



Queanbeyan and District Preschool Association

Family Handbook 2026



Acknowledgement of Country

Queanbeyan & District Preschool Association acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land in which we play, live and learn, and guide the young leaders of tomorrow.

We recognise the traditional custodians connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to First Nations peoples and their culture, and to Elders past, present and emerging.

*Always was, Always will be,
Aboriginal Land.*

Welcome to QDPA

We are a community-based, not-for-profit organisation running four preschools in Queanbeyan, NSW:

- Harris Park Preschool (80 children per day)
- Waratah Preschool (25 children per day)
- Karabar Preschool (24 children per day)
- Mura Preschool (60 children per day)



Vision and Mission

Vision Statement: Our vision is to be a leading provider of inclusive and culturally responsive early childhood education that nurtures each child's potential, supports their learning journey, and empowers families and communities.

Mission Statement: At QDPA, we are dedicated to fostering inclusive, respectful, and supportive early learning environments that empower children and their families. We prioritise each child's unique strengths, cultural background, and developmental needs, while ensuring access to high-quality, affordable education. Through collaborative partnerships with families and the community, we aim to inspire a lifelong love of learning and promote social justice, respect, and sustainable practices in every aspect of our work. We strive to create environments where children feel safe, respected, and valued, fostering their development into confident, capable, and compassionate individuals. Through innovative programs and sustainable practices, we aim to shape a future where every child has access to high-quality education and opportunities to thrive.



Philosophy

At QDPA, we believe that every child is unique, capable, and deserving of high-quality early childhood education that respects their individual strengths, cultural identity, and developmental journey. We view children as active participants in their learning and empower them through play-based, experiential learning environments that nurture and cultivate a love of learning, curiosity, resilience, and sense of belonging.

We strongly believe children have the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to have their voices heard. We are dedicated to being strong advocates for children's rights, through the principles of the United Nations Rights of the Child and provide and support children with opportunities to develop relationships and engage with their peers, educators, families, and community, with the aim of building each child's confidence to communicate their thoughts and feelings.

We are committed to fostering strong partnerships with families and the broader community, recognising that collaboration is key to ensuring children thrive. Inclusion, equity, and respect for all forms of diversity guide our practices. We believe that education is a tool for promoting social justice and children's rights. We strive to create environments where every child feels safe, valued, and empowered to express themselves fully.

We hold high expectations for our educators to ensure they align with our values, beliefs, and this philosophy to provide the highest level of care and education for the children. We are committed to recruiting and retaining educators who demonstrate these skills, as well as investing in educators' growth through a vast range of professional development opportunities.

We strive to create learning environments that inspire children. As co-constructors alongside children, we aim to create nurturing and stimulating environments that encourage curiosity, foster creativity, and support the whole child. We embrace change and innovation, ensuring our programs are responsive to the evolving needs of children, families, and society.

We also believe that some of the best opportunities for learning are through exploring risks, allowing children to analyse their environments and challenge their own learning and development. We encourage children to play in all environments and weather and to experience the natural world in all its fundamental elements.

We value reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as being essential to our mission to raise awareness and educate future generations. We acknowledge and are grateful for the Ngunnawal and Ngambri Peoples' custodianship of the land on which we live, play, teach and learn. We acknowledge that everything we do is on Aboriginal land, and wish to build and maintain strong, meaningful relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.

Our Programs

HARRIS PARK KANGAROO ROOM	HARRIS PARK ECHIDNA ROOM	HARRIS PARK KOOKABURRA ROOM	HARRIS PARK KOALA ROOM	MURA YURUNG ROOM	MURA YURRH ROOM	MURA BURIN ROOM	KARABAR	WARATAH
WOMBATS Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 9.00-3.00	PLATYPUS Monday & Tuesday 8.30-4.00	DINGOS Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 8.45-2.45	GUMNUTS Monday & Tuesday 8.15-3.45	BROLGAS Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 8.30-2.30	PELICANS Monday & Tuesday 8.15-3.45	BILBIES Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 9.00-3.00	JOEYS Monday & Tuesday 8.15-3.45	SEAHORSES Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 8.45-2.45
EMUS Thursday & Friday 8.15-3.45	GECKOS Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 8.45-2.45	WALLABIES Thursday & Friday 8.30-4.00	WATTLE Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 9.00-3.00	LYREBIRDS Thursday & Friday 8.30-4.00	CYGNETS Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 8.45-2.45	NUMBATS Thursday & Friday 8.15-3.45	KOALAS Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 8.30-2.30	DOPHINS Thursday & Friday 8.30-4.00

- Once you receive an enrolment offer, you are able to select from one of the programs listed here, subject to availability
- Once you have accepted your enrolment, you are unable to change programs
- Your enrolment is not confirmed until the enrolment fee has been paid (see 'Preschool Fees')

Preschool Fees

- QDPA is a not-for-profit community organisation. We strive to keep our fees as low as possible to make preschool accessible to all families across our community.
- Fees are reviewed by the Management Committee at the end of each year for the following year. Our fees policy can be found in OWNA.
- Upon accepting a placement with QDPA, a \$160 enrolment levy is payable. This levy covers the costs of enrolment processing and funds excursions, maintenance contributions as well as the Association Membership fee. **The enrolment levy is not refundable.**
- Current daily fee is \$38 (\$13 for eligible equity families)
- NSW Affordable Preschool funding reduces or covers most fees - you must opt into this program which currently provides \$4347 off your preschool fees
- Fees are invoiced fortnightly via direct debit (where fees are payable).
- Late fees apply for late collection past the program end time
- Non-payment of fees and/or late fees, may result in termination of care in accordance with our fee policy.
- For fee assistance and hardship queries, contact admin@qdpa.com.au



Daily Checklist for Families

- Packed lunch (nut-free) to fuel for a busy preschool day
- Labelled water bottle
- Sun-safe hat (available for purchase)
- Weather-appropriate clothing and spare clothes
- Comfort item (if needed for rest)

Attendance

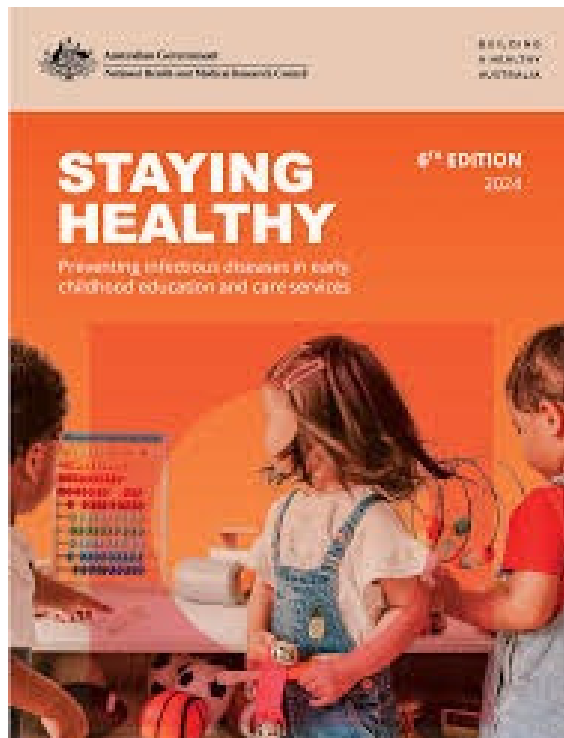
- Signing in/out is a legal requirement under National Law.
- Use the iPad at the entrance to electronically record attendance.
- Notify educators when you arrive and depart.
- Children will only be released to authorised contacts (with photo ID if unknown to staff).
- Persons under 16 cannot collect children.
- Absences can be marked on the app to notify the team your child won't be in.
- Absences are automatically marked if a child is more than 30 minutes late.

The OWNA App

OWNA is our platform for:

- Marking absences
- Viewing your child's learning stories, photos, and videos
- Receiving updates, newsletters, and notifications
- Signing digital forms (medication, incident reports, permissions)
- Families are strongly encouraged to download and regularly check OWNA.





Health & Illness

- Keep contact details updated for emergencies.
- Children must stay home for 24 hours after starting antibiotics or pain relief.
- We follow NSW Health exclusion periods to prevent the spread of illness.
- Illnesses and incidents are documented in OWINA for your records.
- You will be contacted to collect your child within 30 minutes if they become unwell.

Medication Policy

- Complete an online authorisation form via OWINA.
- Medication must be in original packaging with pharmacy label (if prescribed).
- Hand medication directly to staff – never leave it in bags.
- Pain relief (Panadol, Nurofen) is not administered at preschool.

Behaviour Guidance

- Children thrive when they feel safe, supported, and understand boundaries.
- Our approach focuses on positive guidance, redirection, and prevention rather than punishment.
- We maintain each child's dignity and encourage self-regulation.
- Educators use strategies tailored to individual needs, respecting family and cultural values.

High Learning Support Needs

We welcome children to enrol with additional learning or developmental needs. We:

- Collaborate with families to create individualised learning plans.
- Work with external professionals (speech therapists, occupational therapists, paediatricians).
- Provide referrals to support services when needed.
- Ensure our environment is inclusive, supportive, and adaptable (where possible).
- Seek additional funding where available to enhance support.
- Request you share any relevant reports or action plans during enrolment to help us support your child.

Diversity & Inclusion

At QDPA, we celebrate and respect the diversity of our community.

Our preschools welcome children and families of all backgrounds, cultures, and abilities.

We:

- Promote an anti-bias approach that encourages acceptance and respect.
- Support children in learning about different family structures and cultural traditions.
- Provide resources in families' first languages where possible.
- Encourage families to share cultural experiences, music, food, and stories.
- Actively embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in our programs through our Reconciliation Action Plans and partnerships with local Elders.

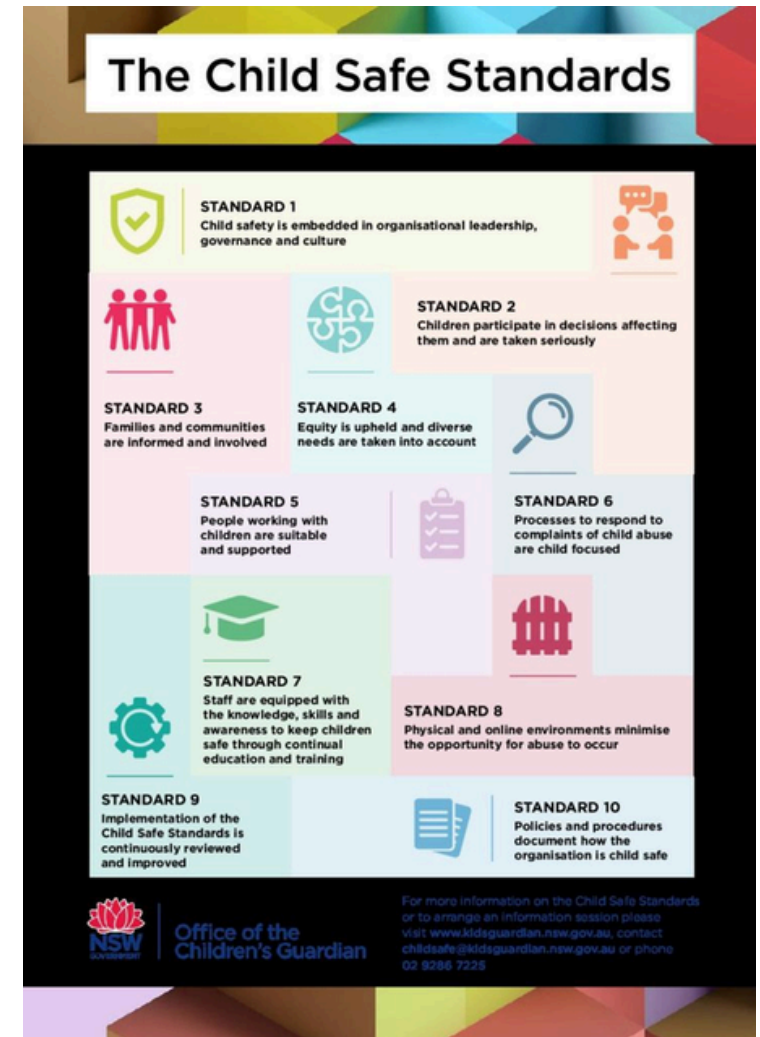
Child Safety

- All staff are mandatory reporters under NSW law.
- All staff have completed child protection training, and refresh this annually.
- We must report concerns if we suspect a child is at risk of harm, including neglect, abuse, or domestic violence.
- Reports are made to protect children and ensure they receive the help they need.
- We follow the NSW Child Safe Standards, embedding safety into our culture, policies, and practices.

Protecting **children** is

EVERYBODY'S

BUSINESS



Learning at QDPA

Our programs follow the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), focusing on:

- Identity
- Connection with the world
- Wellbeing
- Learning confidence
- Communication
- Children learn best through play – we encourage outdoor exploration in all weather.



Family Partnerships

We value two-way communication – ask questions anytime!
Families are encouraged to share cultural traditions and skills with children.

You can join our Parent Management Committee, assist with fundraising, or participate in our RAP Working Group.

Thank you for being part of our QDPA community!
Together, we create a safe, nurturing, and inspiring start to your child's education

Waratah Preschool

27 Alanbar Street
Karabar NSW 2620

Director: Joanne Crammond

Phone: 02 6297 3850

Email:

Waratah@qdpa.com.au



Karabar Preschool

191 Cooma Street
Karabar NSW 2620

Director: Jenny Farnhill

Phone: 02 6297 5111

Email:

Karabar@qdpa.com.au

Harris Park Preschool

61 Lowe Street
Queanbeyan NSW 2620

Director: Ashley Hugill

Phone: 02 6297 1689

Email:

HarrisPark@qdpa.com.au



Mura Preschool

181 Cooma Street
Karabar NSW 2620

Director: Carly Smith-
Beeson

Phone: 02 6297 1640

Email: Mura@qdpa.com.au

Our Office Team



QDPA Association Office

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Association Administration:

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Executive Officer:

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Web Site:

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