possible after the onset of severe symptoms. Severe symptoms occur when the respiratory or cardiovascular systems are affected. This would be indicated by:
  - Difficulty breathing, talking or swallowing
  - Persistent cough
  - Inability to talk
  - Noisy breathing
  - Loss of consciousness
- The assistant teacher must immediately ring 000 and request an intensive care ambulance.

- The roster parent or Assistant Teacher should gather the remaining children together separate from the patient/but still within sight of the Teacher. They should engage the children in an orderly group activity such as reading stories or singing songs.
- The Teacher must remain with the patient at all times until the ambulance arrives.
- The Teacher should contact the parents or emergency contact person as soon as possible after the patient is in the care of qualified attendants.
- A Roster Parent or staff member may be required to accompany the child in the ambulance to hospital in the absence of the child's parent or carer.

NB: If the reaction does not appear to be "severe" as defined above, the Teacher should remain with the child and the Assistant Teacher should ring the parent or emergency carer and ask them to come to the Playschool immediately. The parent/carer should take the child to hospital for observation and treatment.

Should the child's reaction progress to a "severe" level, then the procedures outlined above should be followed.

#### **(e) Location of the Epipen™**

The parents of the children concerned shall ensure Wombats Playschool is always supplied with an Epipen for each child and that it has not reached its expiry date. All Epipens etc are to be supplied to the Playschool on enrolment. They should be clearly labelled with the child's name and stored with the other medicines that are easily accessible to adults but not children. The Epipen should not be stored in a child's bag. Nor should they be stored in a locked cupboard or drawer. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the Epipen is in date.

Adrenalin (the contents of the Epipen) may be stored at room temperature, away from bright light. It does not need to be refrigerated.

In addition to this, Wombats Playschool should have an in-date Epipen in the first aid kit for administration for a first-time anaphylactic reaction or where a child's Epipen cannot be located.

#### **(f) Consent and Release Documentation**

Children should have appropriate consent and release documentation completed regarding the administration of medications by the Playschool Teacher.

#### **(g) Review of Action Plans**

Action Plans for each allergic child should be reviewed annually or after each reaction.

#### **(h) Protection of Roster Parents**

At no time will the roster parents be placed in the position of having to make an assessment about whether a reaction is occurring, an assessment of its severity, or have to administer medication. However, roster parents are asked to be observant and bring to the Teacher's attention any concerns. The Teacher is the person responsible for assessing the situation and administering medication.

## Medical Conditions

Children who require on-going prescribed medication for health conditions such as asthma, epilepsy, diabetes and other conditions must have an up to date health management plan. This will be known as the MEDICAL ACTION PLAN. It should be written and signed by the prescribing doctor or parent, and should include information on the expected level of supervision and assistance required to manage the condition. All staff including relief staff should be made aware of health management plans and children with such conditions. Health Management plans should be kept on display near kitchen for handy reference. A list of all children with Medical Action Plans should be posted in the kitchen.

## First Aid

The safety and well-being of the child is of primary importance, and if the situation warrants it, First Aid may be administered by a staff member with a current, 'Provide Emergency First Aid Response in an Early Childhood Setting'. A record must be made of any treatments administered. **See Section J5.**

If ambulance transport or medical attention is provided, a parent must be notified, and must sign to confirm that they were informed.

## Summary of Records Required

A separate report must be completed as soon as possible following every incidence of illness, accident, or near miss, emergency event or incident at the Playschool.

**Illness and Notification of Disease Record** - used for recording any illness occurring during a session; must be signed by parent to confirm they were notified. Also used to record report from a parent, of a child's communicable disease. Original put in child's file. Copy to parent if requested.

**Written Medication Permission Form** - Parent / Child's Doctor to complete before Medication can be administered in session. Completed with witness when medication given by Teacher in Charge. Original in child's file.

**Medication Administration Verbal Permission** - complete when authorization for medication is obtained verbally. Parent to sign as soon as possible, same day, to say they were notified

**Medical Action Plan** - drawn up by child's doctor and posted in Playschool kitchen.

**Allergies and Medical Conditions List** – filled in and displayed in Playschool kitchen.

# H4 Wombats Hygiene

**ACT Childcare Services Standards** 1.23 b(viii) , 1.61(c&d), 5.22, 5.23, 5.24, 5.26

## Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases

The Director will provide information on health and hygiene to Staff and Parents, during Staff Training, in the Parent Handbook, on Notice Boards, and with the distribution of newsletters. A copy of the ACT Health Protection Services' "Exclusion Periods for Infectious Conditions" poster will be

displayed, as well as being attached to the Playschool Policy and Procedures Manual. The Playschool will comply with the ACT Health and Safety Regulations, including those concerning Immunisation. Children will be educated in hygiene practices daily, through their program and through role-modelling by Staff.

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/school-exclusion-periods>

All staff members will be requested to share in cleaning responsibilities, and to step in quickly if they perceive a breach of hygienic practices. Any staff member who is suffering from an infectious condition will not be permitted to attend work, and Staff are requested not to come to work when they are unwell. Staff are also required to maintain healthy and clean habits. This includes clean nails, clothing and a general clean and tidy appearance.

### Hand Washing

The Teacher/Assistant Teacher will:

- ensure that posters and notices regarding Hand Washing Procedures are placed in appropriate areas;
- provide a supply of liquid soap and individual hand wiping facilities;
- make toilets and hand washing facilities easily accessible to each child whether they are indoors or outdoors;
- ensure paper towels are available for children and adults who use the facility. Bins for disposing of towels are provided in the same area. The Teacher/Assistant Teacher will ensure that this area is always kept well supplied and that the bin is emptied daily; and
- only fill up water bottles from the kitchen sink, not the bathroom handwashing sink.

Parents and Staff should remember that hands should always be washed:

- On arrival at the Playschool
- After using a toilet or toileting a child
- Before and after giving first aid
- Before and after the administration of medication
- Before food preparation, and after a meal
- After handling animals
- After dealing with a sick child (who should then be excluded until well)
- After cleaning and disposing of protective gloves

### Toy and Equipment Sanitation

The Director will ensure that toys and equipment are wiped down and sanitized regularly, once a year and that sand pits are routinely covered after every session, to prevent soiling by animals.

### Washing and Storage of Handtowels, Kitchen Teacloths, Bed Linen

A Teacher/Assistant Teacher will remove all hand drying towels, kitchen tea towels, and mop sleeves every week, for cleaning and disinfecting.

## Disposable Gloves

Disposable gloves must be worn during:

- first aid procedures;
- the handling bodily fluids, this includes changing soiled (faeces) and wet (urine) pants, wiping children's bottoms and clothing and nose wiping; and

Gloves should be removed by turning them inside out, and disposing of them directly into the bin. Wearing gloves does not replace the need for hand washing as hands may become contaminated during removal of gloves. New gloves should be used for each child.

## Handling and Spillage of Bodily Fluids

In case of any spillage of bodily waste (faeces, urine, and blood) disposable gloves and towels must be used, with general purpose cleaner to clean up the waste. When most of the waste has been disposed of, a disinfectant and fresh paper towels should be used to disinfect the area. Paper towels and gloves should be sealed in a plastic bag before discarded into a rubbish bin, with a lid. Hands should then be washed again.

## Cleaning of the Facilities

The Director will ensure that the Playschool maintains a hygienic environment and that the premises are cleaned daily. There must be regular cleaning of floors, bathroom area including toilets, kitchen area, walls, window coverings, table tops and furniture, during and after sessions.

## Cleaning of Floors

Mops are labelled according to their intended use. Toilet mops must not be used in the classroom. The correct mop, bucket and cleaner must be used to clean toilet areas and clean up spillage of bodily waste in that area. There will be a different mop and bucket for the classroom. The Director will ensure that cleaning instructions and labels are clearly displayed.

## Washing tables

Tables must be washed before and after the children sit down for morning tea and lunch (if tables are used for eating at), after craft activities, at the end of the day and other times as needed. The correct colour of sponge and a general-purpose cleaner in a spray bottle should be used. At the end of the day, after cleaning with general purpose cleaner, the tables should be treated with disinfectant, using the correct colour of sponge as before. Furniture should be sanitized including legs and under ledges at the end of each term.

## Toilets and sinks

Toilets should be cleaned inside the toilet bowls using the toilet brushes located in cleaning cupboard. Disposable paper towels and disinfectant should be used to clean outside surfaces, and the toilet should be flushed to finish.

# H5 Changing Soiled Clothes and Disposing of Wastes

**ACT Childcare Services Standards:** 1.61 b, 1.62 b, 5.25 a&b

## **Nappy Change Policy**

Normally, children enrolled at the Playschool must be toilet trained. If a child is attending Wombats Playschool and they require a nappy they will need to be accompanied by a parent/guardian until such time as they are toilet trained. Where special circumstances apply, an individual care plan should be developed with the parent/guardian, Director and Teachers.

## **Policy for changing soiled clothes**

Staff must notify their colleague before changing a child's soiled clothing, so they know that they must supervise all the other children. Staff should try to use this time for a friendly conversation, and respect the child's need for privacy by avoiding changing the clothes when the other children are all in the bathroom to wash their hands for morning tea / lunch.

The following procedures for changing soiled clothing must be followed. The child should be assisted to remove shoes and pants. Disposable gloves must be worn. The child should be assisted with hand washing, and putting clothes back on, and sent back to class. After completing assisting the child with changing their soiled clothes the educator will wash their hands with soap and water either in the children's sink in the bathroom or around the corner in the 'handwashing only' sink in the kitchen area. Roster parents should not assist a child is changing soiled clothing unless the child is their own child.

## **Individual Toileting Policy**

See **Section H6** in Staff Training for policy regarding toileting children respectfully. Disposable gloves must be used and hands must be washed before and after assisting a child at the toilet. Only Staff, not Roster Parents, should individually assist children with toileting.

## **Disposing of Waste Material**

Staff must be trained to dispose of waste materials safely and hygienically. Disposable gloves should be removed by turning them inside out, and avoiding touching the exterior while dropping them into the waste receptacle. Where the gloves have been worn to deal with bodily waste or fluids, the gloves and any paper towelling, cloths, or wipes must be disposed of into a plastic bag, which must be sealed, and placed in the rubbish bin.

## **Contaminated Laundry**

Contaminated materials which are to be sent home with a parent for laundering should be placed in a sealed plastic bag.

# H6 Food

## **ACT Childcare Services Standards state that:**

1.23 b) vi. food and nutrition, including food handling and storage;

1.63) *There must be a written food policy in place that is consistent with National Food Safety Standards, is available to parent / guardians and outlines the approach to:*

- *accommodating individual dietary, cultural, religious and health needs;*
- *safe preparation handling and storage of food and drinks; and*
- *discussing safe food preparation, handling and storage of food with children and their families.*

*Information regarding the National Food Safety Standards is available from ACT Health, Health Protection Services, or from Food Standards Australia New Zealand.*

1.91) *Food provided for the children must:*

- a) *be nutritious;*
  - *be adequate in quantity;*
  - *be varied;*
  - *be offered at regular intervals;*
  - *be stored, prepared and presented in a hygienic manner;*
  - *be developmentally and culturally appropriate; and*
  - *meet individual health needs with regards to intolerances and allergies.*

1.93) *Staff who prepare or supervise food handling must have skills and knowledge of current food safety and hygiene practices.*

1.95) *The service must provide equipment for eating including crockery, cutlery and furniture that is safe and appropriate for children. It is best practice to ensure children sit down whilst consuming food. This may reduce the likelihood of choking incidents.*

## **Implementation**

### **National Food Safety Standards**

Staff will clean the kitchen thoroughly as needed and after sessions. Fridges are to be kept clean.

### **Provision of Food**

The Playschool has a policy of not providing food for children. The need to accommodate individual dietary cultural, religious and health needs will be met by having parents supply their own foods for children. Parents will be advised in the Parent Handbook that children are expected to bring foods

in containers clearly labelled with the child's name and that these should be placed in the child's locker or the baskets provided.

Children should take their drink bottles and lunch boxes home after each session. This ensures that food is not left to spoil, and also allows the parent to judge how much food and what kinds of food to provide, by seeing what was left unconsumed.

When baking in class with children, Staff will discuss with them how to handle food and drink safely, about making healthy food choices. Foods baked together in class will be healthy and nutritious; developmentally and culturally appropriate; varied, and designed to meet individual health needs with regards to intolerances and allergies.

Children will be invited to eat and drink mid-morning and at lunch time. Children will be required to sit down to eat, so as to minimize risks of choking. Parents will be encouraged to provide healthy and nutritious food, and stored, prepared and presented in a hygienic manner. Parents will be invited (in the Parent Handbook, and at Orientation sessions), to send in treats to keep in the freezer for their child, if foods to be baked in class do not suit their individual dietary, cultural, religious and health needs.

### **Food Allergies**

Parents are required to inform Playschool staff of any food allergies that their children may have prior to commencing attendance. If an enrolled child is known to suffer anaphylactic reactions to a certain food, that food is banned from the preschool premises altogether. Nuts will not be allowed. Parents will be advised in the Enrolment Pack, and reminded again through the Newsletter, Notice Board, or emails, which foods are banned, and which are restricted. Children's allergies, intolerances and family preferences are written on the Allergy List, which is displayed in the kitchen for easy reference by the staff.

Children are discouraged from sharing foods to avoid the risk of cross infections, and triggering allergic reactions in others. Children must be seated to eat, to avoid risking choking, and children with severe allergies may be required to be seated near a Staff Member who can supervise this more closely.

The contents of food brought in for a special event should be clearly identified. Parents will be informed that food labelled with casein, livetin or hydrolysed vegetable protein indicates the presence of milk, egg and peanuts respectively. Foods labelled "may contain traces of nuts" should also be avoided. Parents will be asked to wash their children's hands and faces before coming to Playschool (especially if peanut butter or Nutella is on the breakfast menu at home).

There should be no trading or sharing of food, food utensils and food containers.

All children with severe food allergies should only eat lunches and snacks that have been prepared at home. Surfaces such as tables, toys, etc should be washed clean of contaminating foods prior to contact. The use of food in crafts and cooking classes may need to be restricted. Care should be taken when making play dough to use appropriate nut-free oil and avoid any known colouring agent triggers.



### Special Occasions

Special occasions when food is shared form an important part of our community building atmosphere at the Playschool. Children bake and cook together; sometimes there are celebration morning teas; and sometimes parents/children bring in food (birthday cakes, for example) for everyone to share. Parents will be informed that if they wish to send in foods for special occasions, they should avoid foods containing banned ingredients, and that if they wish to please as many children as possible they should check the allergy list before baking, or avoid the common allergens such as dairy, nuts, egg and colouring.

Parents of children with food allergies, intolerances or strong preferences will be invited to provide some suitable treats that can be kept in the freezer at the facility, marked with the child's name. These will be defrosted and served to their child whenever any shared food is being served that is deemed unsuitable for the child.

### Facilities

In order to deal with foods hygienically and safely, the Director will ensure that the kitchen facilities at the Playschool include the following: a stove/microwave, a sink, separate adult hand washing facilities, a refrigerator, a dishwasher, or procedures to adequately sanitise dishes as required, and hot and cold running water. The facilities for food preparation, handling and storage are in or close to the room where the Playschool program usually operates. Where one side of a double bowl sink is to be used for hand washing only, appropriate signage and procedures will be installed. Crockery, cutlery, and furniture that is safe and appropriate for children is provided.

## H7 Wombats Water

### ACT Childcare Services Standards 1.94

It is the policy at Wombats Playschool that parents provide a bottle of water each day for their child. The bottle should be taken home each day for cleaning and refilling. Bottles are to be placed in the child's locker so that they are accessible easily from indoors or out, and children will be encouraged to drink plenty of water, particularly on hot days when they may be outside longer.

Teachers will set an example by also having their own drink bottle on the table and drinking plenty of water throughout the day. Teachers will also give the children instruction on the benefits of staying well hydrated. Sharing bottles is not allowed, and children will be instructed on the importance of this and limiting the risk of cross infection.

# H8 Sun Protection & Clothing

**ACT Childcare Services Standards 1.23 b vii, 1.61a, 1.62 c.,**

Staff will educate children about the weather, seasons, and the need for appropriate clothing for protection from the elements, and the importance of exercise, through discussions, stories and role-modelling. Parents will be provided with information about suitable clothing for play experiences, both indoors and outdoors in the Parent Handbook. Children will be encouraged to engage in active Physical play, both indoors and out, for their health and well-being.

## Sun Protection

All children are required to wear a suitable hat to Wombats Playschool and to always wear a hat when playing outdoors. Hats must not be shared or placed in a common basket, to minimise the risk of transferring head lice. The hat should provide protection for the child's face, neck and ears (e.g. a wide brimmed or legionnaires style hat). Parents will be provided with an appropriate hat on enrolment. This hat should be clearly labelled for exclusive use by the child.

Parents are responsible for applying sunscreen to their child before they attend Playschool sessions. SPF 50 + broad-spectrum sunscreen is provided at Playschool for parents to apply prior to a session beginning. Parents are required to provide sunscreen for their child/ren if the one provided by the school is not suitable for their child/ren. As added protection from the sun, children should wear clothing that covers their shoulders. Parents are responsible for applying sunscreen if required prior to dropping of their children.

The Director/staff will ensure that there are adequate shaded areas, either natural or through fixed shade cloths in frequently used outdoor play spaces.

## Inclement Weather

In the colder month's children will be required to wear a beanie, coat and if necessary, a thick jumper to play outdoors. In case of extreme weather such as severe cold and heat children will be kept indoors.

# J1 Wombats Safety Policy Goals

**ACT Childcare Services Standards 1.23 (b), 1.61 (d & e)**

## Safety Policy

It is important that children and adults using the Playschool do so in a safe and secure manner and that they are not exposed to undue hazards. The goal is to remain injury and accident-free every day. Accordingly, it is important to always maintain the facility in a safe condition and to raise the safety awareness of staff so that they can recognize potentially hazardous situations and take prompt corrective action. It is incumbent on teachers and other adults to be safety conscious; to instruct children in safety matters, and to role model safety conscious behaviours for them.

# J2 Safety Standards for the Facility

**ACT Children's Services Standards** 1.29(a to c), 1.73(a to c) 1.74, 1.77, 5.9, 5.10, 5.11, 5.12, 5.13 and 1.65, 5.14, 5.15, 5.17, 5.18, 5.19, 5.20 (a to c), 5.22 (a & b) 5.26, 5.27(a to f), 5.28 to 5.34 (a to c), 5.35 to 5.38 (a to d), 5.39 to 5.50 (a to f), 5.51 (a&b), 5.55 (a & b)

## Fire Safety

The Playschool will comply with recommendations made by the ACT Fire Brigade. A fire safety report is required before an extension to the Playschool becomes operational. All smoke alarms must meet the relevant Australian Standard, and it is recommended that they are of the photoelectric type. A 240-volt smoke alarm with battery backup and interconnected with other smoke alarms is a preferred option by the ACT Fire Brigade. A Fire Drill should be conducted on a termly basis with each Playschool group. This should be documented.

## Electrical installations

The installation of a safety switch, or residual current device, on electricity and lighting circuits is recommended to assist in the prevention of electrocution. Information about safe electrical outlets and safety plugs is available from Kidsafe Australia.

## Indoor play areas

In calculating unencumbered floor space in playroom areas, open floor space does not include passageways, storage areas, fixed furniture, lockers, areas occupied by cots, separate sleeping areas or door swing arcs which encroach on possible play space. However, open shelving offering toys and equipment directly to children, and activity tables and chairs are not considered to encumber the floor space. In calculating both the size of the room and the number of children, the figure is to be rounded down.

The design of the play room should allow easy supervision of all areas, whilst providing flexibility for innovative layout of furniture, activity areas and play spaces. Staff should be able to see all parts of the playroom.

"Convenient from indoor play areas to toilets and hand basins access" means that the children's bathrooms / nappy changing area adjoins the indoor play areas. In older buildings where this is not possible, the flow of traffic through rooms can be guided by careful placement of furniture.

Any form of enclosure, e.g. stairway, must take into account possible entrapment areas.

## Furniture and fittings

In addition to meeting relevant Australian Standards, the person purchasing the items must also consider the risk of injury through its use, the suitability for the age group, the play value, likely life expectation before having to be replaced, the time required to tidy up and the likely time available for teaching staff to instruct or supervise. When ordering furniture, safety and utility are of equal importance, and therefore furniture must be of appropriate height and construction for children,

with smooth surfaces, rounded corners, appropriate weight and stability. See Standard 1.29 regarding compliance to Australian Standards.

Some items not considered suitable or appropriate for use in or around classrooms or play areas are

- thumb tacks, use push pins with coloured plastic heads instead because they are easier to see and tend to land with points to the side;
- sharps - however, blunt-ended scissors may be used. (See the section under Hazard Identification and Maintenance, below, regarding sharps)

### **Entrances and exits**

Consideration needs to be given to all users of the building when planning entrances and exits. The needs of people with disabilities, wheelchairs, or pushing prams are to be balanced with the need for children to be safe. Advice from the ACT Fire Brigade may be sought regarding fire regulations for exits.

The following rules are in relation to external gates, which are not to be propped open while the Playschool is in session.

- The first teacher to arrive in the morning ensures the gate is closed.
- Staff will ensure it closes behind them as they pass through it during the day
- Staff will close it immediately (and check for all children) if they see it has been left open.

### **Storage**

The Director will ensure that there is storage, inaccessible to children, for dangerous items such as cleaning materials, disinfectants, poisons, flammable and hazardous substances, toiletries, first aid equipment and medications, gardening and maintenance equipment, tools, and "sharps". This can be accomplished by means of lockable cabinets or storing materials out of reach.

Storing frequently used products on a high shelf out of reach of children is acceptable.

Chemicals and similar products must be stored in appropriate containers. When bulk materials are decanted into smaller containers, appropriate bottles should be used. Empty drinks bottles, or other containers usually associated with foodstuffs must not be used, even if different labels are used.

Storage facilities for program materials and indoor play equipment should be at a height to allow easy lifting and bulky items should be stored where they do not constitute a trip hazard. Staff supervision requirements should also be considered when planning the location of storage space.

### **Toilets and hand basins**

The temperature of hot water accessible to children must be controlled to prevent burning. A temperature of 50°C is recommended. Hand basins and troughs used for hand washing in toilet areas should not be used as a drinking facility, because of the risk of infection.

### **Food preparation facilities**

Rubber gloves should be worn so that water may be used as hot as possible, adequate amount of dishwashing detergent should be used, and rinse water should also be as hot as possible.

### **Outdoor play space**

In calculating the outdoor play space, the calculations for both area and number of places will be rounded down. Storage sheds, landscaped shrubberies and garden beds which are decorative and not considered to be available for children's play, and areas less than 3 metres in width are considered to encumber the outdoor play space.

### **Outdoor play equipment**

Playground equipment does not have to be static; it may be portable. All outdoor play equipment must be checked regularly for wear and tear.

### **Water safety**

There will be close supervision when children are engaged in water play in portable pools or similar, and such temporary water features must be emptied at the conclusion of play.

## **J3 Wombats Hazard Identification and Correction**

### **ACT Children's Services Standards state that:**

1.23(b), 5.16, 1.64, 1.66 to 1.67, 1.70, 1.71, 1.72, 1.78, 1.80, 1.81(a to e)

### **Maintenance and Cleaning**

The Teacher and Assistant Teachers will ensure that the facility is well maintained and that carpets, floors, toilets, sinks and kitchen areas are cleaned daily after. Other maintenance such as water leaks and blockages, window or fly screen damage, must be corrected as soon after occurrence as possible.

### **Vandalism, Damage and Burglary Protection**

There are two main approaches for discouraging vandalism, theft and property damage. The first is to keep maintenance up to date and the second is to build in prevention measures, such as indoor and outdoor security cameras.

### **Keeping up Appearances**

Every effort should be made to keep the appearance of the Playschool clean and neat. An exterior appearance which suggests apathy and neglect, including litter, broken fences, broken windows, overgrown landscape and poor lighting sends a message that the property owner is not attentive or does not care, and invites abuse.

### **Build in Prevention Measures**

Increasing the risk of detection, increasing the difficulty of vandalizing and reducing the rewards to graffiti vandals reduces the opportunity of vandals and burglars to target the Playschool. In the case of graffiti, rapid and continual removal of the graffiti is the best way to protect the property and preserve the image of the Playschool and the neighbourhood. Removing graffiti within 24 to 48

hours makes removal easier and more effective and reduces the notoriety for graffiti vandals that results from their efforts remaining on display. (So-Safe graffiti remover is effective).

In the case of other damage, e.g. broken windows, smashed doors, fly screens, gaps around door frames, again the best way to protect the property and preserve the image of the Playschool and neighbourhood is to repair or replace the damaged item. It is well established that leaving damage visible is paramount to giving permission for more damage to take place. Furthermore, it may allow access of vermin into the buildings. All vandalism and damage to the property will be reported directly and quickly to ACT Property Group.

### **Contractors**

Contractors may be engaged to perform maintenance on Playschool property, clean the classrooms, offices, toilets and washrooms. All contractors are required to wear appropriate safety equipment, depending on the job. Preferably maintenance should be conducted when children are not present, however emergency maintenance, e.g. to correct electrical faults, repair telephone lines, may be required during operating hours. In such cases, children should be kept well away from the area where work is being done.

### **Hazard Identification and Correction**

Hazard identification can be undertaken formally and informally. In both cases both physical objects (such as the building, equipment and supplies) and unsafe actions should be identified and reported.

The formal process requires regular inspections or things such as, but not limited to sharp edges, broken toys, water leaks etc. Check lists are most helpful for these kinds of inspections. Items considered unsafe should be reported to the Director for appropriate action.

The informal process requires constant vigilance as the day progresses. In this regard, unsafe actions (by children or adults) are the most likely observations, e.g. one child hitting another, spillage of drinks on the floor. In such instances, action should be taken immediately to correct the infraction, and the observation and action reported to the staff for any subsequent action. There may also be unsafe conditions, e.g. water too hot, which cannot be dealt with immediately; such instances should be reported to the Staff and ACT Property Group. If necessary, the Director will communicate with the parents, either by a notice at the sign-in desk or to their home.

### **Housekeeping**

Walkways and areas surrounding firefighting and first aid equipment should be kept free of obstacles in order to facilitate quick action in the event of emergencies.

Tripping hazards should be moved so that the items no longer present a tripping hazard, e.g. small toys on the floor.

Water or other liquids on floors should be mopped up immediately and the area dried as soon as possible, in order to avoid slips.

## Storage

As a principle, items should be stored neatly and with sufficient space around them that it is not necessary to step over other items in order to access them. Additionally, heavy items should not be stored above chest height. When reaching objects high up, use a ladder or step stool, not a chair.

## Sharps

"Sharps" are items which have sharp points or cutting edges capable of causing injury to, or piercing human skin, when handled.

### *Use and Storage of Approved Sharps*

Sharp knives, potato peelers and like sharp instruments should be kept in a designated drawer, in a knife block or sharpening sheath, or at a height inaccessible to children. Children under the age of 12 should not be permitted in kitchen areas without close supervision.

In children's areas, steps can be taken to minimize injuries from sharps. Teach children how to use sharp instruments, including closing scissors after use; putting sharp instruments away safely; and passing sharp instruments either by laying them down for the receiver to pick up, or passing the instrument blunt end towards the receiver.

### *Disposal of glass and sharps*

If sharp items such as small pieces of broken glass, hypodermic needles, razor blades etc are found, they should be placed in a sealed, rigid walled, puncture proof container and then disposed of in a wheelie bin, or preferably a yellow Sharps Disposal Container (obtainable from safety supply companies). Large pieces of glass and light bulbs (including fluorescent bulbs) should be placed directly in a wheelie bin.

### *What to do if you Find an Unsafely Discarded Needle and Syringe*

- Do NOT attempt to recap the needle;
- Find a rigid walled, puncture resistant, sealable container, e.g. a yellow Sharps Disposal Container;
- Put on latex/rubber gloves if possible;
- Pick up the needle/syringe by the middle of the barrel keeping the sharp end facing away from you at all times;
- Place the needle/syringe in the container sharp end first; and securely close the lid, holding the container at the top;
- Place the sealed container into the wheelie bin (non-recyclable waste), or return it to your nearest Needle and Syringe Program (9 Sanford St, Mitchell; phone no. 6241-8203) for disposal as medical waste;
- Remove gloves (if appropriate and wash hands with running water and soap) and
- Advise children to inform an adult if they find unsafely disposed of needles/syringes

## Chemicals, Cleaners and Dangerous Goods

Kitchen cleaners, bleach, liquid soaps etc are to be kept in a cupboard with a child-proof safety lock, out of children's reach.

Paints, paint cleaner, graffiti removers and chemicals classified as hazardous or poisonous should be stored out of children's reach or in a cupboard with a child-proof lock. All chemicals, including kitchen chemicals, should have a safety data sheet, if available, e.g. Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS), or Concise International Chemical Assessment Document (CICAD). The safety data sheet will have information about the necessary protective gear required, e.g. goggles, masks, gloves, clothing.

### **Playground and classroom equipment**

Many items may become damaged as a result of human or natural causes. For example, wooden articles - such as tables - may become splintered; plastic articles - such as trucks - may become brittle as a result of UV exposure; cloth articles may become ripped or badly worn; toys may lose wheels, etc. Such items should be disposed of.

### **Dangerous Animals**

The risk of a potentially dangerous spider, snake or insect bite exists all over Australia, in bushlands and in urban areas. The treatment and management of spider, insect and snake bites is covered in Australian first aid courses, and at least one first aid qualified staff member should be present at all times children are in attendance. The prevention of bites is an important safety factor at the Playschool, and the mainstay of our bite prevention program is two-fold: visually checking for hazards and removing the hazard. Staff should refer to the current First Aid manual for appropriate treatment of spider, snake or insect bites.

## **J4 Occupational Health and Safety**

### **ACT Children's Services Standards state that:**

1.23) The service shall implement written policies and / or procedures for each of the following areas:      b) Safety, Health and Hygiene, v. occupational health and safety.

### **Implementation**

The Playschool will adhere to the requirements under:

- The Commonwealth Work Health and Safety (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Act 2011
- The ACT Work Safety Act 2008 Code of Practice;
- The ACT Work Health and Safety (Consequential Amendments) Act 2011

Current copies of the Regulations and Codes will be kept in the Playschool office.

### **Staff Responsibility**

It is each individual staff member's responsibility to actively evaluate, address and identify potential and current hazards within the Playschool. All risks, issues or concerns are to be reported directly to the Director immediately.



Staff are encouraged and asked to minimise the use of dangerous products within the Playschool environment. In doing this staff are to ensure that hygienic practices and conditions are not jeopardised.

All staff, contractors or visitors are to record any accident, injury or incident, including near miss incidents. These records are to be kept on file.

## Staff Strategies

Staff must:

- Avoid carrying children. If Staff need to carry a child, it should be face to face. Even when talking with a child, adults should knee down and not bend towards the child;
- Keep the back straight;
- Use a ladder or step up to store or hang items above shoulders level;
- Carry heavy items in teams of two;
- Sit on bigger chairs. All staff should have the opportunity to seat on a normal chair when attending staff and board meetings;
- Hands must be washed on arrival at the Playschool;
- Participate in workplace inspection and risk control on an ongoing basis;
- Be active in the review of the Playschool Occupational Health and Safety procedures, policies, and practices; and
- Record any accident, injury and near miss incident immediately, passing the information onto the Director.

# J5 Emergencies, Fire Drills, Lockdowns and Evacuations

**ACT Children's Services Standards state that:**

## ***Accidents and Injuries Records***

1.12) There must be a record of a child's accident /injury when this occurs while the child is attending the service, which includes:

- the child's first and surname and age;
- the date, time and location of the accident / injury;
- circumstances of the accident, if observed;
- nature of any injury sustained;
- names of any witnesses;

- any action taken for the wellbeing and comfort of the child, including the administration of first aid;
- date, name and signature of the person making the report;
- record of persons notified and by whom;
- signature of parent / guardians, to acknowledge that they have been notified of the accident / injury.
- time of the child's departure from the service and the name of the person collecting the child.

Parent / guardians must be immediately advised of any accident causing an injury that requires, or may require, medical attention. They should be notified as soon as possible and the child should be closely monitored. This is particularly important in situations where the effect on the child is not immediately visible, such as a blow to the head.

1.13) If a child has an accident that requires medical intervention or hospitalization or causes death; or if a child dies from non-accidental causes at the service; the licensing authority must be notified no later than the next working day of the fact and the circumstances of the injury or death.

1.14) If any of the circumstances outlined in Core Standard 1.13 occur, the service must forward a copy of the report to the licensing authority no later than the next working day.

### ***Register of Accidents / Injuries***

1.15) The service must maintain a register of accidents / injuries which details;

- full name, age or date of birth of the child;
- location and date of the accident or injury; and
- brief description of the circumstances of the accident, and the nature of the injury.

1.19) Records of emergency procedure practices must be maintained and kept on the premises for a minimum of two years.

1.20) Emergency procedure records must include the following information:

- date, day of the week and time of emergency procedure completed;
- staff involved in the procedure;
- number of children involved in the procedure;
- time taken to complete the procedure; and
- evaluation of, and actions arising from, the practice to inform future planning.

### ***Emergency Procedures***

1.23) The service shall implement written policies and / or procedures for each of the following areas:

- Emergency Procedures
  - emergency procedures for the service;
  - accidents Emergency Procedures and incidents for both staff and children;

- death of a child;
- lost child
- abandoned child; and
- unauthorized access to the service / children.

1.75) There must be a written emergency procedure and a copy of the floor plan for the following in case of a fire or other emergency at the service:

- evacuation (detailing an alternate route and assembly point);
- lock down;
- threats to premises and people where children are in care, by persons known and unknown to the service.

1.76) There must be processes in place which ensure that :

- all staff have a copy of the emergency procedures;
- emergency procedures and floor plans are posted in every room of the service;
- all staff have access to written procedures for accessing all emergency services;
- telephone numbers of emergency services are prominently displayed at each telephone;
- a copy of the daily attendance record / s and each child's contact details are taken out of the service during an emergency; and
- emergency procedures are practised a minimum of four times a year in all services.

### **Incidents**

1.87) If a significant incident occurs that affects the provision of care or the wellbeing of children (excluding illness and accidents):

- the parent / guardian or emergency contact must be notified on the same day;
- a written record of the incident must be completed and signed the same day; and
- the licensing authority must be notified no later than the next working day.

### **Implementation**

The Director will ensure that staff, relief staff, and parents are all informed regarding Emergency procedures. This will be done through Parent Orientation Sessions, Staff Induction Sessions, notices and reminders on bulletin boards, and practice drills.

### **Accident or Injury**

In the event of an accident which gives rise to injury, or an acute illness, the Teacher must be notified immediately. At no time will roster parents or volunteers be placed in the position of having to make an assessment about first aid or administering medication; the Teacher is the person responsible for this. For policy and procedures regarding acute illness, see Section H2, Individual Health.

In the event of an accident, the area checked to ensure it is safe. Other children must be moved away to a safe place. The Teacher must stay with the affected child(ren) at all times and if the first

aid box is required, the Assistant Teacher/volunteer will retrieve what is needed from it. See Section J6 regarding first aid supplies and administration. First aid may be administered in cases of minor injury or urgency.

If the injury is serious, the Assistant Teacher or volunteer will phone for an ambulance. The Teacher should give their name, location, number of people involved, details of medical/accident emergency and ask for instruction and advice. If an ambulance is required, the Teacher in Charge must stay with the affected child(ren) until the ambulance arrives. Every effort will be made to contact the parent or emergency contact, and inform them before the child leaves the facility. However, the health of the child is the primary concern. A staff member will accompany the child, in the event that the parent is not available. The Teacher in Charge must remain with the other children, and if Staff : Child ratios cannot be maintained, the session will end and parents will be called to come and collect their child.

If the Teacher is busy with the affected child(ren) it is recommended that the Assistant Teacher and/or parent helpers sit the remaining children down quietly, in the view of the Teacher in Charge, and read the children a story or sing songs with them.

At the end of the session the Teacher is required to complete an **Accident Incident Report Form**. The parent is required to sign to confirm that they have been notified. See Section 10 below for information regarding records.

If the accident requires medical intervention (e.g. stitches) or hospitalization or causes death then the Playschool must notify the licensing authority and forward a copy of the report no later than the next working day.

## Death

Death of a child, staff member, volunteer or family member is a traumatic event for those left to mourn. A death while the Playschool is in session is especially so

If the death occurs in view of the children, the Teacher should remove the children out of sight of the dead person and engage them in an activity, which may or may not deal with the death, depending on circumstances. Each Playschool should develop their communication structure regarding calling parents (e.g. by the Teacher, Assistant Teacher, Director), calling a doctor for confirmation of the death, advising the licensing authority, dealing with media if approached.

Following the death, a record of the circumstances leading to death will be recorded and the Department should be contacted.

The Director will decide if and when to close the Playschool. As it is unlikely that staff will have counselling skills for such events, referral to counsellors may be advisable for some people affected by the death. However, the teaching staff can help students deal with the event in the days following the death, with opportunities to express emotions and grief, verbally, through play, drawing etc.

A useful reference: A Student Dies, a School Mourns; Ralph L Klicker; published Brunner-Routledge 2000; ISBN 1-56032-742-1

## Fire Emergencies

In the event of a fire, the Teacher in Charge is to:

- Collect the whistle and back gate key, which are located hanging in the kitchen;
- Blow the whistle with three long blasts to indicate that the building is to be evacuated;
- Retrieve the class list and laptop
- Lead the children out of the building via closest safe exit (see floor/site plan), to the Assembly Area;
- If there are adults on the premises (for example parent volunteers) then they are to assist with the evacuation of the children;
- Assemble children, staff and visitors in the evacuation area (see floor/site plan);
- If it is prudent to move the children off the Playschool property, unlock the back gate and move to the Alternate Assembly Area.
- Check that all children, staff and visitors are accounted for by taking a roll call.

The Assistant Teacher is to:

- Collect the parent contact / emergency contact information which is kept on the back of the craft door;
- Collect the First Aid Kit and mobile phone
- Check, with assistance from a Roster Parent if available, the classroom, office, toilets and store room and assist any remaining children;
- Phone the Fire Brigade at 000 (or 112 from a mobile phone). The address of the Playschool is Old Page Preschool Macadam Street Page;
- Exit the building, closing doors in order to block off the fire, and then go to the evacuation area and assist the Teacher;
- Advise the Fire Brigade, when they arrive, of the situation and give the names and last known locations of unaccounted children, staff or visitors to them;

If the Fire Brigade deems it unsafe to re-enter the building, arrange for parents to be called to pick up their children. (In the event of a small quickly contained kitchen or waste basket fire, the staff may decide whether it is safe to return to the classroom, taking into consideration fumes or smoke hazards for young children.)

Anyone trapped in a room, should close the door between themselves and the fire, and close off any air gaps by stuffing them with cloth. They should signal to someone outside, if possible, and stay low to avoid smoke inhalation.

NB. If the fire is small and contained, e.g. in a waste paper basket, and there is no immediate danger, any staff member or adult may use a fire extinguisher in an attempt to extinguish the fire. However, this is not to be done in lieu of all other people being evacuated; and then the staff

member or adult must leave the building and await the Fire Brigade. To use a fire extinguisher, remove it from the wall, pull pin from handle, aim at the base of the fire, and sweep from side to side at the base of the fire.

Once everybody is assembled in the emergency evacuation area, **no-one** is to attempt to re-enter the building until the area is declared safe by Fire Brigade or Emergency Services staff.

### **Intruders, Threats or Hostile Behaviour**

An Intruder is an unauthorized or an unknown person who enters the premises. Unless the person is known to the Playschool, or is escorted by someone known to us (for example a visiting Grandmother coming to the Playschool with the rest of family), ask them to stay out. People wishing to pick up children but not known to the Teacher should be asked for proof of identity, and their name checked on the child's enrolment application; or the Teacher may call the Parent/Guardian for verification.

If the person has already entered the premises, one staff member or parent is to escort them off the premises; the other staff member/s is/are to stay with the children.

The staff member is to politely greet the intruder, identify them self and ask the intruder's purpose. The staff member should remain calm, be patient and courteous. If the intruder's purpose is not legitimate, inform the intruder that unauthorized persons are not permitted to be on the premises and ask him/her to leave, and then escort the intruder off the premises. If the intruder refuses to leave, inform him/her that the police will be called. Contact police (phone 000, or 112 on a mobile phone) if the intruder still refuses to leave.

In the event that the intruder is angry or hostile, institute lockdown immediately.

If the intruder appears to be in a genuine emergency, e.g. is injured, help may be provided under close supervision at the Teacher's discretion.

A record of what transpired is to be kept.

### **Break-in**

In the event of a break in, the police are to be called and a decision then be made by the Teacher about whether the Playschool is to be open for that day, or certain areas to be considered off-limits for children. For example, if there is broken glass over carpet that would need to be commercially cleaned before being safe, then that room would not be able to be used. Parents are to be advised of the decision.

### **Lockdown Procedure**

A lockdown should be initiated when a situation arises that requires the isolation (rather than evacuation) of staff, students and visitors from an identified threat (for example: an aggressive or violent intruder, a siege/hostage incident, dangerous animals, severe storms).

- The Teacher is to move all children and visitors to a secure room/office. A mobile phone and the class list should also be taken in to the room/office
- Close windows, blinds and lock doors.
- The Teacher shall account for all students, staff, visitors and volunteers on the premises.

- Phone Emergency Services/Police (000, or 112 from the mobile) to inform them of the lockdown incident, request police attendance, and take their instruction.
- Contact a staff member not currently at work to inform them of the lockdown incident so they can ensure that Emergency Services/Police attend, track the events from outside the building, and, if necessary, contact parents/carers.

If the threat is from an intruder:

Students and staff are to stay out of sight as much as possible (for example, sit on the floor), turn off lights and stay quiet. No one is to leave the room until given the all clear from Emergency Services/Police .

If emergency medication is required, relay this information to Emergency Services for advice, assessment of the situation and to discuss options.

Once the lockdown incident is over, the Teacher will make a large note of this on the Sign-in/Welcome table. The Teacher in Charge/Director will inform the parents by email or phone. Advise parents that if they wish to discuss the incident further staff are available to do so.

The Director will report the incident to the Children Education and Care Assurance

## **WOMBATS LOCKDOWN PROCEDURE**

### **When to do a lockdown?**

A lockdown should be initiated when a situation arises that requires the isolation (rather than evacuation) of staff and students from an identified threat, this could include aggressive or violent intruder, siege/hostage incident, dangerous animals, armed robbery and lightning/severe storms.

### **What happens in a lockdown?**

The teacher in charge shall announce to the students and all present that they all need to move to the 'safe room' ( the office), once this has been announced the staff need to gather children calmly, checking that there are no children on the playground, bathroom, etc and also ensuring all staff know what is happening. The teacher in charge will move with everyone to the office, where everyone will sit on the ground, roll call will be taken, blinds will be pulled and all doors locked from the inside.

Staff will tell the children calmly that they will be safe and will stay quiet and still until told otherwise. The teacher in charge will notify police and parents will be notified. There will be a list of all children and contact details of all children in our 'safe room' so everyone can be notified. There are books and games to entertain children if needed.

Children, staff and parents will not come out of our 'safe room' until notified by police or other trusted parties.

### **Post lockdown**

Parents will be sent an email to explain what happened and CECA will also be notified about the details of the event. Counselling will be provided to all if needed after the event.

Lockdowns will be practiced four times a year, once each term by children and staff and in the event of an actual, feedback will be gathered from staff and families about how the lock down worked and if there could be ways to improve it.

### **Incidents**

Significant incidents (excluding illness and accidents) which affect the provision of care or the wellbeing of children may include natural disasters, power outages, serious illness or injury of staff or volunteers, fires, harassment and threatening behaviour and violent behaviour. Parents will be informed on the day of the incident and the licensing authority notified no later than the next working day.

### **Lost or Abandoned Children**

With a large number of children to supervise, it is always possible that one will become unaccounted for, e.g. on an excursion, or slipping out of the Playschool gate unnoticed. Therefore it is imperative that throughout the session day the staff keep a count of the children in their care.

#### ***Lost children***

Within the Playschool, when it is discovered that a child cannot be accounted for, the Teacher will ask the remaining children if they know where the missing child is and the Assistant Teacher or a volunteer will make a calm and methodical search of the premises - in toilets, cupboards, storage areas, offices, in and around classroom and playground equipment and, in the playground. If the child still cannot be located, the parent is to be advised and Police and the Director notified. The Teacher will then direct volunteer(s) to search outside the premises. If at the end of the day the child has still not been located, the remaining parents will be notified of the incident and the licensing authority notified.

If the child becomes lost on an excursion, when it is discovered that a child cannot be accounted for, the Teacher will ask the remaining children if they know where the missing child is and parent volunteers will be asked to search in the most likely places where the child may be found. If the child still cannot be located after an exhaustive search, the parent is to be advised and Police and the Director notified. Also, the excursion will be curtailed and children returned to the Playschool while further searches are undertaken, if at the end of the day the child has still not been located the remaining parents will be notified of the incident and the licensing authority will notified.

#### ***Abandoned children***



If a child is not picked up at the appointed time, contact with the parents will be attempted. If, after several attempts, no-one can be raised to take charge of the child, the child will be viewed as potentially abandoned. At this stage it must be recognized that the parents or carers may be unexpectedly detained and unable to contact the Playschool. If, after an hour or so after the Playschool closes for the day, the child has not been picked up, the Teacher will call the police. The Teacher will make arrangements for someone to be with the child, at the Playschool, until police take over.

### **Training and Drills**

All teaching staff will be trained in safety procedures as part of their induction and reviews of that training be made at least once a year.

Fire drills and Lockdowns, with children present, are to be held once a term, and this will be recorded on the Fire Drill and Lockdown Drill Register.

### **Emergency Procedure Records**

On completion of each emergency procedure practice, a record of the event will be completed. This record will be kept on file, in the Incidents Register Folder / Binder in the Office, for two years. Reports should be filed by year, so that out-dated material can be easily removed after two years.

### **Safety Records**

Record Keeping Forms pertaining to Safety Records are as follows:

#### **Accident Incident Report Form**

#### **Emergency Event Record Form**

A separate form must be completed after every accident that occurs on site. **See Accident Incident Report Form.** The Teacher in charge is responsible for completing forms, (with information obtained from relevant parties) as soon as practicable following the incident. Forms must also be signed by the person collecting the child to acknowledge that they were informed of the occurrence. The originals of completed forms will be filed with the child's record, and a copy will be filed in the Health and Safety Register, which will be kept securely in the Office.

Where an accident requires medical intervention (e.g. stitches) or hospitalization then the Playschool must notify the licensing authority and forward a copy of the completed **Accident Incident Report Form**, no later than the next working day. In the event of a lost child or death, the licensing authority must be notified as soon as possible. The original form will be kept securely with the child's record and a further copy must be filed in the Health and Safety Register, which will be stored in the Office.

A separate form must be completed following each emergency event, (fire drills, threats, intruders etc.). Originals of these forms should be filed in the Health and Safety Register. The licensing authority should be notified as soon as possible if the event was unusual in any way. Records must also be kept of meetings, discussion and corrective action that may be taken following any incidents, accidents or near misses that occur.

For Record keeping regarding illness at the Playschool, see Section H2.

## Inquiries and Recommendations

After every accident, injury or emergency event, the Director will cause an investigation into the matter to be held to elicit what can be learned and recommendations made, e.g. for changes to operations or procedures, changes to training methods, repairs to defective items. During the investigation, previous occurrences should also be reviewed to see if there is a pattern. The Director will then ensure that there is follow-up to actions needed to be made as a result of those recommendations.

The Director will also contact the insurance company if warranted.

# J6 Safety - First Aid

## The ACT Children's Services Standards state that:

The services shall implement written policies and/or procedures for each of the following areas:

### 1.23b) Safety, Health and Hygiene

#### xix. First aid

#### First Aid Kit

1.82) There must be a fully equipped and approved first aid kit on the premises that is;

- a) inaccessible to children;
- b) labelled;
- c) readily available to staff;
- d) checked regularly; and
- e) kept up to date.

In accordance with Commonwealth Occupational Health and Safety Code of Practice 2008, The Director will ensure that we have an Apply First Aid certificate that is renewed every three years.

The First Aid Kit(s) is located in the office.

The Director will ensure that:

- All Staff know where the First Aid kits are located;
- First Aid kits are out of the reach of children, clearly labelled and visible;

- A nominated staff member is made responsible for keeping the First Aid Kits checked any missing items replenished, and stocked with products that have not passed their expiry date, using a checklist that satisfies current standards of practice;
- Ice packs/cold packs are kept at all times in the freezer ready for use on bruises and sprains;
- First Aid Kits are available for Excursions, (where applicable);
- Emergency telephone numbers (ambulance, police, fire, poisons information, and Health First) are kept near each of the phones;
- Staff members update their first aid certificate as required;
- Copies of the most recent First Aid Manual are located in designated first aid areas;
- A wall chart with the DRABCD Action Plan is displayed near the First Aid Station.

### Plan of Action for Accidents:

If a child has sustained minor injuries or felt mildly unwell during a Playschool session, and there is clearly not an emergency, the parents should be informed at pick up time, whether first aid has been used or not. In more serious cases the following guidelines apply.

- When an accident/injury involves a bump on the head, even if minor, parents should be notified as soon as possible and the child closely monitored for signs of concussion.
- Assess injury:

*If the incident is minor, e.g. the person has a scraped knee or is mildly unwell:*

- A qualified staff member may give appropriate first aid, complying with the Playschool's Hygiene;
- The policy for "Safe handling and cleaning of body fluids or materials in contact with body fluids procedure" should be adhered to;
- Contact parent or, in the case of an adult, the next of kin;
- Complete an incident/illness report form;
- Ensure that a child's parent has signed an incident/illness report and has received a copy if they have requested one.

*If the incident is serious, e.g. the child has a serious injury, or is running a high fever and is seriously unwell*

- A qualified staff member may give appropriate first aid, if urgent, and will keep the person under supervision until he/she recovers, or a parent or emergency contact takes charge;
- If first aid is not urgent, another member of staff will attempt to contact a parent or next of kin immediately and secure consent prior to giving any medical aid;
- Depending on the situation, the person may be moved away from other children, but if there is a potential for spinal injury if moved, then the other children should be removed from the scene;

- Staff may call the child's doctor, or Health Direct at 1800 022 222 for advice, and this number should be posted near the Office phone, or a member of staff may call for an ambulance;
- When a parent or the emergency contact person/s cannot be contacted, a qualified member of staff will accompany the child or adult in the ambulance. Staff must not transport a child themselves;
- An Incident/Illness Form must be completed immediately following each incident or illness that occurs to a child during a Playschool session. **Accident Incident Report Form.** Parents must sign the form when the child is picked up, as confirmation that they were informed of the illness or accident, and they may be given a copy of the form upon request; and
- In the event of a serious incident, the Director will notify the licensing authority and the insurance company. The Director may need to organize counselling services for the Playschool staff, families and children depending on the nature and outcome of the injury.

## J7 Excursions

The ACT Children's Services Standards state that: 1.23) 5.56, 5.57, 5.58, 5.59), 5.60 a to f, 5.61 a and b, 5.62 a to d, 5.64

### Implementation

The aim of any excursion, whether for short local area walks or outings to specific venues or activities, is to provide an enjoyable and safe experience that will extend the children's learning. The excursion must be linked to the children's interests. For example, a bus trip to the Transport ACT Bus Depot may be linked to a program about transportation.

### Preparation

The Teacher, in consultation with the Assistant Teacher, are responsible for organising excursions.

This includes:

- Ensuring that costs are established and budgeted for;
- Booking transport, if necessary;
- Plans be made for transport breakdown or transport not otherwise being available;
- Educators could take a list of optional transport which could be available in the case of a breakdown.
- Educators also should take extra supplies and entertainment for children in the case that they will have to wait for alternative transport to arrive in the case of a breakdown.

- Arrange for a designated contact who can be notified so they can relay the alternative arrangements to all parents (this may include parents picking up their children at the breakdown site);
- Ensuring that the place of excursion has toilet and hand washing facilities, access to drinking water, an area where the children can eat and sufficient shaded or undercover areas to protect them from the sun and other elements;
- Assessing the potential dangers of the venue and that first aid equipment and qualifications appropriate for these hazards are made available ;
- Provisions made for any children not attending the excursion;
- Alternative arrangements made in case of adverse weather;
- Ensuring that there is insurance coverage for excursions;
- Arranging for evaluation of the excursion so that follow up programming can be planned for.

The usual staff to child ratios apply for all excursions. However, when the excursion involves the use of transport or the crossing of major roads (speed limit of over 50 kilometres per hour) there must be at least one adult to every four children or, when the excursion involves significantly hazardous venues such as a swimming outing, there must be at least one adult to every two children.

**Excursion Authorisation Forms** will be distributed to parents/guardians at least one week prior to excursion. The form will outline the excursion and provide an area for written parental/guardian permission for the excursion. Written permission from one parent/Guardian will constitute consent; verbal permission is not considered sufficient consent. Excursion authorisation forms must include the destination (including address), the date of excursion, the type and mode of transport and whether seat belts are available (e.g. a bus ride would not entail the use of seat belts), the time of departure and return, the cost, the aim of the excursion and any planned activities at the excursion, the staff and parent/guardian/ volunteers who will be accompanying the children on excursion, and the contingency plans in the event of emergency or inclement weather.

At least one staff member with current 'Provide Emergency First Aid in Education and Care Setting' qualifications must attend the excursion.

### During the excursion

- A complete list of the children and parents/guardians contact numbers will be taken.
- A list of children, staff, parents/guardians/volunteers in attendance, and their allocated groupings will be taken on the excursion (in addition to leaving one at the office).
- All children must wear a label identifying the Playschool and its contact number.
- Children must be coached as to what to do if they become lost.
- Staff members are responsible for counting children at various times during the excursion.
- A First Aid Kit will be taken.
- If soap and water will not be available on the excursion, hand sanitizers or wet wipes should be taken.

- Spare clothes, underpants, plastic bags will be taken.
- At least one mobile phone is to be taken for staff on excursion to contact the Playschool or vice versa.
- If the excursion is delayed for any reasons (e.g: bus late) the Playschool will be contacted.
- The children must have access to a drink of water.

### Parents/guardians/volunteers

- Parents are invited to be involved in excursions as carers and to help maintain the adult: child ratio.
- Parents/guardians are to return their child's permission note by the date stated.
- Any payment due for the excursion will be taken prior to the excursion.
- Parents and volunteers are to be aware of and supervise children in their group, and listen to instructions given by staff in order to keep all children/parents/staff on excursion safe.
- If helping on excursion parents/guardians/volunteers are to arrive approximately 15 minutes before time of departure, in order to be informed of the group of children they will be responsible for.
- Parents/volunteers must not leave their group of children unsupervised at any time.
- Parents/Guardians are asked to keep their child at home if they display any sign of being unwell.

## J9 Safety - Plants and Animals

The ACT Children's Services Standards 1.23b xiv, 1.105 a to c, 1.106, 1.107 a to d and 1.108

### Animals

It is important that staff directly supervise the contact children have with animals for both the safety of the children and animals. If any animals are kept on the premises, they will be housed in suitable cages or tanks, and looked after using recommendations of the RSPCA, and in compliance with the ACS Standards 1.105, and 1.106.

Animal feeding containers, particularly those with water, are a potential safety hazard. Strict hygiene procedures will be followed when feeding animals and cleaning animal containers when carried out with the children. See **Section H4** in the PPPM regarding hygiene.

### Plants

Some plants may pose a danger because of prickles or sharp twigs, e.g. roses, attraction of bees or wasps, e.g. lavender, excessive or irritant sap, e.g. poinsettia, and berries or seed pods. Some plants are not hazardous in themselves but may attract wasps and honey bees, and so in the context of safety in the Playschool grounds, those plants should be considered hazardous, too.

Vegetation in the grounds should be checked for the presence of poisonous plants. If any undesirable plants are detected, the Teacher will take steps to eradicate them as soon as possible. Even if a positive identification cannot be made, any suspect plants should be removed, taking care

in handling (wear disposable gloves), or use a herbicide to kill the plant. The plants may be disposed of by composting or removed as regular rubbish because composting destroys the toxins. Do not burn the material as this releases toxins into the air. Care must be taken when using herbicides, and application should be done when no children are present.

Policy and Procedures Reviewed 2023