

**Narrabundah
Early
Childhood
School**



**Koori
Preschool
Information
Booklet
2016**

Dear Families

Welcome to Narrabundah Early Childhood School. We are excited to have the opportunity to welcome you and your child/children into our school community in 2016.

Our philosophy is 'Learning Excellence' and our Koori Preschool program focuses on meeting the diverse needs of all children.

This booklet is designed to provide you with the information you will need to know now, before your child starts, and as the school year progresses. We provide additional information in the form of newsletters, as well as regular updates on the school's website, Facebook page and of course, welcome daily contact with our families in person, via phone 6142 3828 or email info@necs.act.edu.au.

We look forward to sharing this stage of your child's learning and working in close partnership with you.

Regards



Bernadette Hayes

Principal

KOORI PRESCHOOL

Koori preschool has been designed to cater for children from 3 - 5 years of age who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. The Koori preschool program focuses on learning through inquiry, participation, exploration and experimentation. Educators plan a program that supports all areas of development within a developmentally appropriate and play based program. A culturally inclusive environment is created where children feel safe and welcome. Children may attend the Koori preschool program in addition to attending any preschool for which they are eligible. Children under 3 years of age are welcome to attend with an adult. The aims of Koori preschool are to provide:

- experiences where children have the opportunity to acquire standard Australian English,
- opportunities for children to be exposed to culturally significant materials, resources and experiences,
- opportunities to socialise and build strong connections with their peers.

FIRST DAY OF KOORI PRESCHOOL 2016!

DAY 1 - Thursday 4 February at 9:00am

- Follow the signs to your Classroom - Purple Room
- Collect a nametag and meet the staff

When do families leave?

After your child has unpacked, settled in and is engaged in activities and enjoying the classroom.

Some children are more anxious than others and so are some of our parents. There are plenty of staff on hand to ensure that the children settle in, feel safe, happy and have had an opportunity to farewell their family. Students often settle very quickly once they are intrigued by their new surroundings.

We invite you to join us for light refreshments in the foyer once your child is settled.

When is home time?

School finishes at 3:00pm. We have a hand-over requirement, this means that we ensure that we have a quick chat and pass your children over to you. For those children attending after school care the staff sign them over to the care of the COMMUNITIES AT WORK staff.

Koori Preschool operates on Thursday & Friday, every Term

At NECS we strive for Excellence in Learning

WHAT IS KOORI PRESCHOOL? WHAT TO EXPECT ON DAY ONE

What is in my School Bag?

A Purple Hat – A jumper – A labelled drink bottle –
A lunch box – A change of clothes—Nappies if needed
(please ensure all items are labelled clearly)

The LUNCH BOX

As we have three eating times across the day we suggest that you provide familiar foods that your child enjoys eating at home. It is important to know that staff are unable to heat food for children, but you can purchase some fabulous food containers that keep lunches nice and warm or cold.

At NECS we do have access to the school kitchen and families are welcome to place lunch orders at the beginning of each day (before 9:30am). Lunches are delivered to the classroom ready for eating time. Lunch orders are placed at the Front Office each morning.

The children eat at:

10:30am - Snack Time

12:30pm - Lunch Time

2:00pm - Snack Time

3:00pm - Home Time

As a Fresh Taste school we promote a healthy lunchbox, please view the flyer provided or visit www.health.act.gov.au/freshtastes

Why a change of clothes?

At Narrabundah Early Childhood School the preschool program encourages children to engage in active and at times messy play. At times, children may require a change due to being wet or as a result of messy play time.

Sometimes, even when a child has been well and truly toilet trained, accidents can happen. Children get caught up in an activity and the excitement of their learning and they just “forget” until it is too late and then they may need a change of clothes. We don’t make a fuss, staff just assist children to manage the changing of their clothes. It is important to note that children three year old preschool are not required to be toilet trained. If this is the case with your child, please send them in nappies or pull ups and provide enough spares for each day.

What should I wear to school?

At Narrabundah Early Childhood School students wear uniforms. It is so much easier to say “Today is a school day, go and find your school clothes!”

Uniforms for Narrabundah are available for purchase from our Front Office. We encourage children to be comfortable and to be able to run and jump and skip and hop and they need clothes that allow them to do this. Children at Narrabundah also get dirty, dusty and get glue and paint on themselves, so hard-wearing easy care clothes suit the work they need to do.

Jeans, shorts and leggings are great to wear on the bottom half for a busy day at school and enclosed shoes for running around, bike riding, playing and climbing. Thongs don't keep toes safe so we don't encourage them at school.

We have a specifically designed mud patch. Water is channelled along a creek bed into a catchment area. Children are encouraged to engage in messy mud play. Our uniform policy is available on our website at www.necs.act.edu.au



How much does it cost for school?

Voluntary Contributions

Each year the school charges a one-off Voluntary Contribution Fee which contributes to the running of the school. In 2016 this fee will be \$110 per child. The cost of Voluntary Contributions are set by the School Board. The School Board is chaired by a member of our school community and our current chair is John Norgrove.

Book Packs

There is also a Book Pack payment. The payment is used to contribute towards consumables used in the Preschool classrooms. Please see the attached Kindergarten Book Pack List for included items and cost. As we purchase these items in bulk, the cost is kept to an absolute minimum for families. The book pack for 2016 is \$75.00 and we would appreciate payment before Week 6 Term 1 2016, unless you wish to pay the cost off over time. Payments can be made in 2015.

We appreciate any financial assistance with these expenses and welcome payments throughout the year, or we can organise a payment plan. Both payments are voluntary and if you require financial assistance please email the Principal at bernadette.hayes@ed.act.edu.au

When can you pay for these two things?

Families are able to make use of the direct deposit process and can pay money directly into the school account using the following details:

NARRABUNDAH EARLY CHILDHOOD SCHOOL MANAGEMENT ACCOUNT

Westpac Bank BSB: 032 777 Acc No: 00 1711

Payments may also be made in the form of cash or cheque, over the counter to the Front Office staff. You may also use Quickweb which you can access through our school website. Further information on how to use Quickweb will be provided.



Community Breakfasts

Our Community Breakfast is held on the last Wednesday of each month from 8:00am - 8:50am in partnership with Australian Red Cross and supported by Narrabundah IGA. Families and the wider community are welcome to attend and join us to start the day with a healthy breakfast.



Move and Groove

Move and Groove is a fun music therapy program for children aged 0-4 years and their parents and carers. At Move and Groove families can:

- Learn new songs and musical games
- Use musical instruments, puppets, parachute, drums and ribbons
- Move and Groove to music
- Enjoy active play
- Make new friends
- Learn about child development

Move and Groove is facilitated by a Music Therapist and Narrabundah Early Childhood Community Coordinator. The program runs for 8 weeks during school term in our school library from 9:30am - 10:30am.

How to access Move and Groove:

Bookings are required for this program. A gold coin donation is appreciated and helps cover our costs.

Please visit the school website at www.necs.act.gov.au to download the application form.



For further information please contact our Community Coordinator on 6142 3828 or email info@necs.act.edu.au

Paint & Play Saturday

Narrabundah Early Childhood School offers Paint and Play on the second Saturday of each month (excluding wet weather and school holidays) from 10:00am-12:00pm here at the school in our front yard. We provide children with a wide range of experiences including painting, art and craft, singing and lots of fun activities. Bookings are not required for this program. A gold coin donation is appreciated and helps to cover our costs.

OUR COMMUNITY CONTINUED

Community Programs

Narrabundah Early Childhood School is fortunate to have a Community Coordinator at the school. The role of the Community Coordinator is to facilitate a range of activities and services. These include:

- Organising community events for children and families
- Being available to discuss concerns, family matters and parenting issues
- Connecting families with specialist support services
- Providing opportunities for families to meet and develop friendships
- Scheduling parent information sessions on subjects such as parenting, child development, attachment, anxiety, nutrition and health and wellbeing

Providing general support

For further information regarding community programs please don't hesitate to contact Donna on 6142 3828 or by email: donna.seal@ed.act.edu.au

Family Support and Linkage - Child, Youth and Family Services

Woden Community Service, in partnership with Anglicare ACT, provides a range of support services for children, young people and their families across the Woden, Weston and South Canberra Region.

We provide support and case management for young people and families who are experiencing difficulties, including family breakdowns, concerns about parenting, child transitions, relationships and the range of issues that place families at risk, such as mental health, gambling, child neglect and relationship breakdowns, especially between young people and their parents.

Currently we have a case manager based at Narrabundah Early Childhood School on Tuesday's and Thursday's for appointments or drop in's.

Contact: For further information or support please call Jenni Bufalo our case manager who is based two days per week at Narrabundah on 0475 981 785.

This program is an ACT Government funded initiative

Woden Community Service, in partnership with [Barnardos](#), [Belconnen Community Service](#), [YWCA Canberra](#) and the [ACT Government](#), is involved with running the Child, Youth and Family Gateway.

The Child, Youth & Family Gateway

The Child, Youth & Family Gateway is a service for children, young people and families who are looking for help with the tough stuff, but are not sure where to go. We have links to all kinds of programs & services that can support people to have the best chance to stay on track in their lives. The Gateway is also for children, young people and families who might be (or are) involved with care and protection or community youth justice, and who would like support to work through what's happening.

We'll work with you from there to link you to the right sort of support, when you need it.

Contact Gateway on free call number [1800 647 831](tel:1800647831).

Our Beliefs about Learners and Learning

At Narrabundah Early Childhood School we have strong beliefs regarding how children learn and our role as Educators in this learning. We believe:

All children can learn

We all learn at our own pace

Everyone is special and has something to contribute

Everyone learns differently

We value diversity

Learning should reflect the diversity of all children

Environments need to have a variety of spaces so children can be quiet or active

A variety of resources to support programs is essential

We all teach differently

As educators we will:

Share and inspire others

Have a warm and friendly learning space

Be approachable

Have positive relationships with families

Be effective communicators

Collaborate together and share ideas

Look after ourselves

All children have the right to:

Learn, love and feel loved

Laugh

Feel safe and accepted

Feel respected

Have a voice and be valued

Inquiry Based Learning

Narrabundah Early Childhood School believes that an inquiry based learning approach provides a truly authentic personalised learning model of teaching and learning that is effective across all cultural, economic, geographical, religious and social spectrums. The approach uses developmentally appropriate ways of helping to engage children in truly meaningful and relevant strategies that enhance not only literacy and numeracy but motivation and self-esteem.

Curriculum

Children at Narrabundah Early Childhood School experience a diverse and engaging curriculum that is responsive to children interests and needs. We use the 'Early Years Learning Framework – Belonging, Being and Becoming' and the Australian Curriculum to underpin decisions made in relation to ensuring children are presented with relevant experiences that will prepare them to be life-long learners and reach their potential.

Early Years Learning Framework - Belonging, Being & Becoming

Belonging, Being and Becoming is the new National Early Childhood framework that supports collaborative partnerships between families and educators. This will enable an in-depth, shared understanding of each child and can provide programs that support their interests and needs.

Educators will assist children to develop:

- a strong sense of identity
- connections with their world
- a strong sense of wellbeing
- confidence and involvement in their learning
- effective communication skills

The Early Years Learning Framework draws on conclusive international evidence that early childhood is a vital period in children's learning and development. It has been developed with considerable input from the early childhood sector, early childhood academics and the Australian and State and Territory Governments.

The Framework puts children's learning at the core and describes the three elements; Principles, Practice and Outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school. All three elements are fundamental to early childhood pedagogy and curriculum decision-making. The framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning and play as the best vehicle for young children's learning, providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development.

The framework provides broad direction for early childhood educators to facilitate children's learning. It guides educators in their curriculum decision-making and assists in planning, implementing and evaluating quality care and education. It also underpins the implementation of more specific curriculum relevant to each Preschool group.

Absences

Any child's absence should be explained in writing, on their return to school. If they are to be absent for more than three days in a row please contact the school to let us know. If you are going on a holiday for any period of time, please advise the teacher in advance and also notify in writing prior to going away.

Allergy Friendly

Due to the amount of children with severe allergies, we are a nut free school. We need all families to support us in this to ensure all children's safety. If there are children with other food allergies please make sure your child's teacher and the front office staff are aware of their condition.

Assessment and Reporting

Assessment is carried out on a regular basis to provide feedback to children and families, to indicate progress and to inform curriculum development. Educators use portfolios as their main form of reporting. This holistic documentation is an integral part of educators' ongoing assessment, evaluation and reflection cycle.

Formal summative reports are prepared for children twice a year.

Learning Journeys are planned twice a year to enable children to share their learning with their parents/carers. Children lead these sessions and show selected pieces of work and walk you through their learning.

PIPS (Performance Indicators in Primary School)

All children in Kindergarten participate in PIPS assessment. This is a computer based program that is completed individually with each student in their first year of formal schooling. Assessment is completed early term one and again in term four. Reports are sent home to share results from these assessments.

Change of Contact Details

If you need to update your contact information please email info@necs.act.edu.au or phone the front office on 6142 3828. If you change your home address please provide proof of address as soon as possible.

Children's Medication

It is a Directorate policy requirement that written directions from a doctor and written permission from parents/carers must be provided before school staff may administer medication. This applies to any type of medication. If you are providing medication prescribed by a doctor, we require the actual labelled container with your child's name and instructions on how to administer the medicine.

Classroom Connections

Classroom connections are sent home at the start of each term. They provide an overview of the focus for the term.

Communication between Home and School

Open communication supports our educators to develop positive relationships with families. We utilise a range of strategies to build links between home and school, including:

- Conversations
- Emails
- Formal interviews
- Newsletters
- Portfolios
- Website
- Facebook

Communities@Work

Communities@Work operate our integrated childcare service. They provide care for children from birth to five years of age. They also offer a before and after school service for the benefit of our school families.

Dogs in the Playground

From time to time we have 'visiting' dogs in the playground. Many children (and staff) are scared of dogs and they present a risk to their safety. Please assist us by ensuring that your family pet remains at home. This also applies to dogs on leads. Please do not bring them to the school/grounds.

Excursions

Excursions and in-school events are an integral part of the educational program at NECS.

Educators plan excursions and events to offer children the opportunity to explore and learn about their local and wider community and to enhance all areas of the curriculum.

On enrolment we ask parents/guardians to give permission for children to go on excursions within the immediate vicinity of the school e.g. to local shops, playgrounds, gardens etc.

Evacuation/Lockdown Drills

Throughout the year we are required to have a number of evacuations and lockdown drills.

These are designed to prepare staff and children for what to do if an actual event occurred.

Family Court/ Parenting Agreements

If there are any court orders or agreements we need to be aware of, please provide copies of those agreements and instructions to the Principal on how we can best support you and your child.

First Aid

First Aid is looked after by Audrey in our front office. Audrey will make contact with you if required if your child is unwell and if it is a minor issue you will receive a note in your child's bag advising you that your child attended sick bay during the day and the reason why. If you have any questions or concerns please contact us.

Making Appointments

If you wish to make an appointment to see your child's teacher, Shannon Birch (Deputy Principal) or Bernadette Hayes (Principal), please contact the front office on 6142 3828.

Newsletter

The school newsletter is published fortnightly and includes information about what is currently happening at the school. Student work is shown from different year levels, along with dates for upcoming events. The newsletter is distributed electronically, so please ensure the school has your current email address to ensure you receive the most up to date information from the school.

Notes and Payments

Please return all notes for excursions or special events in an envelope with the child's name, class and a brief description of what the money is for on the outside of the envelope. All notes and money must be given to the front office staff. We encourage you to pay for excursions using our online payment facility which is available through our website or by bank transfer (please see - How Much Does School Cost? page for details).

Parents and Citizens Association

The P & C currently meet two times each term on a Tuesday night at 6pm. The P & C welcome new members to join them in their fundraising events for school. They support the school holding events such as barbeques, raffles and movie nights to donate funds to our school for various reasons. All are welcome to help by sharing ideas and volunteer their time.

School Board

The School Board look after the financial management of the school. The School Board members are voted in for periods of 1 or 2 years. When positions become available they are advertised for nominations. The board also meets two times each term on a Tuesday at 6:15pm.