



Wilsons Creek

COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL

PARENT INFORMATION GUIDE



Wilsons Creek Community Preschool has been operating at the local community hall for over 20 years. It is an historic timber hall, nestled in a beautiful rainforest setting, surrounded by creeks, national parks, and wildlife. We value this unique physical environment and have strong links with community and are valued by community as a resource.

We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land and are aware we are in Bunjalung country and this will be reflected in our Preschool.

We are licensed to have 20 children, aged 3-6 years, per day. We remain together as one group throughout the day, with set outdoor and indoor time. We have a compulsory 3-day enrolment to match the Government recommendations of 15hrs per week.

Contact

Wilsons Creek Community Preschool, Wilsons Creek Road, Wilsons Creek
(Located right next door to Wilsons Creek Primary School in the Community Hall)
Phone: 02 6684 0013 Email: wilsonscreekpreschool252@gmail.com

Days and hours of operations

Our Preschool operates Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday only, 9:15am-3:15pm. We follow term dates according to the NSW school terms. The Preschool is closed over school holidays. Families must enrol their child for three days.

Our Philosophy

The philosophy behind everything we do in our program is based on the following areas:

- › Children, families, friends, community and qualified staff are all considered vital components in our preschool, in order for individual children to reach their full potential;
- › We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land and are aware we are in Bundjalung country;
- › Our service is constantly evolving and developing within the community and our commitment is to high quality care and education;
- › We provide opportunities to explore through play and see play as the way in which children learn, develop and grow;
- › We value all children and their families by providing an inclusive, anti-bias environment, which is welcoming, inviting, safe and creative. We celebrate diversity and value our multicultural society and promote a positive world view;
- › We acknowledge and respect parents/guardians as the principal caregivers of their children. We actively encourage parent participation and involvement in preschool life wherever possible;
- › We aim to develop a partnership with families and give support to all the diverse family backgrounds that exist; and
- › We are an environmentally-conscious preschool who encourage and educate on sustainable practices.

Our aim is to encourage in each child:

- › Confidence and curiosity;
- › Interest in the world around them and indigenous cultures;
- › Growth in all areas of development;
- › Respect for themselves, others and the environment, through an atmosphere of warmth and security that nurtures independence and identity;
- › A sense of responsibility for their actions and behaviour;
- › Communication with those around them; and
- › Building partnerships and positive interactions between family members, peers, educators and the community.

Our team embodies a culture of co-operation, caring and teamwork.

- › All educators have early childhood training and qualifications.
- › Staff have made a commitment to support the values, philosophy and practices of the centre.
- › Staff are committed to providing ongoing commitment to training and development.
- › Administrator in office one day per week (Mondays).



Daily routine

The following routine runs throughout Terms 1 and 4. During Terms 2 & 3, the time for indoor and outdoor activities are swapped to conform with our *Sun Protection Policy*.

9:05am	Collect children from both town and valley buses
9:15am	Children commence arrival
	Outdoor play activities
10:30am	Pack away, followed by Story/Language group time
11:00am	Wash hands, morning tea
11:20am	Indoor play activities
12:45pm	Pack away, followed by Music group time
1:15pm	Wash hands, lunch time
1:40pm-2:10pm	Quiet activities: books, puzzles, drawing
2:15pm-2:45pm	Rest time
2:45pm	Outdoor or verandah activities
3:15pm	Home time



Signing in and out

Signing your child in and out is a part of the regulatory and funding obligation. For safety and legal reasons, the person who brings and collects children must sign them in and out of the centre. This is especially important in an emergency situation. The sign-in sheet is found in the front entrance on the table near the lockers.

If you, or the person you authorised on enrolment, are unable to collect your child, you must inform staff in writing, in person or by telephone, of the name of the person who will be collecting your child. Alternatively, use the comment column on the sign-in sheet to communicate a change to the usual routine. The person you authorise to collect your child will be asked by staff to show identification. Under no circumstances will a child be allowed to leave with an unauthorised person.

Visitors are also required to sign in and out at the sign-in sheet on the entry table. The purpose of their visit is to be placed in the comments column. This excludes parents dropping off or picking up children.

Morning bus service

Our local Mullumbimby bus company offers an opportunity for preschool children to use their primary school bus service, mornings only, from town and Upper Wilsons Creek to preschool. There is a small bus fee that must be paid to the driver. Staff will meet children off the bus on their arrival and walk them into Preschool. Signed authorisation from parents is required in the enrolment process, to allow staff to sign your child in on arrival from the bus.

What to bring

- A suitable size case or bag to hold belongings.
- A hat must be provided and this will remain at preschool for the duration of your child's enrolment. These hats are stored in the children's lockers, which we close at the end of each day, and will be washed when necessary or each term. Wearing hats supports our *Sun Protection Policy*.

Clothing

- Please send your child to Preschool in practical clothing as well as a full set of spare clothes in their bag. Remember messy play is common at preschool and in this age group toileting skills are still developing. We often require the spare clothing provided. The children are encouraged to undress and dress themselves independently or are guided as needed.
- In winter the temperature can drop quite quickly in the valley and we are often a little cooler than Mullumbimby. Please send appropriate clothing and suitable footwear, slippers in winter.
- Please mark your child's name on their belongings.



Morning tea and lunch

- At Wilsons Creek Community Preschool we aim to encourage sound nutrition practices which when started early may lay a solid foundation for life. For this reason we would like you to pay particular attention to providing a nutritious morning tea and lunch for your child. We believe that encouraging good nutrition now, sets patterns for healthy eating later in life.
- Please pack foods in containers and lunch boxes that are labelled with their name.
- On arrival, the children are asked to take their lunch boxes to the fridge. After lunch, if their box is empty they take it back to their locker or, if food remains in the box, they place it back in the fridge.
- A microwave is available if heating food is required and leftovers often make a great lunch.
- We supply filtered drinking water that children can independently access at any time. If children wish to bring a water bottle from home, please label it with their name.
- Inappropriate foods will be left in the lunch box and saved for home time, eg: chips chocolates and lollies. Please be aware that some products may appear to be healthy but are actually high in sugar, salt and fat.

Food snack

If children are hungry before morning tea or lunch, they may choose one item from their lunch box.

Educational program

The program will be linked to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). One fundamental view of the EYLF is that all children experience:

- **BELONGING:** This is about children knowing where and with whom they belong, First with families but also friends, neighbours, community, and culture, plus interdependence with others and relationships.
- **BEING:** Childhood is the time to be, to seek and make meaning of the world, immersion in the here and now of relationships, interests, and day-to-day happenings.
- **BECOMING:** Is about changing, learning, growing, the many different events and circumstances that shape us towards participating fully and actively in society.

Observations

Observations play an important role in our preschool. They provide us with windows into how the children spend their day at the preschool and reflect their strengths and interests, growth, development and relationships; a vital part in assisting with our planning and programming. Records of the children will be formulated using these observations and are available to families.

The program for the week is based on individual children's strengths and interests. Our program takes into account all areas of children's development – physical, social, emotional, language, and intellectual, as well as their family, community and cultural background.

We have documentation kept on the children and the program provided. You are welcome to look at this at any time.



Program wall

If you want to see the weekly program you can find it in the kitchen, displayed on the notice board, known as the program wall and shelf.

Sustainable practices

We are an environmentally-conscious preschool, showing awareness and respect. Sustainable practices are imbedded in our program. For example, we recycle, make compost, grow food and are water wise.

Orientation and enrolment

We provide an orientation process for new children and their families to familiarise them with the daily routine and activities

- It is recommended that the child, together with one or two parents, has a few short visits (preferably at different times of the day) before beginning.
- Parents will be encouraged to stay as long as they feel necessary in order to reassure their child.
- Staff will greet all children on arrival and encourage them to independently put bags in lockers and take their own lunch to the fridge. We then encourage them to involve themselves in an activity of their interest.
- Parents are encouraged not to just leave a child. They must say goodbye to the child on departure and tell them that they will return. Slipping away unnoticed makes it difficult for the child to build trust.
- Parents may telephone at any time during the day to reassure themselves that their child has settled.
- Staff will support and comfort children if necessary when saying goodbye to parents.
- The daily timetable and program will be discussed with the child so the child knows what to expect.
- We provide children with their own hand towel and sheet for rest time. A name card and photo of your child will be displayed to help build their sense of belonging.

Records to be supplied by families on enrolment

All sections of the enrolment form are to be completed before returning it to the Preschool. In addition, parents must supply:

- Copy of child's birth certificate
- Copy of immunisation status. Either the up-to-date immunisation schedule or your Conscientious Objection Form from a medical practitioner.
- Copy of Health Care card (if applicable)

Lockers

Each child is given a locker to keep all belongings in. We encourage children to be independent and take their belongings to the lockers, it also helps prevent lost items at the end of the day. Please encourage your child to use their lockers and keep their belongings in them.





Birthdays

We love to share these special days with children and their families. We usually celebrate by making a cake with the children, although families are welcome to send a cake from home. We share it together with a song in the afternoon after rest time. Of course families may join us in this special celebration.

Yoga

Yoga for children occurs once a term throughout the year (days vary). The yoga session is presented by Joanna Gardener, a qualified early childhood teacher and yoga instructor. She delivers an imaginative, positive experience, utilising creative story-telling to introduce the poses which are both active and passive. The session ends with an offering and relaxation. There is an additional fee for participation in yoga.

School transition

Due to our close proximity to the Wilsons Creek Public School, just next door, we have created a great relationship with the school community. Walks to school and visits from teachers and students, provide us with some fantastic school transition activities. School transition is a part of our preschool program, helping children to have a smooth, positive process into the school world, regardless of which school families choose for their child to attend.

Lost Property

All lost property will be placed in the orange Lost Property Box in the front entrance near the children's lockers.

What is a Community Preschool?

A non-profit community-based service, which is managed by a Parent Management Committee.

Management Committee

The Management Committee is involved in making decisions in conjunction with the Director or Nominated Supervisor on a range of issues from staffing, purchasing resources, dealing with government departments, undertaking fundraisers and ensuring the smooth running of the Preschool.

WCCP is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act. WCCP is licensed by Dept of Family and Community Services and supervised by the Children's Services Officer from Community Services ensuring that all licensing requirements and standards are met.

Parent meetings

Your input would be valued at these meetings, helping create links between home and preschool. They are held at the Preschool from 3:30pm. Parents and community members are always welcome to join our parent meetings, and the children are invited to stay on. Families are notified of upcoming meetings through parent communications.

Partnership with families and community

The staff team fosters friendly, supportive relationships between one another, parents and children. Staff actively encourage and support parent participation within the program. Your involvement in activities is greatly enjoyed by the children and valued by the staff. Reading a story in your first language or joining in a game or craft activity are examples of some of the ways you can participate. We all benefit from your active participation and suggestions. You are encouraged to discuss your child's progress or any concerns with staff on a regular basis.

Open door policy

Our centre is open at all times for families to drop in; you don't need to ring and tell us you are coming. You are welcome at any time to participate in our programs. Never feel there is a question you can't ask. Our centre is proud of the care we provide.

Parent communications

- Special Interests & Events Book: this can be found on the front desk next to the sign-in sheet, containing details and photos of all the activity of the week, including birthday celebrations, visits, and special projects.
- Notice boards: above the sign-in table at the entry, the noticeboard conveys preschool information and community notices. The noticeboard in the kitchen specifically relates to the educational program.

- Newsletters: regular newsletters will be sent home to inform families about what is happening with the care and education of your children.
- Parent pockets: each family will have their own pocket labeled with their child's name. These are located hanging in the front verandah entry, near the lockers. Please check these pockets regularly as important notes and documents are distributed this way, such as invoices, receipts, newsletters and permission notes.
- Suggestion box: we very much value family input into the operating of our preschool. We have provided a parent suggestion box on the sign in table where you may place an anonymous comment or suggestion if need be.



Remember though, you may talk to staff at any time regarding your child or any part of our daily routine.

Working bee

Twice a year, the preschool and the hall committee come together in a working bee, usually during school holidays. This is to clean and maintain the premises, grounds and equipment. This kind of support is crucial for a community-based service who rely on families and community members to help keep the preschool running smoothly and safely.

Complaints and feedback

Our service values the feedback of educators, staff, families and the wider community in helping to create a service that meets regulation and the needs of enrolled children and their families. We encourage open communication through opportunities to respond and feedback on the program.

A component of this feedback is the ability to put forward a complaint and have this managed appropriately with due consideration for accountability and quality improvement. For further details on this procedure, please refer to our *Complaints and Feedback Policy*, available on request.

Continuous improvement of our service occurs where there is reflection and constructive feedback given from the community, which results in positive change and improvement.

National Quality Framework

We strongly support the National Quality Framework and thus the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia and refer to it on a regular basis. The goal of the NQF is to help families and centres improve the quality of education and care for children. National Quality Standards give guidelines towards achieving the highest quality. This process is underpinned by seven Quality Areas, each of which defines a particular aspect of the service.

The seven Quality Areas are:

1. Education Programme and Practice
2. Children's Health and Safety
3. Physical Environment
4. Staffing Arrangements
5. Relationships with Children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Leadership and Service Management

Staff encourages all families to be involved throughout the process of self-assessment, improvement and maintenance of quality practices. Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 is available to access at any time.

Parent survey

Once each year, in order to self assess the quality of our preschool in the above seven areas, we ask families to fill out and return a parent survey. Parent feedback is crucial in operating a high quality preschool. Therefore we would greatly value family involvement in our survey.



Policies and Procedures

The following Preschool policies and procedures are available for you to view at any time. Families are invited to review any policy or procedure and to help keep them updated. These may be accessed by asking staff for the policy folder.

1. Education Programme and Practice

- Behaviour Management
- Transition to School

2. Children's Health and Safety

- Arrival and Departure
- Bushfire
- Child Protection
- Cleaning and Maintaining the Environment
- Emergency and Evacuation
- Emergency Communication
- Excursions
- First Aid
- Flood
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Infectious Diseases
- Infectious Disease Notification and Exclusion Periods
- Medical Conditions
 - Asthma Management
 - Anaphylaxis Management
 - Diabetes Management
- Medication Administration
- Nutrition/Food/Beverages/Dietary Requirements
- Power Failure
- Providing a Child Safe Environment and Emergency Risk Assessment
- Smoke-free Environment
- Snake Procedures
- Sun Protection
- Tick Procedures
- Water Safety



3. Physical Environment

- Environmental Sustainability
- The Indoor and Outdoor Environment

4. Staffing Arrangements

- Determining Responsible Person
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Volunteers and Students

5. Relationships with Children

- Interactions with Children

6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

- Bus Travel
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Family Participation and Communication

7. Leadership and Service Management

- Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation
- Complaints and Feedback
- Confidentiality
- Fees and Payment
- Governance and Management of the Service

Fees

To enable our service to provide high quality early education and care for children we need to ensure we are financially viable at all times. Prompt payment of fees allows us to plan with certainty. We have a commitment to ensuring our fees are as affordable as possible. Our service will advocate with governments for all children's right to access early education and care regardless of their family's financial situation.

Fees payable

- › Fees and levies are invoiced for the Term and issued to families in the first weeks of each Term;
- › Invoiced fees and levies are payable in full by Week 5 of the Term;
- › A receipt will be issued for all fees paid which will include the child's full name, date of care, date of payment, etc, which complies with the government's child care assistance scheme.

Payment of fees

- › Fees may be paid by Cash, Direct Deposit, Direct Debit (ensuring fees are paid in full by Week 5 of each Term), or Cheque;
- › Should the unfortunate incidence of a dishonoured cheque occur, we regret that a charge of \$20 per cheque will be payable and families will be charged accordingly.

Overdue fees

- › Any family who is one or more weeks in arrears and who has not reached an agreement with the Administration Manager to make good such arrears, must make an appointment with the Administration Manager to discuss the situation immediately;
- › Fees which remain two or more weeks in arrears will attract a late fee of \$30, payable immediately;
- › Any family who is endeavouring to pay their arrears or late fees as per the agreed arrangement with the Administration Manager, will be required to pay for their child's attendance up front on the morning of each day of attendance;
- › Failure to meet the above Overdue Fees process will jeopardise the child's place at the preschool.

Withdrawal from Centre

- › Families will provide 2 weeks written notice of withdrawal from service. If child does not attend during this 2 week notice period full fees will be chargeable.

What happens in an emergency?

Incident, injury, trauma and illness

The Preschool will maintain communication with families to ensure they are informed of any incidents, injury, trauma and illness to their child/ren as required.

In the event of illness or incident, our Preschool staff will:

- Respond to children in a timely manner. Provide reassurance and ensure children's emotional and physical wellbeing is paramount at all times;
- Seek further medical attention for a child if required; and
- Respond to children showing signs of illness and monitoring the symptoms, recording as appropriate. The Preschool will contact the child's authorised person to inform them of the illness signs, or to request collection of the child.

Families are required to inform the Preschool of their child's particular requirements, and provide any relevant paperwork to the service, such as asthma plans from a medical professional, etc.

Infectious diseases

Ensuring the health and safety of children, and staff, and supporting children's ongoing wellbeing, is a core focus of the Preschool. Maintaining hygiene practices and teaching young children about health and hygiene assists in the prevention of infectious diseases.

Therefore, any child showing signs of a heavy cold or any other contagious illness which may affect the health of other children will not be permitted to attend Preschool. If a child is sick with a cold or temperature it is best that they have care and comfort in their home environment.

Exclusion is necessary for children suffering mumps, chicken pox, measles, conjunctivitis, whooping cough, etc, or temperature over 38 degrees. A complete list of exclusion periods is available upon request. A doctors' certificate must be produced before a child is allowed to return to preschool.

If a child becomes ill at preschool the parent/guardian will be asked to collect their child promptly. The Preschool will ensure that any child suspected of having an infectious illness is responded to and their health and emotional needs supported at all times. The child will be made as comfortable as possible in a quiet area until collection. Every effort will be made to monitor and attend to the child's needs.

In the event of an infectious disease, the Preschool will display an Infectious Disease Notification on the front noticeboard and inform parents of the exclusions and return to care for children who have been exposed to an infectious disease.



Wilsons Creek

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We are looking forward to a positive
time filled with care, growth,
development, education and building
a sense of belonging with children,
their families and community.

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