Bright Start
Preschool Bateau Bay

# Family Handbook 2026

# Bright Start Preschool

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Connect with us on facebook and Instagram @brightstartbateaubay #brightstartbateaubay

Opening times
Monday to Friday for children 2 to 5 years
8.00am to 4.00pm
50 weeks per year and closed on NSW public holidays.
Notice will be given when these days occur.

Bush Kindy runs during school terms only with children remaining at preschool during holiday periods.

## Welcome to Bright Start Preschool.

The Parent Handbook outlines important information you will need to be aware of while you are a part of Bright Start Preschool family. It is important that you read over this booklet and ask questions about matters you do not understand. You will find a form at the back of this booklet which you must sign and return to Bright Start Preschool to indicate that you have read the information in this booklet and your enrolment pack.

Bright Start Preschool has an open door policy. You and your family are welcome to visit Bright Start Preschool at any time.

## Our Policies and Procedures

You will find a copy of Bright Start Preschool policies and procedures located in the policy folder in the foyer, along with links in our OWNA app. We expect our staff and families to adhere to our policies and procedures at all times to ensure we maintain compliance and abide by the National Law and Regulations.

Educators cannot make exceptions for individuals unless the Nominated Supervisor or Management do so on account of serious and/or unusual circumstances.

We are constantly reviewing our policies and procedures and ask for staff and family participation to ensure our policies and procedures adhere to family's needs and meet required regulations. Your involvement helps us to improve Bright Start Preschool and may lead us to change our policies and procedures.

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# Introduction

Welcome to Bright Start Preschool. Finding a Preschool for your child can be a daunting task. At Bright Start Preschool our aim is to provide a secure and happy environment where children can develop their intellectual, social, emotional, physical and aesthetic skills to become competent and confident individuals, and for you as a parent/guardian to feel safe knowing that your child is receiving the best possible care.

We believe the best way to work with you and your child is by building a partnership of education and care. To do this we want you to feel:

- Welcomed, recognised, acknowledged and respected by all our Educators.
- That your child is really known by, and really knows, the people who care for him or her.
- You are given lots of information about what is occurring and are asked for your views.
- You are involved in making decisions about your child's experiences.
- You and your child are received and greeted upon arrival.
- Your child is happy, secure and engaged.
- Your child is not just looked after but really educated and cared for.

# Ownership Structure

Bright Start Preschool is privately owned and operated by Ashleigh Waugh and ValdaEna Pty Ltd.

# Contact Persons

Approved Provider : Ashleigh Waugh 0407 401 041
Nominated Supervisor / Director: Micah Patterson
Educational Leader: Micah Patterson

# Regulatory Authorities

Bright Start Preschool complies with the National Quality Framework (NQF) including the National Quality Standard (NQS), the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Regulations (Education and Care Preschools National Regulations).

Bright Start Preschool is regulated by the national body for early education and care – the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) as well as the state licensing department in NSW. To contact our Regulatory Authority, please refer to the contact details below:

NSW GOVERNMENT Education & Communities

**NSW Early Learning Commission**

www.education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/regulation-and-compliance
1800 619 113, information@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au Locked Bag 5107 PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

# Bright Start Preschool Philosophy

*Aligned with EYLF V2.0, National Quality Standard (NQS;), and the Child Safe Standards*

At Bright Start, we believe our philosophy is a living document that grows with our learning community. It shapes our daily interactions, curriculum decisions, and community relationships and reflects our commitment to delivering early childhood education and care that is safe, inclusive, empowering and exceptional.

Reviewed with families, educators, children, and leadership, it reflects our shared commitment to quality, inclusion, and continuous improvement under the National Quality Framework, incorporating the Early Years Learning Framework Version 2.0 (EYLF V2.0), the National Quality Standard (NQS;), and the Child Safe Standards.

**We Treasure Play and Childhood**

We value early childhood as a unique and precious time of life. We support each child to experience joy, curiosity, and wonder - unrushed and celebrated for who they are. We see education as a holistic journey of becoming, not merely a path of acquiring skills.

Our play-based curriculum supports children's agency, expression, and identity, allowing time for deep engagement and real-life learning. Children are encouraged to explore, get messy, take risks, and express themselves authentically. This supports EYLF practices of play-based learning and responsive teaching (NQS; QA1).

Guided by Vygotsky and Malaguzzi, we support the social construction of knowledge, mixed-age learning, and the hundred languages children use to express their thinking and identity.

**Our Environment is the Third Teacher**

Our natural, beautiful environments invite exploration, creativity, and connection. They reflect children's interests, cultural backgrounds, and contributions. We encourage children to care for their spaces, developing responsibility and belonging. We embed sustainable practices into daily life and help children build a lasting relationship with nature (NQS; QA3, EYLF Outcome 2).

**We Are Deeply Connected to Community**

Children thrive when they feel a sense of belonging beyond the preschool gate. We build strong connections with local places, people, and services through excursions, visitors, and community involvement, supporting a rich sense of place, identity, and citizenship (NQS; QA6, EYLF Outcome 2).

We actively support inclusive practices, collaborate with families, and honour their knowledge and stories as essential to children's wellbeing and learning.

**Our Image of the Child**

We see children as competent, capable, and full of potential. Our curriculum is strength-based, guided by high expectations and a deep respect for each child's unique identity, culture, learning style, and pace (EYLF Outcome 1, NQS; QA5).

Guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Child Safe Standards, we create safe, respectful spaces for children to learn self-regulation, manage risks, build resilience, and express their emotions. We advocate for every child's right to be heard, protected, and empowered.

**We Embrace Diversity and Inclusion**

We celebrate and value diversity in all its forms - cultural, linguistic, religious, gender, ability, and family structure. We are committed to anti-bias practices, cultural responsiveness, and creating a culture of equity, inclusion and respect (NQS; QA6, EYLF Practice: Equity and Inclusion).

We value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and recognise Country, culture, and community as central to Australian identity. Children are encouraged to build empathy, fairness, and social awareness.

**We Care for the Earth**

We believe children must build a love for nature before they can protect it. Through daily engagement with natural environments, we foster children's sense of environmental stewardship. Sustainable practices are embedded in our routines, decision-making, and curriculum. Children are actively involved in recycling, gardening, conserving resources, and caring for living things (NQS; QA3, EYLF Outcome 2).

**We Prioritise Wellbeing, Safety and Security**

Children's physical, emotional, and psychological wellbeing is foundational to their learning and development (NQS; QA2, EYLF Outcome 3). We prioritise secure attachments, consistency, and emotional safety, providing a calm, nurturing environment where children feel seen, valued, and supported.

Our educators actively promote protective behaviours, support children's rights to safety and bodily autonomy, and foster respectful relationships. We uphold our obligations under the Child Safe Standards, ensuring our service maintains robust policies and practices to protect children from harm and empower them to speak up.

**As Educators, We Grow Together**

We are a learning community of educators, children, and families - co-researchers, co-creators and collaborators. We are committed to ongoing critical reflection, professional learning, and ethical practice, constantly striving for innovation and improvement (NQS; QA7, EYLF Practice: Ongoing Learning and Reflective Practice).

We respect the complexity of our work and maintain strong professional standards. Through thoughtful documentation, we make children's learning visible and support continuity, growth, and shared understanding.

We prioritise open communication, maintain confidentiality, and build meaningful relationships as the heart of our practice.

# Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Bright Start, educators and staff are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. We understand our responsibilities and statutory duty of care to implement the National Child Safe Principles and embed the Child Safe Standards to prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse.

We are committed to implementing our Child Safe Environment Policy incorporating the Child Safe Standards. This policy accentuates our zero tolerance for child abuse and raises awareness about the importance of child safety and protecting children who have experienced or are at risk of significant harm, abuse or neglect within Bright Start and the broader community.

We ensure all staff, volunteers and students engaged at Bright Start are suitable to work with children and young people through rigorous employment procedures and Working with Children Checks.

We are committed to adhering to the Child Protection Policy by fulfilling mandatory reporting requirements and complying with the Reportable Conduct Scheme to protect children from physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological harm, as well as neglect. Everyone working with or engaged by Bright Start—including staff, educators, volunteers, and students—must complete both mandatory Child Protection Training and National Child Safety Training. This ensures that we fully comply with the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection Act 1998) (NSW) and other relevant legislation.

We are dedicated to promoting cultural safety and providing an inclusive environment for all children and young people, including First Nations Peoples, children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, disabilities, gender identity and/or diversity.

We believe all children are unique and have the right to be protected against discrimination, harm and abuse. We support ongoing professional development for employees to maintain clear boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and their ability to distinguish and respond to situations of abuse and neglect.

We aim to ensure Bright Start is a tobacco, vape, drugs and alcohol-free environment at all times in accordance with legislative requirements. Smoking or vaping is not permitted in or on surrounding areas of Bright Start by educators, staff, parents or visitors.

Bright Start adopts and aligns with legislative requirements for taking images or videos of children, as outlined in our Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy and Photographs/social media/promotion Policy

We work in collaboration with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and educate children on their right to be safe, empowering them to voice any concerns they may have. We encourage children to express their views and opinions on matters that affect them and provide them with guidance on what to do if they feel unsafe. Bright Start policies and procedures are developed with the children's voice to help keep all children safe from harm and abuse.

We are committed to maintaining regular communication with families, carers, and the wider community to encourage constructive input into the review of our policies and procedures. This collaborative approach supports the ongoing enhancement of our child safe practices. In alignment with our dedication to transparency and regulatory compliance, Bright Start is pleased to display our NQS quality rating, compliance history, and subsequent actions, enabling families to remain fully informed about our regulatory status.

# Paramount Consideration

We believe that children's safety, rights, and best interests are the paramount consideration for all Service operations, decisions and functions. Bright Start ensures that child safety, wellbeing and best interests take priority over all other considerations, including financial interests or other obligations of management, and are embedded in our daily practices, policies and procedures.

# Our Educators and Staff

Bright Start Preschool is made up of a team of high-quality professional educators who are committed to and passionate about early childhood education and care. Our staff promote the human rights, safety and wellbeing of all children and consider and respect the diverse backgrounds and needs of children.
We create an environment that promotes and enables children's participation and is welcoming, culturally safe and inclusive for all children and their families.

Our educators are continually evaluating how our curriculum meets the educational and wellbeing needs of our children and reflecting on ways to improve children's learning and development and are supported by a team of highly qualified professionals. Our educational leader and early childhood teachers guide our educators in providing quality, research based educational programs.

Our educators take into account children's learning styles, abilities, interests, linguistic and cultural diversity and family circumstances when planning and implementing learning programs. We support and respect the history and backgrounds of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and aim to foster each child's sense of identity.

All staff are encouraged and supported to attend professional training and development to further their knowledge and skills.

All staff hold valid Working with Children Checks/Cards and all Responsible Persons (placed in charge of the day-to-day running of Bright Start Preschool) have current approved First Aid, CPR, Emergency Asthma and Anaphylaxis qualifications.

For further details on the qualifications of the educators, please see our Nominated Supervisor.

# Educator Qualifications and Ratios

We comply with the National Regulations for educator to child ratios across Bright Start Preschool to ensure adequate supervision is provided for all children. Ratios are calculated across Bright Start Preschool (not by individual rooms). This provides us with flexibility to respond to children's interests and needs at different times during the day.

| **Age of children:** | **Educator to Child ratios:** |
|---|---|
| Over 24 months and less than 36 months | 1:5 |
| 36 months up to and including preschool age | 1:10 |
| Bush Kindy Sessions and Excursions | 1:5 |

*(Ratios are maintained at all times across Bright Start as per the Education and Care Services National Regulations.)*

All Educators hold First Aid, Asthma Response and Anaphylaxis management qualifications, have Working with Children Checks completed and attend monthly Educators' meetings.

Our Educators are continually evaluating how our curriculum meets the education needs of our children and reflecting on ways to improve children's learning and development. They are encouraged to attend further professional training and development.

# Our Educators



Ashleigh Waugh
Approved Provider/ Nominated Supervisor



Micah Patterson
Nominated Supervisor/ Educational Leader



Amanda Brown
**Early Childhood Teacher**



Sharyn Guile
**Diploma Educator**



Kelly Sims
**Diploma Educator**



Emma Swanson
**Diploma Educator**



Lauren Beard
**Certificate 3 Educator**



Rachel Qorovarua
**Certificate 3 Educator**



Sarah West
**Certificate 3 Educator**



Sienna Knauer
**Trainee Certificate 3 Educator**



Joanne Cairncross
**Volunteer**

# Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct establishes the standards for all employees of Bright Start Preschool. Employees are committed to adhere to the ethical responsibilities of early childhood professionals outlined in the Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics. The values that underpin our work ethic include equality, respect, integrity and responsibility.

# Bright Start Preschool Program

## National Quality Framework

Bright Start Preschool complies with the Australian Government's National Quality Framework (NQF) which consists of the legislative framework of the Education and Care Services National Law (National Law) and National Regulations, the National Quality Standard (NQS) and a rigorous assessment and rating system. Our educational program and curriculum are based on the Australian Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

We regularly self-assess our practices against the National Quality Standard and strive for continuous improvement through our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The QIP assists Bright Start Preschool to identify quality aspects of care we are already providing and assists in developing future goals for further improvement. Families are welcome to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Additional information about the NQF can be found at ACECQA/nqf/about

## Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)

The Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 (EYLF) guides early childhood educators, early childhood teachers and approved providers to inform educational programs and practices that emphasise play-based learning and extend and enrich children's learning and wellbeing from birth to 5 years and through the transition to school.

The EYLF was reviewed and updated and released in early 2023 to ensure the framework reflects contemporary developments in practice and knowledge while supporting educators to promote the learning, development and wellbeing of each child.

The vision of the EYLF is:
*All children engage in learning that promotes confident and creative individuals and successful lifelong learners. All children are active and informed members of their communities with knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.*

*(EYLF, V2.0, p.6)*

Fundamental to the Framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by belonging, being and becoming. From before birth children are connected to family, community, culture and place. Their earliest development and learning takes place through these relationships, particularly within families, who are children's first and most influential educators. As children participate in everyday life, they develop interests and construct their own identities and understandings of the world.

The EYLF is made up of learning outcomes, principles and practices which educators use in their documentation of children's learning and in their reflection and planning.

### BELONGING

Experiencing belonging – knowing where and with whom you belong – is integral to human existence. Children belong to diverse families, neighbourhoods, local and global communities. Belonging acknowledges children's independence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. In early childhood, and throughout life, trusting relationships and affirming

experiences are crucial to a sense of belonging. Belonging is central to being and becoming in that it shapes who children are and who they can become.

## BEING

Childhood is a time to be, to seek and make meaning of the world. Childhood is a time to be, to seek and make meaning of the world. Being recognises the significance of the present, as well as the past in children's lives. It is about children knowing themselves, developing their identity and building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life's joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life. The early childhood years are not solely preparation for the future but also about children being in the here and now.

## BECOMING

Children's identities, knowledge, understandings, dispositions, capacities, skills and relationships change during childhood. They are shaped by many different events and circumstances. Becoming reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow. It emphasises the collaboration of educators, families and children to support and enhance children's connections and capabilities, and for children to activity participate as citizens. (EYLF V2.0. p.6)

The diversity of family and community life in Australia means that children experience belonging, being and becoming in many ways. They bring their diverse experiences, home languages, perspectives expectations and cultural ways of knowing, being and doing to their learning. (EYLF V2.0. p.8) Educators understand, respect and work with each child's unique qualities and capabilities. (EYLF V2.0. p.8)

Children's learning, development and wellbeing are communicated through 5 Learning Outcomes.

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

Children's learning, development and wellbeing are communicated through 5 Learning Outcomes.

**Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity**

- Children feel safe, secure, and supported
- Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency
- Children develop knowledgeable and confident self identities and a positive sense of self-worth
- Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect

**Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world**

- Children develop a sense of connectedness to groups and communities and an understanding of their reciprocal rights and responsibilities as active and informed citizens
- Children respond to diversity with respect
- Children become aware of fairness
- Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

**Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing**

- Children become strong in their social, emotional and mental wellbeing
- Children become strong in their physical learning and wellbeing
- Children are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health and personal safety

**Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners**

- Children develop a growth mindset and learning dispositions such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity
- Children develop a range of learning and thinking skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating
- Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another
- Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

**Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators**

- Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
- Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts
- Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
- Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
- Children use digital technologies and media to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

# Goals for your Child at Bright Start Preschool

***"We discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being."***

***Maria Montessori***

Educators' practices and the relationships they form with children and families have a significant effect on children's involvement and success in learning. Children thrive when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's learning. Children's early learning influences their life chances.

Wellbeing and a strong sense of connection, optimism, resilience and engagement enable children to develop a growth mindset, and a positive attitude to learning. (Early Years Learning Framework V.2.0. p.9).

We will create a range of short and long-term goals for your child that we will program to and observe on which will be based on the outcomes in the Early Years Learning Framework and include:

- Mutual respect and empathy
- Concern and responsibility for self and others
- A sense of self worth
- Social awareness
- Respect for Diversity
- Importance of sustainability
- Self-discipline
- Habits of initiative and persistence
- Creative intelligence and imagination
- Self-confidence as an independent learner
- A love of learning

We strongly encourage communication between families and educators to ensure continuity in what we are delivering to your child and acknowledge that the role of the Educator is to work in partnership with families; children's first and most influential educators

# Education, Curriculum and Learning

We will be following the Early Years Learning Framework V2.0 as per our Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy. This is Australia's first national Early Years Learning Framework for early childhood educators. The aim of this document is to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to Five years and through the transition to school.

We are committed to providing a developmental and educational program which caters for each child's individual needs, abilities and interests. Our educational program is delivered through an intentional, play-based pedagogy aligned to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) V2.0. Our program continues to develop as we use the relationships children have with their families and communities, working in partnership with parents, to ensure each child's knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of our programs.

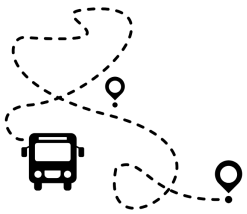
We encourage children to be responsible for their own learning through choices in experiences, interests and routine. We use conversations, actions and play as the basis for teaching which involves the children being partners in teaching by seeking out ideas, opinions, thoughts and questions. We encourage children in promoting their independence and self-help skills by assisting within the routine and involving the children in interest based projects to further enhance their learning and knowledge. We value children and family input and encourage family involvement in order to gather a comprehensive and holistic view of the child.

We know that children learn effectively through play and Educators who are diligent in their responsiveness to each child support this. Applying strong intentional teaching practices will provide the children with an authentic and meaningful learning environment that challenges, supports and nurtures a child's development.

If we, as Educators, have any areas of concern, we will inform you and advise where help may be pursued, e.g. speech therapist. We understand this is a sensitive topic and it is always your decision to follow this up. Educators are willing to discuss any aspect of learning and development with parents. We understand this may be a sensitive topic and it is always your decision to follow up intervention. Educators are willing to discuss any aspect of learning and development with parents and support discussions with allied health professionals.

All Educators at Bright Start Preschool are trained and experienced in areas of early education and care. Due to our high standard and commitment of our Educators, we are able to provide developmental and educational curricula for each group of children.

# Excursions and Regular Outings



Excursions are an important and valuable part of learning in early education. They expose a child to a range of different experiences and help them to observe and understand the world around them. For any excursion or regular outing in our community, we will complete comprehensive risk assessments to minimise any identified risks as part of our planning for excursions. We provide parents with information about the excursion in advance and require written authorisation for each child to participate on an excursion or regular outing.

Regular excursions include walks around our neighbourhood, visting local shops, fire station, ambulance community gardens and library visits, monthly visits to Killarney Court Aged Care and theatre visits.

Authorisation for regular transportation and regular outings will be gained once every 12 months or whenever any of the circumstances of the transport may change. Please see our Excursion/Incursion Policy and Safe Transportation Policy for further information.

Please also see the Bush Kindy Section for Bush Kindy Specifc Excursion Information

# Physical Play

Physical play includes activities that use physical movements to allow children to use their energy, enhance their concentration, motivation, learning and wellbeing. We feel physical play is a vital part of everyday life. We believe in providing children with a range of physical activities and experience on a daily occurrence for them to challenge their large and small muscles, allowing them to gain increasing control over their bodies as they learn the importance of physical play.



Physical play provides children with the opportunity to:

- Develop strong bones and muscles,
- Improve strength and balance
- Develop flexibility and coordination
- Develop and refine Fundamental Movement Skills
- Develop and improve spatial awareness
- Develop and improve mathematical concepts
- Be confident as they learn to control their bodies and understand their limits
- Learn to cooperate and share with others, developing peer groups/freindships
- Promote healthy growth and development
- use their imagination
- roster self-esteem and confidence
- build resilience
- become more independent
- test abilities and experience adventure
- challenge their fears

# Sustainability

Bright Start Preschool is passionate about sustainability. We believe in supporting children to appreciate and care for the environment by embedding sustainable practice into the daily operation of Bright Start Preschool, infrastructure and teaching. Further, we support children to appreciate that sustainability embraces social and economic sustainability as we engage in concepts of social justice, fairness, sharing, democracy and citizenship.

In order to empower our sustainability program we emphasise children's ability to make a difference, enabling them to learn and appreciate their environment in an engaging, fun and exciting manner. We do this by engaging children in discussion about sustainable practice, developing an appreciation of the natural world, encouraging them to participate

in a recycling program and reducing energy and conserving water. We aim to provide children with the skills and knowledge required to take an active role in caring for the environment and to think about ways they can contribute to a sustainable future.

# Documentation of Learning

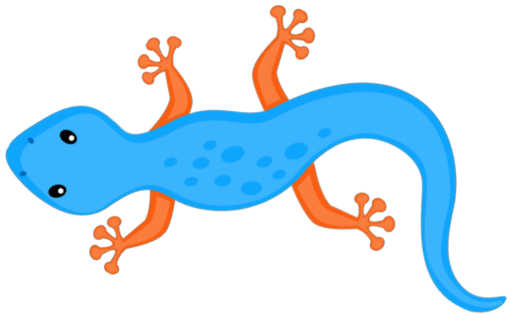
Educators observe children and facilitate their learning to provide each child with a personal, confidential digital /hard copy portfolio by documenting their learning throughout the year. Bright Start Preschool uses a variety of documentation to demonstrate learning which may include:

- your child's profile
- goals from families and educators
- observations- learning stories, captioned photos
- objectives for further development
- work samples- drawings, photos, recorded video
- checklists and transition statements.

The individual child's portfolio is maintained and used as a direct tool for evaluation and future planning within Bright Start Preschool's program. This makes the program reflect the value of individuality and is not be used as a means of comparison between peers or stereotypes. The portfolio will be used in parent/educator meetings throughout the year and is always available via our app for you to review at your convenience.

Please refer to the 'Photographs/Social Media/Promotions' section of this Handbook regarding the use of digital devices and taking and storing images of children within Bright Start.

# Bush Kindy Program



## Program Overview

Our Bush Kindy program is currently being run three days per week. This style of program (known as Nature or Forest Kindergartens in other parts of the world) has been in practice for around 50 years, primarily in Scandinavian countries. There are very few child care providers providing this service within Australia but the Bright Start team sees enormous benefits, in regards to children's learning, decision making, creativity, self expression, collaboration and resilience that can only be developed through this style of program. Refer to the Bush Kindy Handbook for further information.

Bush Kindy Makes a natural connection between our educational philosophy and the promotion of sustainability at Bright Start Preschool. It will enable the children to connect, through play, with the space and their land in a way that cannot be done under a roof or within walls. Teachers will support children as they take risks and face challenges essential to well-rounded learning.

## Benefits of Bush Kindy and Nature Play

Quite simply, outdoor play is good for children!

The benefits of outdoor play are well documented, and include:

- Increasing physical activity
- Increasing the body's levels of Vitamin D
- Reducing anxiety and improving mood
- Improving concentration and focus
- Enhancing imaginative and creative play
- Promoting problem solving and leadership skills
- Growing the next generation of stewards for the earth
- Developing stronger immune systems

Less time spent playing outdoors is linked to:

- Obesity
- Type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Anxiety disorders and depression
- Attention deficit disorder

There has never been a more important time for parents and educators to make outdoor play a priority for the children in their lives. It is one of the best things that we can do for their health, education and wellbeing.

# Sessions and Hours

The Bush Kindy runs three days per week during school terms. Sessions may be altered or cancelled due to staff absence or extreme weather but alternate experiences will be provided at Preschool in this situation and no additional bush kindy fee will be charged.

Children leave preschool at 9:00am and return at 12:30pm. Children must be at preschool by 8:45am to allow educators to coordinate the group, toilet the children and check equipment.

# Attendance

We ask that parents are diligent and use their own judgement in assessing whether it is appropriate for their child to attend Bush Kindy and spend the time outdoors in the prevailing weather conditions. Our usual conditions apply for medications and exclusion periods for certain illnesses and conditions. Please note that due to staffing and educator ratios, your child cannot remain at preschool, if you consider them too unwell to attend Bush Kindy, they must remain a home for the day.

If your child will be away from their bush kindy session, please advise us prior to 8:30am so we are not waiting for you to arrive. Any child arriving later than 9am will need to meet us onsite so our routines are maintained and we able to maximise our time in nature.

# Clothing

Parents are required to determine appropriate clothing based on the weather forecast appropriate to their session time but must ensure that children have wet weather clothing, footwear and a hat for every session.

Children will not be allowed to attend a Bush Kindy session if they arrive without appropriate clothing and without suitable clothing to change into and sue to ratio requirements, they will be unable to remain at preschool.

It is important that Bush Kindy participants wear appropriate and protective clothing and footwear which:

- Allows children to move freely and undertake activities such as climbing, balancing and running
- Keeps children warm and dry in cold/wet weather
- Protects children from the damaging effects of the sun, UV rays in warm weather and high UV conditions
- Prevents sunburn, bites, scratches and stings. Even in warm weather long sleeve tops and long pants are recommended – this clothing should be loose fitting and light.
- Where possible should be made from natural fabrics which allow the body to breathe and is comfortable against the skin
- In the case of footwear, it needs to keep the feet and toes covered and have a flexible sole to allow children to climb and balance on uneven surfaces.

The following table provided examples of recommended clothing, clothing:

| | Warm Weather | Cold / Wet Weather |
|---|---|---|
| Recommended Clothing and Footwear | oose fitting long sleeve tops and long pants<br>Broad brimmed hat<br>Closed in Shoes | Rain Set<br>Long Pants<br>Long Sleeved Top<br>Beanie<br>Warm Jacket |
| Not Recommended | Short sleeved tops<br>Shorts<br>Skirts or dresses | Skirts or dresses<br>(incompatible with rain sets) |
| Unacceptable clothing and footwear | Open toes shoes<br>Sandals / thongs<br>Crocs<br>Singlet tops | Non waterproof outer clothing – a rain set on top of non-waterproof clothing is recommended |

# Rain Sets

Each child must provide their own rain set to allow for play in all weather conditions. Rain sets are a light rainproof suit worn over clothing. A zippered front suit which includes a jacket with a hood and pants is recommended rather than an all in one suit.

Quality rain set can be purchased from:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Muddlarks.com.au | Kathmandu | BCF |
| Rainbird.com.au | Anaconda | Target |
| Grubbybub.com.au | Macpac | Kmart |

Rain sets are also available from online retailors such as Temu, Shien and eBay.

# What to Bring to Each Session

**CHANGE OF CLOTHES**

All children participating in Bush Kindy are required to bring a change of clothes and footwear as these may become wet and muddy. It is recommended that the spare clothing include:

- Spare top and bottoms of appropriate thickness/weight for the weather on the day
- Spare underpants (and singlet in winter)
- 2 pairs of socks
- 1 pair of gumboots – it is not recommended that gumboots be worn at all times due to the restriction of movement they impose
- Rain sets – if not worn to the session

On high UV days, please ensure that you apply sunscreen prior to the session commencing. Sunscreen will be available throughout the session for reapplication, should it be required

All children will be provided with a child size Hi-Viz vest to wear throughout the session, including to and from the location. Staff will also wear these vests for easy identification.

**WATER AND MORNING TEA**

All children are required to bring a water bottle of fresh water and morning tea to all sessions. We ask that you consider the environment by not including any packaging. We also ask that you continue to follow they centres Healthy Eating Policy when selecting a snack

**A 'BUSH KINDY' BAG AND A REUSABLE WET BAG**

Please pack all bush kindy items, change of clothes etc, into a bag separate to your child's usual preschool bag. A recycleable shopping bag is perfect (the green ones or canvas totes). This allows your child independence in finding their change of clothes and keeps everything tidy.

A reusable wet bag or a thick multiuse plastic shopping bag. We need somewhere to put the wet, dirty and muddy clothes when we get back so they don't make everything else dirty!

**FOOTPRINTS**

Please always take away with you what you brought in. Parents and children are asked not to bring toys along to Bush Kindy to better enable children to engage in the natural surrounds.

# Policy And Regulations

Bush Kindy is conducted as part of the Bright Start Preschool Program and therefore is governed by the regulations and procedures of the preschool. Due to location and environmental factors, variations to policy have been identified and different procedures created which are specific to Bush Kindy to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children, staff and volunteers involved in the program.

We ask parents to view policies regarding Bush Kindy to gain a full understanding of the responsibilities of the Bright Start Community. Risk assessments have been undertaken for all bush kindy sites and activities to be undertaken while onsite.

# Emergency Evacuation

There are times that have been identified that require the Bush Kindy participants to evacuate to a safer location to ensure the safety of the group. In this situation the children will assemble at a set location (information to be provided in the evacuation policy) then return to Bright Start Preschool.

The reasons for evacuation include, but are not limited to: Fire or bushfire, missing child, aggressive dogs off leads, other animal intruders, uninvited person/stranger (threatening, causing a nuisance or unease for staff and participants), natural events such as extreme weather, floods, sever winds or thunderstorms, medical emergency or accidents.

# What to pack in your child's Bush Kindy Bag

(for every bush kindy session)

Remember to also bring your child's usual preschool bag and lunch

A change of clothes for when we return. Don't forget shoes, socks and undies!

Bush Kindy Bag - a recyclable shopping bag is perfect

A rain coat – large enough to fit over your child's clothes

A drink bottle of water and morning tea

Gum Boots / Rain Boots




All children attending Bush Kindy are asked to arrive by 8:45am

A Sun Hat

A wet bag or reusable plastic bag – for wet/muddy clothes and shoes

Wet Weather Pants – large enough to fit over your child's clothes

**Don't forget to dress your child in a long sleeved shirt and long pants in the morning.**

This is for sun safety and protection from insects, plants and other surprises. We will change into preschool clothes once we return to preschool.
If it is raining it is appreciated if children could arrive wearing their wet weather gear also.

# Enrolment Information

## Age Groups

Bright Start Preschool has two rooms which promotes a spacious, warm and inviting environment for all our children at Bright Start Preschool. The rooms are:

- Rainforest Room : 2years - 3 years
- Reef Room : 4 years - 5 years

## Enrolment Form

Prior to your child commencing at Bright Start Preschool, you'll be required to complete an enrolment form, provide documentation and confirm information with Centrelink.

If you require assistance completing the enrolment form, please contact our Nominated Supervisor or reception staff for assistance.

We will require the following documentation:

- a copy of your child's birth certificate or identity documents
- your child's Medicare number (if available)
- completed medical condition documentation, as required
- certified copies of any court order, parenting orders or parenting plans
- an immunisation history statement from the Australian Immunisation Register

This must show that your child is up to date with vaccinations for their age OR your child is on a recognised vaccine catch up schedule OR has a medical condition preventing them from being fully vaccinated.

Please note, the names written on the enrolment form must match the names on your child's birth certificate or identity documents. If your child does not yet have a birth certificate, please speak to a staff member. Enrolment Records will be required to be updated annually or whenever your circumstances change

## Family Law, Access and Court Orders

***Bright Start request that management are kept up to date with any parenting court orders or parenting agreement under Family Law (if applicable)***



Bright Start will uphold any responsibilities or obligations in relation to Family Law and access to Bright Start. We require certified copies of any court order, parenting orders or parenting plans, relating to your child as part of the required enrolment documentation and request that if situations change, a copy of the Court Order is provided to Bright Start. We will only allow children to leave Bright Start with the written permission of the custodial parent/guardian. Without a Court Order we cannot stop a parent collecting a child.

Bright Start will ensure that any child related documents containing personal information about individuals will only be disclosed with written consent. Individuals may withdraw their consent in writing before any information is disclosed. [Reg. 177 (4, 4A, 4B, 4C)]

*All documentation relating to custody and access are held and maintained securely in accordance to our Record Keeping and Retention Policy.*

# Authorised Nominees

You will be requested to provide information about authorised nominees on your child's enrolment form. These are persons that you provide permission to:

- collect your child from Bright Start Preschool
- provide autorisation for medical treatment for your child from a medical practitioner, hospital or ambulance service
- provide authorisation for the transportation of your child by an ambulance service
- provide authorisation to go on an excursion.

Please understand that it is essential we have up-to-date information on your child's enrolment record in case of an emergency. It is important that you notify the Nominated Supervisor (or Responsible Person) of any changes to enrolment information including:

- your residential address
- health of your child
- telephone/mobile phone numbers
- contact details for any parent or authorised nominee
- family changes (parenting orders)
- emergency contact information details etc.

# Authorisations

The enrolment form will include additional authorisations for Bright Start Preschool to seek medical treatment and emergency transportation for your child if required. Authorisations will also be requested for application of sun cream, permission to administer emergency medication to your child in the case of an asthma or anaphylaxis emergency. (Ventolin or Epi-pen)and permission to access medical treatment and transport in case of an emergency.

Parents must also provide the name, address and contact details of any person authorised to authorise Bright Start to transport your child or arrange transportation for your child. This may be for authorisation for your child to go on an excursion and/or for your child to be transported by Bright Start.

# Photographs, Social Media and Promotion




As part of the enrolment process, we will ask for your authoristion to take images and video of your child during normal activities and excursions. Images and video may be used as part of our observation and programming process and shared with our app; OWNA. Photographs and video may also be shared with our parent community through social media and/or to promote Bright Start to the community through marketing and promotional materials.

This authorisation can be withdrawn at any time by providing a written request to the nominated supervisor. Images and videos will be stored securely at the Service and access available to authorised personal only. They will be deleted and destroyed when no longer required, or if retained for compliance purposes, kept for a period of 3 years after the child's last day of attendance.

Bright Start adopts and aligns with legislative requirements for taking images or videos of children and ensures that only Service issued approved devices are used to take images or video of children. We have strict protocols for appropriate storage of images and video.

We request families comply with the guidelines of Bright Start Policies and not take images or recording videos of children whilst at Bright Start.

Families are asked to respect that staff are not allowed to share information on any other children, families or staff members and staff are encouraged to not join any families social media.

# Medical Conditions including Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Diabetes or Epilepsy

It is vital that we are aware of any medical condition including diabetes, epilepsy, allergies, eczema, asthma, risks of anaphylaxis of your child including any potential triggers. Families are required to indicate any medical condition, allergy or asthma on the enrolment form.
Bright Start Preschool requires a Medical Management Plan or ASCIA Asthma/Anaphylaxis Action Plan to be completed by your General Practitioner to assist in managing your child's needs. This needs to be provided prior to your child's commencement at Bright Start Preschool. In consultation with the Nominated Supervisor, you will be asked to develop a Risk Minimisation Plan and Communication Plan to assist our educators and staff. Any prescribed medication that your child may require must be provided each day they attend Bright Start Preschool.



To ensure the safety and wellbeing of your child, please update your child's Medical Management Plan/ Action Plan every 12-18 months or whenever a change in their medication or treatment occurs. (Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy) (ASCIA).

# Inclusion of All Children

If your child has a disability or requires additional support, please speak to our Nominated Supervisor prior to enrolment. We provide a supportive and inclusive environment that allows each child to fully participate in quality education and care.

We aim to develop and sustain supportive relationships with families and encourage discussions about how we can support your child to have equitable access to resources and participation. If your child has a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) package, we may need your consent to make contact with services and/or therapists who are working with your child to seek information regarding their learning plan to support continuity of learning.

Bright Start Preschool may be able to apply for additional support through the Inclusion Support Program (SIP) to assist your child's access.

# Fees and Administration

## Preschool Fees

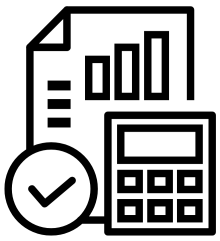
$127.50 per child per day before Child Care Subsidy has been applied
$132.50 per session for Bush Kindy before Child Care Subsidy has been applied

Families are required to complete the online Child Care Subsidy assessment via myGov website prior to starting at preschool. This will determine your eligibility and level of Child Care Subsidy entitlement.

On enrolment we will need the CRN of the person linked with the child, along with the child's CRN so we can confirm register attendance and ensure that you are receiving the appropriate subsidy.

Bright Start Preschool does not have an enrolment fee or bond, however we reserve the right to request 2 weeks advance payments for accounts consistently in arrears or with repeated declined direct debit payments.

# Statements and Accounts



All preschool fee accounts are required to be paid weekly via direct debit and praents/guardians are required to complete a direct debit form upon enrolment.

Each week we will send you a statement via email before your weekly debit. Please check these statements to ensure all details are correct and accurate. If there is any discrepancy, please contact the Nominated Supervisor as soon as possible so that it may be corrected before processing on Friday.

Bright Start Preschool is a cashless service and payment is only available via direct debit processed on Friday. With arrangement fortnightly payments can be made. Fees must be paid via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). ***Please note that additional charges will apply for any failed transactions as a result of insufficient funds.***

Families are provided with access to OWNA to access account information. Each family will be provided with individual log in details, families are reminded not to share passwords or log in details. Families are encouraged to check statements and invoives for any changes to CCS entitlements.

It is our policy that all accounts are to be at a nil balance each week ie there should be no fees outstanding. Declined debit payments will incur an additional $10.00 fee per transaction. This fee is in addition to any fees that may be charged by our processing company or your bank.

If fees are outstanding after two weeks, we will impose a late payment fee of $25.00

Should fees still be outstanding after three weeks, a debt recovery process will be implemented and additional late fee added to your account. Any costs associated with our debt collection process will be added to your account. Bright Start Preschool reserves the right to suspend/withdraw your child's enrolment if your account is overdue after 3 weeks.

If you are experiencing financial hardship, please speak to the Nominated Supervisor or Director. Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) may be available to support your family. We may be able to organise a payment plan before your fees go into arrears

Any change of financial income or work hours will alter your fee structure. Please advise Bright Start Preschool and update your circumstances on my.gov.au.

Please also keep in mind that you are responsible for the payment of any vairances in fees due to Child Care Subisdy adjustments and balancing. Please also be aware that these adjustments and vairances may take place after your child has left Bright Start Preschool and/or after the following financial year.

# Child Care Subsidy

We remind families that there are some compliance areas that Bright Start has no influence over such as Child Care Subsidy (CCS), and timing of payments to Bright Start and your account. When families enrol their child into Bright Start, it is the family's responsibility to provide us with the required information to receive Child Care Subsidy. This includes the correct Customer Reference Number (CRN) and date of birth of the child and parent/guardian who is caliming CCS payment for the child, so we can confirm the attendance and ensure that you are reciving the appropriate subsidy.

Child Care Subsidy offers assistance to families to help with the cost of child care aged 0-13 years. There are 3 factors that will determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy, which include:

- Combined annual family income
- Activity test – the activity level of both parents
- Service type – type of child care service and whether the child attends school

Families who wish to receive Child Care Subsidy as reduced fees must apply through the myGov website. This includes completing the Child Care Subsidy activity test. Child Care Subsidy is paid directly to Bright Start Preschool to be passed on to families as a fee reduction. Families will contribute to their childcare fees and pay the difference between the fee charged by Bright Start Preschool and the subsidy amount received. This is called the '*gap fee*'.

On enrolment we will need the Customer Reference Number (CRN) of the person who is caliming CCS payment for the child, along with the child's CRN so we can confirm the attendance and ensure that you are receiving the appropriate subsidy.

Families are required to advise Centrelink of any changes to circumstances within 14 days to avoid a debt. Changes to circumstances may impact CCS payments. Should you wish to raise concerns regarding the management of Child Care Subsidy, please speak to the nominated supervisor as soon as possible.

Families can raise concerns regarding management of the Child Care Subsidy to the Department of Education via their Online contact form. Additionally, information about any potential breach of Child Care Subsidy can be reported anonymously by submitting an online report directly to the Department of Education. For more information visit the Department of Education website: Reporting fraud via a tip-off.

# Start Strong Fee Relief Funding

In 2026, families can access Start Strong for Long Day Care fee relief for preschool-aged children through the NSW Government's Start Strong for Long Day Care program.

Families with children who are at least 4 years old on or before 31 July 2026 (the child's birthdate must be on, or before, 31 July 2022), and who are enrolled in a preschool program may save up to $2,563 in 2026.

Families with children who are 3 years old and not yet 4 years old on or before 31 July in 2025 (the child's birthdate must be on, or between, 1 August 2022 and 31 July 2023), and who are enrolled at an eligible service may save up to $769 in 2026.

The funding for your child's fee relief will be provided to Bright Start, directly from the NSW Government, and we will pass this fee relief on to you as a reduction to your fees. You cannot receive fee relief at more than one early childhood education service.

There will be no impact on your Child Care Subsidy (CCS). Start Strong fee relief is not income tested and you do not need to be receiving CCS to be eligible for fee relief. There are no citizenship or residency status requirements to access fee relief.

If your child will be attending Bright Start and another service that offers fee relief (a community preschool or another long day care service), it is up to you to choose which service you would like to receive fee relief from. You will need to fill out a Declaration and consent form at both Bright Start and the additional service your child attends.

The Start Strong for Long Day Care fee relief will be allocated to you as a flat rate across the number of weeks Bright Start is open during the calendar year (50 Weeks).

# Complying Written Agreement (CWA)

A Complying Written Agreement (CWA) is an agreement between Bright Start Preschool and a parent or guardian to provide childcare in exchange for fees. The CWA includes information about your child's enrolment including your child's full name and date of birth, the date the arrangement is effective from, session details and details of the fees to be charged. Before Child Care Subsidy can be paid, you must confirm the enrolment information via the MyGov website.

# Attendance and Absence

Research shows that participating in a quality preschool program can significantly increase positive education and life outcomes for children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. (Department of Education; Universal Access to Early Childhood Education). With this in mind, our minimum enrolment is 2 days.

From experience, we believe anything less than two days prevents children from settling and forming valuable attachments with their peers and educators. It can also be difficult for teachers to plan a suitable educational and developmental program if a child is only attending 1 day per week.

If you are already enrolled and decide to reduce your child's attendance this 2 day policy still applies. 2 days also allows your child continue to benefit from the Universal Access to Early Childhood Policy (Department of Education)

We encourage families to notify Bright Start Preschool as soon as possible if your child will be absent for any day or session you have booked. It is recommended that absences are notified to Bright Start Preschool by email or through our OWNA app

Child Care Subsidy will be paid for any absence from an approved early childhood service your child attends for up to 42 days per child per financial year. To assist services and families affected by COVID-19, all families have been provided with an additional 10 allowable absence days in the 2021-22 financial year and unlimited absences in January and February 2022. Full fees are payable for absences after the initial 42 days. Additional absences beyond 42 days may be approved for specific reasons with supporting documentation. Please talk to the Nominated Supervisor about additional absences.

You can access your child's absence record on your online statement by selecting **'View Child Care Details and Payments'** on your Centrelink online account. You can also do this using the Express plus Families mobile app

Fees will not be charged for public holidyas or during our annual Christmas shutdown. We do not offer makeup days for children who are absent from preschool due to illness, holiday or public holidays. If your child has not attended Bright Start Preschool for 14 continuous weeks, your child's enrolment will be cancelled, and Centrelink will stop paying your CCS subsidy. If Bright Start is required to close due to periods of local emergency such as bushfire, flood or pandemic, gap fees will not be charged.

Child Care Subsidy is generally not payable for absences on the first or last days of enrolment. If a child is due to start enrolment on a set date and does not attend, CCS will not be paid until the child physically attends. Also if the child does not attend preschool on their last booked day, CCS may not be paid for any period after the child's last physical attendance at Bright Start. There are some circumstances where CCS may be paid in these situations (including exceptions due to Covid-19 in 2022). Please speak with the Nominated Supervisor for further information.

# Notice of Withdrawal

Two full weeks written notice is required to withdraw your child from preschool. All fee accounts need to be finalised prior to your child's last day, and as such you may be required to pay a double final payment the week prior to your final day. You will be advised if this is required.

Children are not able to attract CCS for any days after the last day your child physically attends Bright Start Preschool, and if your child is not in attendance on their last booked in day, full fees will be charged to your account. For more information refer to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) for information about withdrawals from care. *There are some circumstances where CCS can be paid after the last day your child physically attends with an approved reason.*

# Preschool Closing Time and Late Fees

Please be aware Bright Start Preschool closes at 4:00pm. In accordance with National Regulations and licensing, we are not permitted to have children in Bright Start Preschool after 4:00pm. A late fee is incurred for children collected after 4.00pm. Families are encouraged to arrived 10 minutes prior to closing to discuss your child's day with their educators.

The fee is $20 per child for every 10 minutes or part thereof and will be added to your next account. The late fee is strictly adhered to, as two staff members are required to remain at the program until all children are collected.

If we are unable to contact either the parent or a person nominated by the parent on the enrolment form to arrange collection of the child/children within an hour of Bright Start Preschool closing, we may need to contact the Police or other authorities to take responsibility of your child.

# Permenent and Casual Bookings

Permanent bookings are an ongoing booking that:

- remains the same from one week to the next
- must remain unchanged for a minimum of 3 weeks
- are chargeable regardless of attendance

Casual bookings are one off booking that:

- can be booked at the last minute for emergency care. This is provided that we have vacancies. If there is no vacancy, we will put your child on a casual waiting list and will contact you if a vacancy becomes available
- are designed to support families taking on casual work and shift work
- **can be cancelled at no cost, provided 36-hour notice via email is given**. If 36 hours notice is not given, fees for the day will be charged as the position is unable to be allocated to another child.

# Waiting List

**CASUAL WAITING LIST**

We will create a casual waiting list for casual bookings that have been requested for a session that we are at capacity. If positions become available, we will allocate them in order of application whilst adhering to recommendations of Priority of Access. Casual bookings can be made through our OWNA app or by calling us.

**PERMANENT WAITING LIST**

If you would like to increase your child/ren's permanent sessions but there are no permanent vacancies, your child/ren will be placed on a waiting list until a position becomes available. Positions will be allocated in order of application, whilst adhering to our Priority of Access process.

# Priority of Access

Bright Start Preschool aims to assist families who are most in need and may prioritise filling vacancies with children who are:

- at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- a child of a sole parent who satisfies, or parents who both satisfy, the activity test through paid employment.

# Grievances, Complaints and Feedback

If for any reason you are not happy with our level of education and care or our environment we want to know immediately. You can discuss this with Educators or write a formal letter. When any matter is raised Bright Start Preschool will be following our Grievance Procedure. All Preschool policies/procedures are available to parents. Positive feedback is most welcome too.

# Your Child's Day

## Orientation - Preparing Your Child for Preschool

Orientation is an important start for your child and family to connect to Bright Start Preschool. We encourage each child to attend preschool in the company of a family member two (2) times before they start the day with us. This gives you and your child the opportunity to gain an understanding of our program, the lay out of the room, where to find things, provide Educators with additional information about your child and how we can best support their transition and settling period. The Nominated Supervisor will contact you to arrange suitable times and days for visits.

If your child is reluctant to attend, please discuss this with their room Educators so that they can develop strategies with you to support the transition from home to preschool. You are welcome to take photos of your child in our environment to show and discuss at home. Some children like to take a book from our library to read at home and return on the next visit.

We suggest purchasing the following books you can read to your child prior to starting. 'Preschool Day Hooray' By Linda Leopold Strauss, 'Maisy goes to Preschool' by Lucy Cousins, 'What to expect at Preschool' by Heidi Murkoff and 'I love you all day long' by Francesca Rusackas.

Communication between home and Bright Start Preschool must be open and happen often to best support your child during this time. There may be tears and extra tight hugs when saying goodbye for the first few weeks but there are always cuddles, reassurance and genuine care from Educators for both the children and their families. Sometimes this experience is upsetting more so for the family, not the child. We understand this and offer support through phone calls during the day, photos and open communication.

# Arrival and Departure

Each day, you must sign your child in upon arrival and sign out upon departure and note the date and times. We are required by legislation to maintain our attendance record at all times. This record may be used in the event of an emergency situation at Bright Start Preschool.
Our staff have a duty of care to your child and will only allow your child to be released into the care of either a parent, guardian or an authorised nominee as listed on your child's enrolment record. If your child needs to be collected by another person for some reason, an authority to collect form must be provided in writing to the Nominated Supervisor. Our staff may ask to view photo identification of the adult collecting your child from care to confirm their identity.

# How to Sign Your Child Into Preschool

We will have a tablet device available in the foyer, and both the Reef and Rainforest Rooms. On your first day follow these simple steps:

- Insert your PIN number (default is your phone number).
- Select the child/children your are signing in/out
- Complete the questions regarding collection, medication and sunscreen
- Sign inside the box
- Select done

If the tablets (touchscreen) do not accept your PIN number, please double check with the staff as we can look it up for you and reset it if necessary.

***What happens if I need a family member or friend to drop off or collect?***

No worries, because your family member or friend will be in our system as an emergency contact for your family. So they will have their own log in details (private pin) to drop off or collect.

If we are unable to contact either the parent or a person nominated by the parent on the enrolment form to arrange collection of the child/children within an hour of preschool closing, then we will contact Department of Education and Communities and the Police to take responsibility of your child.

# Those First Days and Weeks

The introduction into preschool can be difficult for children and parents. Children's welfare and happiness are the priority for educators when welcoming new children to preschool and when assisting the family to settle into Bright Start Preschool environment. It is recognised that families' needs will vary greatly in the orientation process and individual needs will be addressed.

Please don't be alarmed if your child experiences some separation anxiety. This is normal and our experienced educators will assist you and your child through this transition period. We encourage parents to stay as long as they like during the morning drop off to help your child settle into an activity.

There may be tears and extra tight hugs when saying goodbye for the first few weeks but there are always cuddles, reassurance and genuine care from educators for both the children and their families. Sometimes this experience is upsetting more so for the family, not the child. We understand this and offer support through phone calls during the day, photos and open communication.

The following outlines some helpful hints for parents on settling their child into care:-

- Make sure you familiarise your child with the environment and the people in the environment (children and adults) by coming in for visits before commencing care.
- Ease your child into care with short stays to begin with.
- Provide a favourite toy, blanket or comforter to support your child when they are separating from you or settling to sleep. This can help your child feel more secure.
- If your child is unsettled, short visits with you will help your child to gain trust with an unfamiliar environment. These visits can be made on a day when your child is not booked to attend.
- Your child will be reassured when they see positive interactions between Educators and parents or Educators and other children, and this will help them to establish trust in an unfamiliar setting.
- Try to talk at home about child care. Mention the names of the Educators and other children. Talk about the things the child will be able to do at child care that are fun and enjoyable.
- Talk to the Educators about your child, for example, what they like to do; successful ways of settling them to sleep; foods they like and dislike and so on. This helps Educators to get to know your child.
- When leaving your child it is best to make sure you say goodbye and then leave. Hesitating and not going after you have said your goodbyes only confuses them, especially if they are upset. Reassure your child that everything is alright and you will return later. This can help them to settle.
- It sometimes helps to establish a routine when leaving. For example, giving your child a cuddle and then passing them an Educator, or sitting down with them to read a book or for a short play before leaving.

- At first some children protest strongly while others may take a day or two to realise that you are leaving them and begin to protest after several days. Children soon learn that you do return and in the mean time they are well cared for.

# Saying Goodbye

What works best is a set routine so try to establish the care routine from the orientation process. Being well organised and avoiding a rush usually results in a calm start to the day.

Most children will want to have a look around first to see who else has arrived and to look at what activities are available. Please tell your child when you are leaving as they may become upset if they haven't had the opportunity to say goodbye. This will gain trust from the child, not only in you but in the Educator who is reassuring your child about their day and when you will return. Rest assured, we'll contact you if your child becomes distressed.

# What to Bring Each Day

### BAG / BACKPACK

For independence, we work towards all children being able to recognise and open their own bag. Let them be involved in selecting the bag and taking ownership of it. Please ensure it is large enough to hold all their belongings and is clearly labelled.

### MORNING TEA, LUNCH AND DRINK BOTTLE

We encourage and support the use of nude (packaging and wrap fee) lunches in reusable containers. Buying in bulk is more cost effective, produces less waste and is better for our environment.

Morning tea can be sent in either a medium-sized paper bag (which can be reused) or if you prefer a small container, clearly labelled with their name. Also include one drink bottle - again with their name on it. We always provide water through our bubbler, but a drink bottle is a great start to school readiness.

Any pre-cut fruit or dairy products must be placed into the fridge in your child's room. Due to food hygiene regulations, we are unable to reheat food, but we do encourage the use of a thermos should you wish your child to have a hot lunch.

Children are asked to bring their lunch in a plastic/metal lunch box with a lid that they can open. As all lunches must be placed into the fridge in each room, please do not send it in a cooler bag, as these are not effective in the fridges. We ask you put your child's name on both bottom (at each end) and the lid. We also ask that you consider the environment and send 'nude food' to preschool without packaging and additional wraps and wrappings.

We try to encourage a healthy lunch at preschool so only provide sandwiches with nutritious fillings. Sprinkles & chocolate spreads are discouraged. Celery and carrot sticks or a salad are good additions to your child's lunch. We prefer that sweet biscuits, cakes, chips lollies, roll ups, are not sent as part of your child's lunch! There is more information on the nutrition requirements we encourage at Preschool in the next section and also attached to the end of the handbook.

For lunchbox examples, please see the Munch and Move brochure at the end of our handbook.

Please do not send chips, lollies/chocolates, highly processed foods, chocolate custards or desserts, pizzas, sausage rolls, pies, flavoured milk, roll ups or other high sugar bars, biscuits or cakes.

These items will remain in your child's lunch box for home time. A healthy lunch box environment is a group effort by all families and staff.

**SUN HAT**

A sun protective hat must be worn every day when playing outside for protection against the sun. Please make sure to include it in your child's bag every day regardless of the weather conditions. Preschool hats are available for purchase from the office.

**SHEET SETS**

If your child still has a rest or sleep during the day, for hygiene purposes, they will be required to bring a set of sheets (cot sized) to cover the mattress during this time.

Mattresses are cleaned and snaitised after each use, aside from making your child more comfortable, sheets also provide a barrier between the mattress and your child.

**NAPPIES**

Any child in the process of toilet training must bring their own nappies each day. We suggest that children have 5 nappies each day to cover our scheduled changing times along with a few spare for those extra times.

Nappies are stored in labelled baskets in the toilet and any unsued nappies can with be returned to you to take home or left at preschool for next time.

**SPARE CLOTHES**

Every now and then accidents occur or we may just being getting messy and it may be necessary for your child to get changed into a fresh set. Please include a complete change of clothes every day which can stay in your child's bag...just in case!

**WATERPROOF BAG**

A reusable, sustainable waterproof wet bag is required for all children so that wet and soiled clothes can be returned to you each day for laundering. The bag must be able to be sealed to avoid items from falling out.

**ADDITIONAL BUSH KINDY ITEMS**

Children attending our Bush Kindy program will also need to additionally bring a set of wet weather clothes, gumboots and dry socks for each session.

Additional information on daily Bush Kindy requirements can be found in the Bush Kindy information

# What Food to Pack Your Child for a Busy Day at Bright Start Preschool

RECOMMENDED DAILY INTAKES

Recommended average number of standard serves per day in accordance with Nutrition Australia.

| THE FIVE FOOD GROUPS | STANDARD SERVE SIZE | 2-3 YEARS | 4-8 YEARS |
|---|---|---|---|
| Vegetables and legumes/beans | 2 cup vegetables – include 2 or 3 different types | ½ Serves | ½ Serves |
| Fruit | cup fresh<br>stewed fruit<br>2 small pieces of fruit (apricot, kiwi fruit, plum)<br>1 medium sized fruit (apple, banana, orange)<br>an equivalent amount of 2<br>3 different fruits | Serve | ½ Serves |
| ain (Bread and real) | slice bread<br>2/3 cup breakfast cereal<br>1/2 cup cooked rice or 1/2 cup cooked pasta | Serves | Serves |
| eat and ternatives | g cooked lean red<br>80g white meat<br>100g cooked fish<br>1 cup cooked legumes (baked beans, chickpeas)<br>2 eggs | Serve | – 1 ½ Serves |
| airy and ternatives | cup (250 ml) milk<br>1 cup (250ml) calcium-fortified soy milk<br>2 slices (40g) cheese or 3 ¼ cup (200g) yoghurt<br>½ cup (120g) ricotta cheese | ½ Serves | ½ girls Serves<br>oys Serves |
| ink | ater<br>ater should be accessible at all times and for all ages.<br><br>ow's milk<br>ontains calcium, zinc and vitamin A, riboflavin and may be fortified with vitamin D and should e offered daily. (Powdered, evaporated or long-life (UHT) milks are just as nutritious ternatives to fresh milk)<br><br>educed fat milk (~2% fat)- recommended to have reduced fat milk as it contains the same mount of calcium, protein, and vitamins as full cream, but is lower in saturated fat and energ ontent.<br><br>ant based milk<br>ower in protein and have fewer vitamins and minerals. Use varieties fortified with calcium with at least 100mg calcium per 100ml).<br>ortified soy and rice milk is suitable for many children who cannot tolerate cow's milk.<br><br>ot suitable substitutes for cow's milk -Oat, almond, quinoa and coconut milks - do not ovide the necessary nutrients for young children. | | |

Reference: Eat for Health, Australian Dietary Guidelines, The guidelines | Eat for Health

# HEALTHY LUNCHBOXES

Healthy lunchboxes can be fun and delicious, packed with excitement, colours, textures and tastes, an adventure in eating everyday. With a little planning your child will be unable to resist. For young children variety is important, choosing a food from each of the six groups below creates a balanced healthy lunchbox and can be easily tailored to the fussy eater.

## Mix from 6






NSW GOVERNMENT Health

# HEALTHY LUNCHBOXES

munch & move

## 1. GRAINS & CEREALS

Wraps
Sandwiches
Bread rolls
Pasta
Rice
Noodles
Cous Cous
Corn and rice cakes
Crackers
Sushi
Naan
Rice paper rolls
*(wholegrain or wholemeal varieties are the best choices)*

## 2. FRUIT

**Fresh fruit:**
Apple
Apricot
Banana
Grapes
Mandarin
Orange
Pear
Peaches
Pineapple
Plum
Rockmelon
Strawberries
*(fruit can be cut into chunks for small children)*

**Tub of fruit**
in natural juice

**Dried fruit**
Sultanas
Dried fruit mixes
*(less often)*

## 3. VEGETABLES

**Fresh veggies:**
Avocado
Carrots
Capsicum
Celery
Corn cobs
Cucumber
Green beans
Mushroom
Snow peas
Tomatoes
*(veggies can be cut into sticks or shapes for small children, they can also be teamed with dips, like hommus or natural yoghurt)*

**Salads:**
Salad filling in sandwiches and wraps.

## 4. DAIRY/ ALTERNATIVES

Plain milk
*(freeze the night before to keep cool)*
Soy or other calcium enriched plant based milk
Plain yoghurt
Custard
Cheese slices, cubes, sticks
Cream cheese
Cottage cheese
Ricotta cheese.
*(choose reduced fat for children over 2 years of age)*

## 5. LEAN MEAT/ ALTERNATIVES

**Fish:**
Tinned tuna
Tinned salmon

**Meat:**
Lean roast or grilled meats: beef, lamb chicken
Lean meat or chicken patties
Skinless chicken drumsticks
Rissoles or meatballs
Lean deli meat: ham, chicken, beef *(less often)*

**Alternatives:**
Boiled eggs
Baked beans
Tofu
Lentil patties
Hommus
Falafel

## 6. WATER

Water is the best thirst quencher and the best choice of drink for every lunchbox.

Tap water is safe, so buy your child a refillable drink bottle they like and get them involved.

Freezing water bottles overnight keeps them cool during the day.



## SOMETIMES FOODS

Snack foods and drinks that are high in added sugar, saturated fat or salt are generally low in nutrients. They also provide a lot of kilojoules that can contribute to children becoming overweight or obese. We call these 'sometimes' foods and drinks because they should only be consumed sometimes and in small amounts. Foods like lollies, chocolates, jelly cups, fruitbars and fruit straps, sweet biscuits, potato and corn chips should be given much less often.

**For more information and ideas on healthy eating and physical activity go to www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au**

NSW GOVERNMENT | Health

# Breastfeeding and Formula

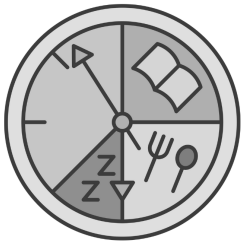
We are a breastfeeding friendly service. Mothers who are breastfeeding are welcome to attend Bright Start Preschool during the day to feed their child. We have a private, clean and quiet area for mothers to breastfeed their children or express breastmilk.

Families that are breastfeeding should speak to the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person to be aware of our policies on storing and serving breast milk.

Families that are formula feeding should also consult our Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person to be aware on how we need the formula prepared and stored. Regular communication is encouraged to ensure your infant's needs are met as they grow.

Please refer to our *Breastfeeding Policy*.

# The Daily Routine



We provide an environment where the children feel comfortable and secure at all times, and all our rooms have daily routines that reflect this. Our routines are designed to maximise each child's opportunities to learn and develop.

Throughout the day the children will experience a number of different activities which are part of the educational and developmental curriculum operated by all of our Educators. These will be based on the interests, skills and knowledge of the children and include aspects of their culture, family and community. Regular excursions such as our Bush Kindy program, Nursing Home visits, swimming lessons and other regular outings are offered across the week.

Each room will display their routine which parents may read, and educators will be happy to answer any questions. There are summer and winter routines which are adapted to the weather conditions.

# Lockers

Each child will be provided with a locker to place their bag and personal belongings each day. Lockers are not labelled or allocated allowing for children to gain independence and responsibility in making choices and caring for their own things.

# Belongings

Please ensure all belongings are clearly labelled including jumpers, shoes etc. Lost property will be displayed for parent collection in your child's room. Parent co-operation in labelling assists Bright Start Preschool in keeping your child's belongings together. Each month any items not collected from the lost property will be donated to local charities.

# Clothing

Parents are encouraged to send their children to Preschool in comfortable, inexpensive clothing. The children need to be able to move around during play and should be unimpaired by clothing.

It is helpful to your child if they are dressed in non- restrictive, serviceable and easy to wash clothes so that they feel free to join in all the activities and to develop independence.

While paints etc will come out in the wash, accidents do happen so please don't send your child in expensive or designer clothing. Young children enjoy and need "messy" play with paint, clay, sand, water and mud. Our Bush Kindy Program can cause children to return dirty!

When choosing clothes for preschool, please consider clothing that enables the child to move around easily and allows children to be independent in dressing. Clothing such as long dresses, overalls, braces, belts and stiff buttons can prove a problem for children who need to go to the toilet.

We require all t-shirts to have sleeves (no midriff tops) and hats that are broad brimmed are essential for effective sun safety

Preschool only has a limited supply of spare clothing. Please supply at least one change of clothing and underwear (for those children out of nappies) in case of accidents. Toddlers should have about three complete changes of clothing and plenty of training pants. Don't forget extra socks!

Please label your child's clothing and replace name tags if they fade in the wash. Ensure clothing is suitable for the weather.

Shoes also, need to allow children freedom to run, climb, hop & jump as well as being easy for the child to take off and put on by him/her. We prefer that thongs, crocs and slide on shoes NOT be worn to preschool. Lace up/Velcro joggers or sandals are appropriate.

# Toys From Home

Preschool has an abundance of developmentally appropriate toys and equipment available and we ask that children do not bring in toys from home. This eliminates toys getting lost, broken, disappointment for other children and responsibility on Educators to track numerous toys throughout the day.

# Guidance and Discipline

We encourage children to engage in cooperative and pro-social behaviour. We give children the opportunity to self-regulate their behaviours during play to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Educators follow a *Behaviour Guidance Policy* that extends across the whole Service giving consistency of expectation in all rooms.

We use a positive approach to guiding children's behaviour to help them develop a respect for others, for property and respect for self. Inappropriate discipline towards any child is strictly prohibited at Bright Start and will not be used under any circumstances.

The policy aims are:-

- To give all children the opportunity to expand their experiences of life in a productive, safe environment that allows individuals the right to safety, tolerance, self-expression, cultural identity, dignity and the worth of the individual, along with honesty in dealing with peers and caregivers.
- To be taught to respect the rights and needs of others by foreseeing the outcome of their behaviour and the consequences of their behaviour.
- To encourage the individual social development of each child.

Educators will identify and implement strategies to guide and support children's behaviour and develop individual behaviour guidance plans as required, however Bright Start may review a child's enrolment status if their behaviour poses a risk to themselves, others, or continues despite the use of supportive strategies and collaboration with the family.

If you require further information on this policy please ask Educators and refer to the policy book.

# Wellbeing

Wellbeing is more than just feeling happy, it is about our overall health- physical, social, emotional and mental. We provide opportunities for your child to develop a strong sense of wellbeing through dance, movement, yoga, mindfulness, music and relaxation.

# Rest and Sleep

Rest and sleep routines vary according to individual needs. We aim to make rest time a relaxed, pleasant time for all children. We provide beds for children and play soft music in the background. Your child may wish to bring a security item to have at rest time. Please feel free to discuss your child's rest or sleep needs with educators. Each day we provide information about the times your child rested or slept.

Quiet activities, such as yoga, meditation, puzzles and books are available for those children who do not sleep.

# Birthdays

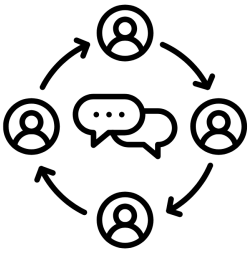


It is very exciting for a child to be having a birthday. If a cake is required for a child's birthday it is recommended that cupcakes be provided as this reduces the major allergy risks associated with most other cakes and helps us to provide a hygienic celebration with only the birthday child blowing out the candles on their cake. Families are required discuss cake options with educators prior to the celebration as all cakes must be store bought, with an attached ingredient list. We monitor food and treats to ensure the safety of all children and staff. *For further information, please see our Celebration Policy*.

# Communication and Family Involvement

We work in partnership with you and your family. We support and encourage communication with your child's educators about your child's unique needs and their general enjoyment of their day at Bright Start Preschool. Everybody has a preferred time and method of communication. Sometimes, mornings and afternoons can be a little rushed, and not the best time to discuss your child's progress. You are encouraged to talk to our Nominated Supervisor to arrange to meet your child's educator at a mutually convenient time.

Bright Start uses OWNA to provide real time updates about your child.



***Ways we communicate news/events at Bright Start Preschool:***

- Verbally at arrival and departure times.
- Via our Owna Community
- Email
- A notice board where various messages and notices are displayed advertising current issues and up coming events.
- A communication box allows parents to leave more detailed written messages if they have concerns or want to provide positive or negative feedback. These can be anonymous if desired.
- Occasionally Educators will ask parents to complete short surveys in order to maintain up to date records and seek parent feedback on various topics.

We also have many additional types of communication we use for families, which may include:

- Newsletter
- Phone calls to your work
- Emails
- Letters
- Face to face
- Family weekend forms
- Mid-year and End of year interviews
- Formal meetings

You can tell is your your preferred way of communicating on the feedback form at the end of the handbook.

It is the parent's responsibility to read these notices and ensure they are aware of current issues and events in Bright Start Preschool.

Policies will be regularly reviewed in a variety of ways (sign in area, newsletters and via files to enable parent comment on Preschool practices).

# Family Conduct Guidelines

The *Family Conduct Guidelines* work in conjunction with Bright Start's *Enrolment Policy*, *Dealing with Complaints Policy, Privacy and Confidentiality Policy,* and the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics.

The *Family Conduct Guidelines* are in place to emphasize commitment and ethical responsibilities each family adopts when enrolling their child/ren. If parents or family members are consistently in breach of these guidelines and following an evaluation by the nominated supervisor and/or the approved provider, any related enrolment/s may be at risk of being terminated.

Families and educators are expected to communicate openly, respectfully and collaboratively, sharing relevant information to support each child's development and learning while adopting qualities such as honesty, inclusivity and confidentiality. We encourage families to arrange a time away from the learning environment for in-depth discussions, where the educator can give families their full attention and make decisions that have been given careful consideration. All stakeholders are expected to show respect toward educators, children, and families, model appropriate behaviour in all interactions and understand that any threatening conduct may result in police involvement.

To maintain confidentiality, families and staff are responsible for protecting personal information and refraining from sharing sensitive details or photos on social media. If you have a complaint or grievance, contact your child's educator to arrange a suitable time to discuss the issue or complete a '*Complaints/Grievance Form'*, forms can be returned to the Service in person or via email. Management will uphold confidentiality unless the complaint involves a notifiable incident, in which case the regulatory authority will be informed as required.

# Privacy, Confidentially and Discretion



We are committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of children, individuals and families and have policies in place to ensure strict confidentiality is maintained.

Bright Start will not use personal information for any purpose that is not reasonably required for the appropriate or effective operation of Bright Start. The privacy of all information provided is paramount, which we as a Service, will protect at all times.

Personal information gathered by Bright Start may be accessed by and exchanged with staff educating and caring for a child, by administrative staff or for legal requirements. Personal information collected may include, medical information, income and financial details, contact information, children's developmental records, legal information, employment/martial information, qualifications, staff entitlements and information required under NQF legislation.

We may disclose personal information where we are permitted or obligated to do by Australian law. This may include

- Government employees
- Authorised officers during assessment and rating
- Software companies that provide computer based educational programs which use children's personal information
- Lawyers in relation to a legal claim
- Debt collection agency where fees are outstanding
- Officers carrying out an external dispute resolution process
- Protecting individuals from serious misconduct or to prevent a serious threat to a life, health or safety.

Personal information is stored in a safe and secure manner, using locked filing cabinets or password protected database and computer. Information is backed up electronically and stored securely. Hard copy information is stored securely at Bright Start and archived in accordance with regulatory requirements when no longer needed.

Bright Start will gather written authorisation prior to disclosing personal information. This may include, displaying medical plans or early intervention services.

We are committed to safeguarding and protecting the privacy of personal information and adhere to the Australian Privacy Principles. By providing Bright Start with personal information, you

consent to the collection, storage and use of personal information in the ways described in our policy and collection statement.

All families are not to use or share images obtained from Bright Start, via the Service's app, Facebook pages or other format. Families are not to share photographs taken during special events for publishing on any social media or for sharing in any format.

Families are asked to respect that staff are prohibited to share information about other children, families or staff members without expressed written consent to whom the information relates to. Additionally, families are not to connect with staff on social media platforms except the regulated Bright Start private Facebook page.

Our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy* is available to view at any time. This policy sets out how we ensure Bright Start Preschool acts in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Privacy Principles and the Privacy Act 1988. We ensure all personal information is protected, records and documents are maintained and stored in accordance with Education and Care Services National Regulations and that all staff understand the requirements of the Notifiable Data Breaches (NDB) scheme. Any Privacy complaints will be managed promptly and in a consistent manner as outlined in our *Dealing with Complaints Policy*.

# Communication and Educators

*What can you expect from Educators?*
Educators will :

- inform families promptly and sensitively of any out of the ordinary incidents affecting their child.
- share with children's families some of the specific interactions they had with the children during the day.
- keep an appropriate record of joint decisions made with families affecting children's progress, interests and experiences. (These may include new events like toilet training.)

Please feel free at any time in person, by phone or email to discuss your child's progress, relationship, interest and experiences.

# Our OWNA Community

OWNA provides a private, fun and cost effective way for child care educators to document & share with family through real-time updates. OWNA is:

- Secure and private. Your community is only accessible by the linked family members invited & your educators
- Reports on learning outcomes and events
- Develop and maintain positive and constructive relationships with parents, staff and families
- Parents receive updates via the free app or email, all in real time!
- Family members can continue the learning with their children at home creating a continuum of care
- Securely invite additional family members worldwide to be part of your child's community

Once your child commences you will receive an email invitation to join our OWNA community.








# Social Media

We use social media to communicate, share information and celebrate what is happening in Bright Start Preschool with enrolled families and Bright Start Preschool community.

We promote safety and wellbeing of all children and are committed to ensure safe online environments when engaging in digital technology including social media. Our social media accounts are managed by the Nominated Supervisor and we set the highest level of privacy and security settings on the accounts. Content is regularly scanned, and any offensive language or comments removed immediately, and these users blocked.

Photographs of your child will only be added if written authorisation has been provided. We maintain appropriate privacy of families, children and educators by not publishing any personal information online.

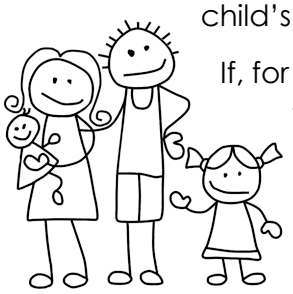
Follow us on Instagram

Follow us on facebook

# Family Involvement

Bright Start Preschool has an Open Door Policy and actively seeks and encourages families to be involved in Bright Start Preschool. This can range from evaluating and adding input to your child's program and observations, volunteering within Bright Start Preschool and sharing skills & experiences that the children and the program will benefit from and providing feedback.

You can be involved in Bright Start Preschool's Family Committee. Your involvement can be as formal or active as you like as time permits. We respect that time is limited for most families and we ask that you inform us as to your preferred way of communication. We can arrange meetings with your child's Educator at a time that suits you throughout the year and offer email, SMS, Facebook, Newsletters, Day Book Journals and pride ourselves on strong verbal communication on a daily basis. We seek input from families on all aspects of preschool but in particular, your child's goals, observations and program.



If, for any reason you question or do not understand any aspect of preschool or your child's experience we have a Dealing with Complaints Policy that supports all stakeholders in our community and like all policies, is available for families to consult and implement at any time. Copies of our policies are available in each room, the office and parent library. You are welcome to take a copy home and review at your leisure.

# Family Skills, Interests and Talents

We welcome and encourage the involvement of all parents/families at Bright Start Preschool. Your ideas, experiences and skills are greatly valued and will enable us to extend each child's interests, abilities and knowledge. There are many ways for your family to be involved. We understand that our busy lives can't always afford the time, however any contribution no matter how big or small is much appreciated. Here are just a few ideas.

### YOUR OCCUPATION OR HOBBY

You are the most important person in your child's world. We welcome all parents to preschool to talk about their occupation or hobby (e.g. music, craft, cooking). Everything parents do

interest children and these talks are the best educational resources you can provide for preschool.

We use information that has come from discussions about occupations and hobbies in our program and the ideas explored which can turn into interest projects providing valuable learning.

**YOUR HOME CULTURE**

Your home culture is most welcome in Bright Start Preschool. We would greatly appreciate if you were able to share with Bright Start Preschool aspects of your culture and family life. This would assist us to enrich the lives of all our families and children.

**READING**

Children love to be read to. If you or child's grandparent/s have the time please contact your room Educators to organise a day for reading. We love grandparents visiting Bright Start Preschool!

**RECYCLABLE ITEMS**

We are always on the lookout for recyclable items for the rooms. Empty food containers, ribbons, wrapping paper, towel tubes (not toilet or egg or milk because of hygiene and allergy issues) paper or anything interesting from your work is much appreciated.

**SPECIAL EVENTS**

Bright Start Preschool organises special events throughout the year. We will communicate these to families in a timely manner. We encourage parent input in all aspects of these events. Some of these include fundraising, celebrations and information sessions.

**DINNER NIGHTS**

There is no better way to meet new friends. We will be having informal dinner nights at Bright Start Preschool after close time for you to meet the other families. These evenings are held at different times during the year.

**FAMILY PHOTOS**

We have a *Family Wall* in each of our rooms. This is a strong and valuable tool in our environment for your child to connect to, feel that they and their family are valued and that their family is as much a part of Bright Start Preschool, even if they are not always there. If you would like to bring in a photo, or a couple of photos that represent your family, we would love to add it to our wall.

**CONCERTS AND SPECIAL EVENTS**

Bright Start Preschool organises special events throughout the year. Keep an eye out, as your child is sure to be a star!

**COMMUNITY INFORMATION**

We have a community notice board at the entry to Bright Start Preschool. This board, in conjunction with community posts on OWNA, is used to display relevant programs, menus, notices, updates and reminders for children and families. Please ensure you check this on a regular basis.

Our staff can also provide information for families about a range of topics including early intervention; supported playgroups; Child Care Subsidy; Aboriginal Child and Family centres; health clinics.

**SUGGESTIONS**

Parents/guardians are welcome to visit or call Bright Start Preschool at any time. If you have any suggestions or ideas on how we best can work together in Bright Start Preschool, please let us know. If you have any concerns, please see your child's educator or the Nominated Supervisor. We have a grievance/complaints procedure if you would like to formally raise any concerns.

# Health and Safety

## Child Protection and Safety

Bright Start Preschool is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children is maintained at all times whilst being educated and cared for by educators and staff at Bright Start Preschool. We promote a child safe environment that minimises the risk to all children in our care from all types of abuse, harm and neglect. We understand our responsibilities and statutory duty of care to adopt and comply with the National Principles of Child Safe Organisations and the Reportable Conduct Scheme to build our capacity as an organisation to prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse.

Our staff carry out their responsibilities as mandatory reporters as required by law under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection Act 1998) and maintain up to date with knowledge of child protection law and child protection training.

Our staff are recruited through an extensive screening process to ensure they display the right personal qualities and experiences to provide high quality supervision and care to child in addition to holding a validated Working With Children Check.

We have a zero tolerance for inappropriate behaviour towards children and any breach of child protection law. Any allegation or concern will be responded to promptly by management. We request that you contact our Nominated Supervisor if you have any concerns

We aim to ensure Bright Start is tobacco, vape, drug and alcohol-free environment at all times in accordance with Education and Care National Law and Regulations. Smoking or vaping is not permitted in or on surrounding areas of the Service by educators, staff, parents or visitors.

Bright Start adopts and aligns with the National Model Code and guidelines for taking images or videos of children. (See *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy* and *Photographs/social media/promotion* section).

# Health and Hygiene

Bright Start Preschool has effective and systematic risk management systems in place to identify any possible risk of hazards to our learning environment and practices.

Strategies are outlined in our COVIDSafe Plan. We strictly adhere to Public Health Orders and recommendations to reduce the risk of transmission of the virus. This includes all adults wearing a face mask whilst indoors.

All staff diligently practice and model personal hygiene measures such as hand washing, cough and sneeze etiquette and disposal of tissues. We request that all children and visitors to Bright Start Preschool wash their hands or use the alcohol-based hand sanitiser upon arrival.

Our educators teach and model correct hand washing techniques to children and regularly clean and disinfect high touch objects throughout Bright Start Preschool to reduce the spread of infection.

# Illness

Please monitor your child's health and do not bring your child to Bright Start if they are suffering from an infectious disease/illness or are generally unwell.

To minimise the spread of infections and diseases, and maintain a healthy environment for all children, educators and staff, we implement recommendations developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)- *Staying healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services, 6th Edition.* Our policies and procedures for *Dealing with Infectious Diseases* is available for all families to view.

Bright Start is a busy and demanding place for the bodies and minds of our children. We are not equipped to care for sick children; however, we will do everything we can to comfort a child who has become sick whilst in our care.

If your child becomes ill whilst at Bright Start, we will contact you or an authorised nominee to collect your child within a 30-minute time frame where possible. If your child is unable to be collected, educators will contact the child's emergency contact for collection. When your child is collected, you will be provided with an *Injury, Incident, Trauma and Illness Record* completed by the educator, which includes information about your child's illness, their symptoms, general behaviour and any action taken. You will be requested to sign and acknowledge the details in this record.

Children who are on antibiotics are to be kept away from Bright Start for the first 24 hours to allow the child to rest and the risk of spreading the infection to decrease. If your child has been had diarrhoea and/or vomiting, they will be excluded until there has not been any diarrhoea or vomiting for at least 24 hours. For certain illnesses, a medical clearance certificate may be required before your child returns.

To try and prevent the spread of disease, please monitor your child's health and watch for:

- A runny, green nose
- High temperature
- Diarrhoea
- Red, swollen or discharging eyes
- Vomiting
- Rashes
- Irritability, unusually tired or lethargic

# Infectious Diseases

National Health and Medical Research Council have supplied the following information regarding: Exclusion from preschool of a child suffering with the following diseases/ailments. Please inform staff if your child has any of the following infectious diseases so that we can let families and Health Department know of any infectious disease/illness and avoid an epidemic. (Confidentiality is always maintained).

***If your child is unimmunised according to our records, then they will be excluded until the threat has passed and upon advice of the Public Health Unit***

# Exclusion for common or concerning conditions



**These are 20 of the more common or concerning conditions seen in care services. For the full list of exclusion based on conditions, see the *Staying Healthy* guidelines.**

| CONDITION | EXCLUSION OF DIAGNOSED PERSON |
|---|---|
| **Chickenpox (varicella)** | Exclude until all blisters have dried – this is usually at least 5 days after the rash first appeared in non-immunised children, and less in vaccinated children<br>See the guidelines for contact exclusions |
| **Conjunctivitis or eye discharge** | Exclude until discharge from the eyes has stopped (unless a doctor has diagnosed non-infectious conjunctivitis) |
| **Ear infection** | Not excluded unless they also have concerning symptoms (fever, rash, tiredness, pain, poor feeding) |
| **Fever** | Exclude until the temperature remains normal, unless the fever has a known non-infectious cause<br>If the child has gone home from the service with a fever but their temperature is normal the next morning, they can return to the service<br>If the child wakes in the morning with a fever, they should stay home until their temperature remains normal<br>If a doctor later diagnoses the cause of the child's fever, follow the exclusion guidance for that disease |
| **Gastroenteritis ('gastro')**<br>• *Campylobacter* infection<br>• Cryptosporidiosis<br>• Giardia infection (giardiasis)<br>• Rotavirus infection<br>• *Salmonella* infection (salmonellosis)<br>• *Shigella* infection (shigellosis) | Exclude until there has not been any diarrhoea or vomiting for at least 24 hours<br>Staff members with these symptoms should not handle food until they have not vomited or had diarrhoea for at least 48 hours (they can be assigned to other duties after at least 24 hours, or stay away from the service for at least 48 hours)<br>Check if your state or territory has different requirements for gastroenteritis |
| • Norovirus infection | Exclude until there has not been any diarrhoea or vomiting for at least 48 hours |
| **Hand, foot and mouth disease** | Exclude until all blisters have dried |
| **Head lice** | Not excluded, as long as effective treatment begins before the next attendance at the service<br>The child does not need to be sent home immediately if head lice are detected |
| **Hib (*Haemophilus influenzae* type b)** | Exclude until the person has received treatment for at least 4 days |
| **Measles** | Exclude for at least 4 days after the rash appeared<br>See the guidelines for contact exclusions |
| **Meningitis (viral)** | Exclude until person is well |
| **Meningococcal infection** | Exclude until the person has completed antibiotic treatment |
| **Mumps** | Exclude for at least 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner) |
| **Pneumococcal disease** | Exclude until person has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and feels well |
| **Rash** | Not excluded unless combined with other concerning symptoms (fever, tiredness, pain, poor feeding) |
| **Respiratory conditions and infections**<br>• Bronchitis and bronchiolitis<br>• Common cold<br>• COVID-19 (also refer to state or territory advice)<br>• Croup<br>• Flu (influenza)<br>• Human metapneumovirus<br>• Pneumonia<br>• RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) | If a person has respiratory symptoms (cough, sneezing, runny or blocked nose, sore throat), exclude them only if:<br>• the respiratory symptoms are severe, **or**<br>• the respiratory symptoms are getting worse (more frequent or severe), **or**<br>• they also have concerning symptoms (fever, rash, tiredness, pain, poor feeding)<br>Otherwise do not exclude.<br>A person can often have an ongoing cough after they have recovered from a respiratory infection.<br>If their other symptoms have gone and they are feeling well, they can return to the service |
| **Shingles (zoster infection)** | Exclude children until blisters have dried and crusted<br>Adults who can cover the blisters are not excluded (they are excluded if blisters cannot be covered)<br>See the guidelines for contact exclusions |
| **Skin-related infections**<br>• Cold sores (herpes simplex) | Not excluded if the person can maintain hygiene practices to minimise the risk of transmission<br>If the person cannot maintain these practices (for example, because they are too young), exclude until the sores are dry<br>Cover sores with a dressing, if possible |
| • Fungal infections of the skin or scalp (ringworm, tinea, athlete's foot)<br>• Impetigo (school sores)<br>• Scabies and other mites causing skin disease | Exclude until the day after starting treatment<br>For impetigo, cover any sores on exposed skin with a watertight dressing |
| • Warts | Not excluded |
| **Strep throat** | Exclude until the person has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours and feels well |
| **Whooping cough (pertussis)** | Exclude until at least 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment, or for at least 21 days from the onset of coughing if the person does not receive antibiotics<br>See the guidelines for contact exclusions |
| **Worms** | Not excluded |

# Immunisation

The Public Health Act 2010 (NSW) requires all families to provide an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) for their child prior to enrolment in an early childhood education and care service. The immunisation history statement must show that each enrolled child is up to date with immunisations for their age.

The relevant vaccinations are those under the National Immunisation Program (NIP), which covers the vaccines usually administered before age five. These vaccinations must be recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR).

The only unimmunised children who can be enrolled in child care (after 1 January 2018) are those who are on a recognised catch-up schedule or those who are unimmunised due to medical reasons as described in the Australian Immunisation Handbook. Parents must provide an AIR Immunisation History Form or an AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form upon enrolment.

In the case of an outbreak of any vaccine preventable disease, management will contact families as soon as possible. We ask that families immediately inform Bright Start Preschool if someone in their family is diagnosed with an infectious disease to help minimise the risk to other children, families and educators. If your child is not fully immunised and an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease occurs at Bright Start, your child will be considered as not being immunised and will not be able to attend Bright Start.

We are legally required to notify the Public Health Unit of any cases of vaccine preventable diseases occurring at Bright Start Preschool.

## National Immunisation Schedule (Childhood)

| Age | Diseases |
|---|---|
| **Birth** | Hepatitis B (usually offered in hospital) |
| **2 months** (can be given from 6 weeks of age) | Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, hepatitis B, polio, *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib)<br>Rotavirus<br>Pneumococcal<br>Meningococcal B—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children |
| **4 months** | Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, hepatitis B, polio, *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib)<br>Rotavirus<br>Pneumococcal<br>Meningococcal B—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children |
| **6 months** | Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, hepatitis B, polio, *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib)<br>Pneumococcal—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children |
| **6 months to under 5 years** | Influenza (annually) |
| **12 months** | Meningococcal ACWY<br>Measles, mumps, rubella<br>Pneumococcal<br>Meningococcal B—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children |
| **18 months** | *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib)<br>Measles, mumps, rubella, chickenpox<br>Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough<br>Hepatitis A—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in WA, NT, SA and Qld |
| **4 years** | Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio<br>Hepatitis A—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in WA, NT, SA and Qld |

Children with certain medical conditions are eligible for additional vaccines for free such as pneumococcal and meningococcal. Speak to your vaccination provider to see if your child requires additional vaccines. All information is correct as at September 2025.

# Medication



If your child requires medication whilst at Bright Start Preschool, you must complete an *Administration of Medication Record* to give your consent for an educator to administer prescribed medication to your child. Medication must be given to directly to an educator for appropriate safe storage.

Educators can only administer medication that is:

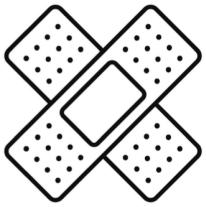
- prescribed by a registered medical practitioner (with instructions attached to the medication or in written form from the medical practitioner)
- in its original packaging and have the original label clearly showing your child's name
- before the expiry/use by date.

Any child's prescribed medication such as asthma inhalers, adrenaline auto injectors (EpiPen) or Insulin (for diabetes), must accompany the child each day to our Service or parents ensure our Service has adequate supplies of the required medication at all times.

Upon collection of your child at the end of the day, you or an authorised person will be requested to sign the *Administration of Medication Form*.

Educators cannot administer non-prescription drugs or dietary supplements unless a doctor provides preschool with written authorisation.

# Incidents, Injury or Trauma



We aim to minimise the risk of accidents and injury as much as possible however, through play, exploration and adventure, children sometimes have accidents. We always have an educator with a First Aid, emergency asthma, anaphylaxis management and CPR qualification on shift at all times we provide education and care to children. First Aid kits are located throughout Bright Start Preschool.

Paresnts or authorised nominees will be notified of all occurances or alleged occurences of incidents, injuries, trauma or illnesses, and asked to acknowledge and sign an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record within 24 hours. In the event of a minor injury, first aid will be provided as required. If your child injures their head, even if it is a small bump, you will be contacted by phone to advise you of the injury. Our educators will continue to monitor your child closely and advise if you should come and collect them, if emergency medical treatment is required following a head injury, eductors will contact emergency services.

If an injury or incident is serious and we believe urgent medical attention is required, the Nominated Supervisor or Responsible Person will contact an ambulance immediately. We will attempt to contact a parent or guardian or an authorised nominee to advise of the situation. If you are unable to meet the ambulance at the Service, we will send one of our educators/staff members to accompany your child in the ambulance. Please note that the cost of Ambulance cover is the responsibility of each family.

An *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record* will be completed, and a parent will be required to acknowledge and sign this record within 24 hours. A copy of any documentation from the hospital or treating doctor will also be requested. Bright Start Preschool will also be required to notify the Regulatory Authority in the event of any serious incident or injury. In these circumstances, you may be contacted by our Approved Provider and the Regulatory Authority to follow up the incident and actions taken by Bright Start Preschool.

# Sun Protection



Bright Start Preschool workds with the National SunSmart Early Childhood Program to ensure children's health and dafety is maintained at all times. implements a combination of sun protection measures to ensure the health and safety of your child at all times. We use a combination of sun protection measures whenever the UV Index Levels are predicted to reach 3 or above. We monitor the UV index levels daily and schedule outdoor activities when levels are safe. Our outdoor environment provides shade for play experiences and we conduct regular risk assessments to ensure the play space and equipment is safe for children.

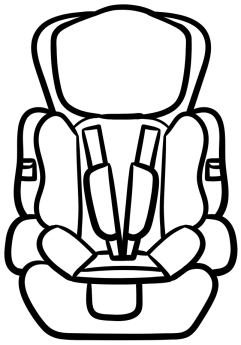
Children and educators must wear hats and appropriate clothing, including footwear when outside. Educators will encourage children, including by way of modelling behaviour, to avoid excessive exposure to the sun and to wear suitable sunscreen (at least SPF 50+ or higher broad spectrum water resistant), which is reapplied according to the manufacturer's recommendations. We ask that children come to Bright Start Preschool with sunscreen already applied so they are able to participate in outdoor play immediately and not have to wait the 20 minutes after application. Consent to apply sunscreen is included in our enrolment form.

# Emergency and Evacuation Procedures

Bright Start Preschool conducts risk assessments regularly and develops emergency management plans for a range of possible hazards. Throughout the year we follow our policies and procedures to carry out emergency and evacuation rehersals. These may occur at any given time throughout the day and week to ensure all children know what to do in case of an emergency. Emergency and evacuation rehersals are carried out in a well-organised and orderly manner and will simulate a range of possible emergency situations such as fire (bush fire), lock down or flood. Under regulations, we are required to practice emergency and evacuation drills every three months.
Parent/Guardian authroisation will be obtained for emergency evacuation rehersals which require children to leave Bright Start premises to our secondary evacuation point.

Educators are trained to use the fire safety equipment located within Bright Start Preschool. An emergency evacuation plan and lock down procedure are displayed in every room and exit locations are clearly indicated. Educators will follow the instuctions of emergency services and the regulatory authority in times of emergencies.

# Using Bright Start Preschool Safely



Early childhood education and care services are busy places especially during the morning drop off and afternoon pickup. We ask that parents be extremely mindful of danger when arriving and departing from Bright Start Preschool.

- Please always hold your child's hand in the carpark area
- Be alert of reversing drivers in the car park as it is very difficult to see small children
- When travelling in a car, all children must be secured in an approved car seat at all times.
- Use the kerbside, rear passenger door when getting your child into and out of their restraint
- Never leave a child or infant in the car unattended
- Never leave the front entry door/gate open
- Always do a visual check around your vehicle before driving
- Please ensure children do not enter areas in Bright Start Preschool that are for adults/staff only.



# Workplace Health and Safety Feedback

We are committed in providing an environment that is safe and healthy for every employee, volunteer, child, family and visitor. We have made every reasonable effort to minimise the risk of serious injury and request all persons to Bright Start Preschool to adhere to our policies regarding Workplace Health and Safety.

Each morning, our educators conduct daily safety checks of the indoor and outdoor environment and will alert management of any potential risk or hazard to children to ensure this is rectified before children use the equipment or area.

We welcome all feedback regarding the safety of Bright Start Preschool. If you see something that concerns you regarding safe work practices, the safety of building and equipment or general work health and safety issues, please contact the Nominated Supervisor immediately.

# Conclusion

We guarantee your child will have a happy, safe and secure relationship with Bright Start Preschool and our Educators and that the time he or she is in our care will be positive and fulfilling.

# Important Contacts and Information for Families




Bright Start Preschool regularly provides families with current information on child and family resources and preschools accessible in the local community.

Bright Start Preschool has a parent library with resources you may find helpful.

## School Information

### Department of Education
NSW Public School and Enrolment Information

### Catholic Schools NSW
NSW Catholic School and Enrolment Information

### Transition to School
Central Coast Transition to School Support

### Schools as Community Centres
Child and Family Assistance

## Health, Safety and Parenting Information

### Breastfeeding Australia

### Tresillian
1800 637 357

### Red Nose
Safe Sleep Information and Bereavement Support

### CC Child and Family Health Clinics
Long Jetty – 0243367800

### Health Direct GP After Hours Help Line
1800 022 222

### Health Point Mingara
02 43 140 400

### Gosford Hospital Audiology
02 43 203 121

### RTC Speech Pathology
02 43 884 765

### The Sydney Childrens Hospitals Network Factsheets
Health and Safety Information

### Kid Safe Australia
Safety Information for Children, Families and Homes

### Kids and Traffic
Road Safety Information and Support

### Raising Children
Health, Development and Parenting Information

### Nutrition Australia
Nutrition and Dietary Information

### Australian Dental Association
Promotion And Support of Dental Health and Practices

### Bravehearts
Dedicated To the Prevention and Treatment of Child Sexual Abuse 1800 272 831

### Munch and Move
Promoting Physical Activity, Healthy Eating and Reduced Screen Time

## Our Community Partnerships

### Shoe Box
Packages for the Homeless

### Cartridges for Ark
Recycling Printer Ink Cartridges

### Bread Tags for Wheelchairs
Recycling Bread Tags

### Nappy Collective
Nappy Donations and Distribution For Those Who Need Help

*All websites and links correct as of November 2025*