



Queanbeyan & District  
Preschool Association

# Management Committee Handbook

For QDPA Services



# Contact Us

## Harris Park Preschool

61 Lowe Street

Queanbeyan NSW 2620

Managing Director: Mandy Jackson

Phone: 02 6297 1689

Email: [Harrispark@qdpa.com.au](mailto:Harrispark@qdpa.com.au)

## Karabar Preschool

191 Cooma Street

Queanbeyan NSW 2620

Director: Jenny Farnhill

Phone: 02 6297 5111

Email: [Karabar@qdpa.com.au](mailto:Karabar@qdpa.com.au)

## Waratah Preschool

27 Alanbar Street

Queanbeyan NSW 2620

Director: Carly Smith-Beeson

Phone: 02 6297 3850

Email: [Waratah@qdpa.com.au](mailto:Waratah@qdpa.com.au)

## QDPA Head Office

Mandy Jackson - QDPA Managing Director

Harris Park Preschool

61 Lowe Street

Queanbeyan NSW 2620

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# Contents

## Welcome to the QDPA Management Committee

- Introduction and Objectives of this Handbook as a Guideline
- Who is QDPA?
- A brief history of QDPA

## What do we believe in?

- QDPA Philosophy
- Our QDPA Vision and Mission Statement

## Some Important Information

- Key Early Childhood Terminology & Governance

## Positions and Duties of the Management Committee

- Chair (Executive Member)
- Vice-Chair (Executive Member)
- Secretary (Executive Member)
- Treasurer (Executive Member)
- Public Officer (Executive Member)
- Staff Representative (QDPA Managing Director)
- General Committee Members (between 3 and 5)

## What will be expected of you?

### Management Structure & Responsibilities

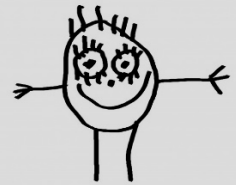
- Responsibilities of Management Committee Members
- What makes an effective committee member?
- Ethical Management
- Conflicts of Interest
- Working with Children Check/Police Record Check
- Confidentiality
- Decision making
- Strategic planning and risk management
- Accountability and transparency
- QDPA Constitution

## Meetings and Annual General Meeting (AGM)

### Meeting Procedures

- The agenda
- The role of the chairperson
- Minutes

## Further Information



# Welcome to QDPA

## Who is QDPA?

The *Queanbeyan & District Preschool Association* (QDPA) is a community based not for profit organisation. Management of QDPA is overseen by a Managing Director – Mandy Jackson and a volunteer community Management Committee, who make decisions about the overall operations of the Association.

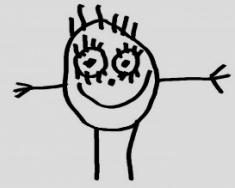
The QDPA is made up of three preschools – *Harris Park Preschool*, *Karabar Preschool* and *Waratah Preschool*, all located within Queanbeyan NSW. Each preschool is managed by a Director who is Early Childhood qualified and responsible for the day to day staffing, educational practice and operation of that service.

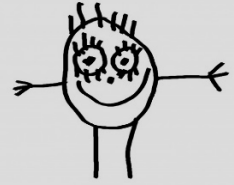
The manager of each QDPA service is as follows;

- *Harris Park Preschool* – Mandy Jackson (QDPA Managing Director)
- *Karabar Preschool* – Jenny Farnhill (Director/Teacher)
- *Waratah Preschool* – Carly Smith-Beeson (Director/Teacher)

In addition to a Management Committee, QDPA also has a P&C Committee which is a sub-committee, created under the delegation of powers in the QDPA Constitution. The P&C Committee made up of volunteer parent representatives elected each year for each of the Association's preschools. The P&C Committee are responsible for fundraising for the Association, as well as providing feedback and acting as a voice for individual preschools and families on their preschool experience. The P&C Committee report to the Managing Director, of whom provides feedback to the Management Committee. The P&C Committee meets once a month, with the venue changing each month and rotating around each preschool in turn. All staff and parents are welcome at each meeting.

Further information about QDPA and individual preschools is available on our website @ [www.qdpa.com.au](http://www.qdpa.com.au)





## Objective of this Handbook as a Guideline

1. The objective of the QDPA Management Committee Handbook is to convey the practices of the current QDPA management committee to any new or incoming committee members who may join our Association each year. This handbook documents the undertakings of each committee position, provides useful information for incoming members and aims to ensure continuity of information, communication and practice for all our QDPA preschool operations.
2. It is important to bear in mind that as a management committee, members will come and go and therefore continuity of practice can be compromised and needs to be safeguarded. So while each new year can bring wonderful and unique family and community compositions, opportunities, and needs to our management committee, it can also present us with challenges through changing economic factors, regulation, new teaching pedagogy or perhaps new teaching staff and it is therefore important that such transient trends are addressed within the underlying governance framework of QDPA.
3. Accordingly, this handbook will be continuously updated in line with changes to QDPA practice or relevant legislation, including the *National Education and Care Services Act*, government funding and new Early Childhood regulation and law which was enforced from 2012 onwards. This handbook will also reflect amendments to the *Incorporated Associations Act (2012)* and subsequent updates to our QDPA Constitution.

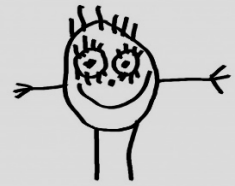
# A brief history of QDPA

QDPA was formed in May 1950, when a public meeting was held to elect a management committee that would work towards setting up a preschool centre in Queanbeyan. For a cost of £1900 (\$3800) a weatherboard building was constructed on the grounds of an existing park in Queanbeyan named *Harris Park*. The preschool was officially opened in March 1952. The preschool was later renamed the *Margaret Donoghue Memorial Preschool*, in recognition of the late Mrs Donoghue's endeavours as president and later as patroness of the Association, however, the preschool is still known in the community as *Harris Park Preschool*.

The growing demand for preschool education in Queanbeyan was met by the opening of a second preschool – *South Queanbeyan Preschool*, in November 1973. This preschool was later renamed *Waratah Preschool*. The preschool was built with funds raised by QDPA, whilst the land remains the ownership of Queanbeyan Palarang Regional Council.

The demand for preschool places continued to grow in Queanbeyan and this led to the opening of *White Rocks Preschool*, which operated from the YMCA building during the late 1970's and Early 1980's.

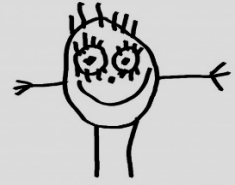
In 1980 it became apparent that the maintenance effort at *Harris Park Preschool* was becoming unsupportable and it would require a great expense to bring the building up to the standards required in the 1980's. The Association investigated the possibility of constructing a new and larger preschool centre on the original site. With an estimated cost of \$180,000.00 the Association approached Queanbeyan City Council for assistance. An agreement was reached Between QDPA and council, with the Association contributing \$30,000 toward the cost of a new building and undertook an agreement to pay commercial rent to Queanbeyan City Council for the use of the building. A new two classroom *Harris Park Preschool* building was opened in November 1983.



Also in 1980 the Association became known as the *Queanbeyan & District Preschool Association (QDPA)*, with the establishment of a preschool at Captains Flat. The White Rocks Licence was transferred from Queanbeyan YMCA to a site at Captains Flat. This preschool was originally operated from the old Picture Theatre at Captains Flat, which was being used as a Community Hall. In 1990, after fundraising by QDPA and the Captains Flat community, a new purpose built preschool was established at 27 Foxlow Street, Captains Flat on Crown land and the preschool was moved. In 1990 the preschool was renamed *Jingera Preschool*. However, in 2016 after years of Jingera Preschool running at a loss (due to government underfunding and dwindling enrolment numbers in the community), the decision was made to hand Jingera Preschool at Captains Flat over to a newly formed *Captains Flat Community Preschool Association* and QDPA ceased to operate a preschool service at Captains Flat.

In 1987 QDPA commenced negotiations with Karabar Housing Co-operative to establish a preschool within the new community complex being constructed at 191 Cooma Street, Queanbeyan. As a result Karabar Preschool was opened in September 1988. The building was later bought by St. Matthew's Church and QDPA currently rents the premise from the church.

The demand for preschool places within Queanbeyan township continued to grow and after years of lobbying various state governments, QDPA was finally successful in gaining a grant of \$850,000 to expand Harris Park Preschool. In 2012 Harris Park Preschool was extended into a 4 unit preschool and the four classrooms began operation in January 2013. Due to the continued growth of the Association, in January 2016 the Association elected to employ a Managing Director to oversee operations of preschools across QDPA.



# What do we believe in?

## QDPA Philosophy

QDPA philosophy is used as a guide in the development of an individual program philosophy in each QDPA preschool service. The philosophy for each preschool is developed collaboratively with educators, children, families and the community to determine a set of values and beliefs in regard to early childhood education and the building of relationships within the preschool community. Each philosophy aims to challenge discrimination and promote social justice. Please ask the director of your service for a copy of your preschool's philosophy.

Our preschool philosophies are a living and changing document that reflects the knowledge, beliefs and values of our early childhood educators, children, families and the wider community. The QDPA Mission Statement is the overarching statement that supports and shapes each individual services philosophy. Each service has unique characteristics and cultures which provide the rich context for their individual philosophy, curriculum and programs and ways of being.

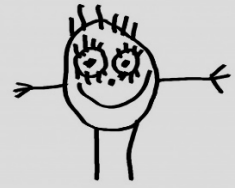
## Our QDPA Vision and Mission Statement

*Our vision- to be an engaged, respectful and participative community of preschools, supporting children's lifelong learning journey.*

The best interest of children is our primary consideration. We acknowledge that the rights of the child are to be upheld in our daily practice, routines, program development, the organisation of staff and the decisions we make as an Association.

We acknowledge that children are capable and competent within their own right, and come to us with individual knowledge, skills, culture and unique ways of being.

We acknowledge that children belong first to a family. QDPA therefore advocates for the development of respectful partnerships that rely upon trust, ethical behaviour and social justice. We are committed to building positive relationships with all members of our community. These relationships are nurtured through open communication and based on principles of engagement, mutual respect, honesty and a commitment to work together towards shared goals for children and families.





As an Association we are committed to the continued provision and support of accessible, high quality preschool services for children and families within the Queanbeyan and District's community. Our partnership with communities strengthens our capacity to support children and families, and in turn develop thriving services. We strive to provide access to affordable quality early education and care that reflects local community culture and need. All of our services are self-sustaining with any surplus reinvested back into the QDPA preschool services.

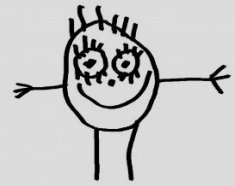
Our learning environments reflect a holistic approach to learning and provide endless opportunities and possibilities to support children's wellbeing, education and autonomy. Our space and resources are arranged in the environment to empower and support children to actively engage in co-constructing their learning journey. Our environments reflect an atmosphere of respect and appreciation for the importance of sustainability.

Current research and theory will inform our early childhood curriculum. We recognise the value and richness of children's play as a catalyst for their learning. *The Early Years Learning Framework* (EYLF) and the *National Quality Framework* (NQF) will guide the planning process in all our preschool services. Staff, children and families are provided with opportunities to discuss, reflect on, and evaluate the curriculum as it unfolds throughout the year, so that children can be provided with an educational program that empowers, inspires and encourages them to further develop their knowledge, skills and interests.

As educators we are committed to critical reflection, evaluation and we will regularly assess the appropriateness of the curriculum and our daily practice. We strive to ensure we provide true inclusion, as well as authentic and meaningful experiences that are worthwhile.

QDPA firmly believes that continuous professional development is essential for providing quality early childhood education and encourages regular training workshops and in-services for staff, administrators, families and others involved in our preschools.

QDPA strives to be a recognised leader in the provision of quality community based education and care.



# Some Important Information

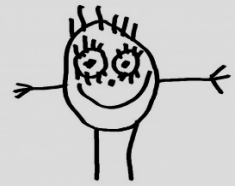
## Introduction

This handbook has been prepared to help you become familiar with QDPA's Management Committee - it is a summary of policies, key roles and responsibilities for Management Committee members and provides information on committee roles & responsibilities, ethical management, confidentiality, decision making, accountability and transparency.

Governance is the system or process by which organisations are directed, controlled and held accountable to ensure that the right decisions are made. Our preschool Association recognises the importance of having a framework of rules, relationships, systems and processes within and by which authority is exercised and controlled within our organisation. We view good governance and management as essential to our provision of high quality education and care in a responsible manner. To ensure our Association has good governance we will;

- Conduct our affairs legally, ethically and with integrity
- Identify organisational risks and understand our legal responsibilities and manage these through clearly defined policies and relevant processes, and
- Ensure that mechanisms are in place for fair and transparent governance.

It is important that all Management Committee members have a clear understanding of how all QDPA preschool services are governed and managed. From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 a new *National Quality Framework and new Law & Regulation* came into being to 'ensure the wellbeing of children' (NQF, ACEQA, 2011:3). To support you in understanding the complex Early Childhood National Quality Framework, Laws & Regulations we have included some important Early Childhood information & terminology on the following pages;



## QDPA Important Information



Name of Association: Queanbeyan & District Preschool Association	
Preschool Constitution	Reviewed end 2017/ Accepted early 2018
Preschool Handbooks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parent Handbook updated July 2016</li> <li>▪ Staff Handbook updated October 2016</li> <li>▪ Management Committee Handbook updated February 2017</li> <li>▪ P&amp;C Committee Handbook updated February 2017</li> </ul>
QDPA Policies & Procedures	Ongoing as per policy folder
Australian Business Number (ABN)	58 507 571 471
Financial Year	01 <sup>st</sup> January to 31 <sup>st</sup> December
<b>Education &amp; Care Directorates</b>	
Education and Care Services National Law Act (2010)	Education and Care Services National Regulations (2012)
<i>National Quality Framework (NQF)</i> Governed by ACECQA (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority) <a href="http://www.acecqa.gov.au">www.acecqa.gov.au</a>	Funded through NSW Department of Education <a href="http://www.dec.nsw.com.au">www.dec.nsw.com.au</a>
QDPA Provider Approval Number	PR-00005679
Service Approval Numbers	Harris Park Preschool - SE-00007493 Karabar Preschool - SE-00007720 Waratah Preschool - SE-00009483
<b>ACECQA Delegations (Must be invited/accepted in writing &amp; held in preschool staff registers)</b>	
<b>Licensee</b> - (Approved Person with responsibility & signatory control)	Chair of the Management Committee: Current Chair - Mr Tobi Edmunds
<b>Nominated Supervisors</b> - (Persons with Qualifications, Experience & approval under regulation to assume management control of services)	<b>QDPA Managing Director &amp; Harris Park Preschool</b> - Ms Mandy Jackson <b>Karabar Preschool</b> - Mrs Jenny Farnhill <b>Waratah Preschool</b> - Mrs Carly Smith-Beeson
<b>Educational Leaders</b> - (Person responsible for overseeing Educational Programs for children).	Harris Park Preschool - Holly Sutor Karabar Preschool - Mrs Jenny Farnhill Waratah Preschool - Mrs Carly Smith-Beeson
<b>Certified Supervisors</b>	All educators - as services are certified.
<b>Responsible person in Charge</b> (in the absence of the Nominated Supervisor)	Harris Park Preschool - Mrs Holly Sutor-Fogarty (2 <sup>nd</sup> in charge)

# Early Childhood Terminology

## Preschool Roles & Responsibilities:

### ➤ Approved Provider

An Approved Provider is a person or an entity who holds a Provider Approval granted under the *Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)*. This approval authorises the Approved Provider to operate an approved education and care service. Approved Providers were formerly known as licensees of education and care services.

### ➤ Responsible Person

A responsible person applies only to centre based services. Under the National Law a responsible person must be physically present at a centre based service at all times that the Approved Service operates. A responsible person can be;

- The Approved Provider; or
- The Nominated Supervisor; or
- A Certified Supervisor who has consented to be placed in day- to-day charge of the service

### ➤ Nominated Supervisor

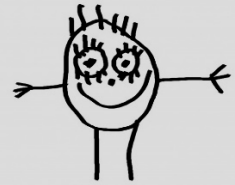
The Nominated Supervisor is the person with responsibility for the day-to-day management of an Approved Service. The National Law requires that Approved Providers must not operate a service without a Nominated Supervisor for the service. In the absence of a Nominated Supervisor a Certified Supervisor will need to consent to filling the role. In most cases the Director is the NS.

### ➤ Certified Supervisor

A Supervisor Certificate, which is a nationally recognised approval that allows a person to be appointed as the Nominated Supervisor for an Approved Services or to be temporarily placed in charge when the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor is absent.

A Supervisor Certificate is a personal approval and is ongoing unless suspended, cancelled or surrendered. A Supervisor Certificate is not attached to a particular preschool/centre, which means a person will not have to reapply for a Supervisor Certificate if they move to another State or Territory.

There is no maximum number of Certified Supervisors per preschool/centre. An Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor should nominate chosen Authorised Supervisors for a service in writing and assess how many staff may need to hold a Supervisor Certificate to ensure that the responsible person requirement is met. Certified Supervisors will also need to have completed approved child protection training when placed in charge.



## ➤ Educational Leader

The role of the Educational Leader will be to lead the development and implementation of the educational program (or curriculum) in the preschool/centre. The *National Regulations* require the Approved Provider to appoint the Educational Leader in writing, and note this designation in the staff record of service.

## Regulatory Bodies:

### National Legislative Framework

The National Legislative Framework is established through an applied law system and consists of;

- The *Education and Care Services National Law*;
- The *Education and Care Services National Regulations*.

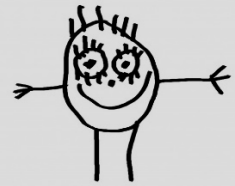
### ➤ National Quality Standards

The *National Quality Standard* sets a new national benchmark for the quality of education and care services. The *National Quality Standard* is divided into seven quality areas;

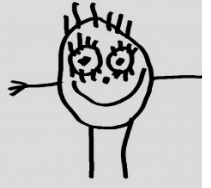
- Educational program and practice
- Children's health and safety
- Physical environments
- Staffing arrangements
- Relationships with children
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Leadership and service management.

### ➤ National Quality Rating and Assessment Process

Services will be assessed and rated against each or the seven Quality Areas of the *National Quality Standard* and the *National Regulations*. They will also be given an overall rating. The rating and assessment process aims to drive continuous quality improvement at services and provide families with better information for making choices about their children's education and care.



# Positions and Duties of the Management Committee



The QDPA Management Committee consists of between 7 and 12 elected members. These positions are the office-bearers being Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Public Officer, together with at least 3 three General Committee members, a Parent Representative and a Teaching Representative (expected to be the QDPA Managing Director or delegate). All members hold equal voting rights. A member may hold up to 2 offices (other than both Chair and Vice-Chair).

The QDPA Constitution provides that the elected members of the Management Committee are to hold office until the conclusion of the AGM following the third anniversary date of the member's election, but is eligible for re-election. The intention having a three year commitment from elected members is to provide consistency in management and direction for the Association. Resignations from the Management Committee should be made in writing to the Secretary. In the event a vacancy is created under these circumstances, the Management Committee may appoint a member of the Association to fill the vacancy subject to the provisions in the Constitution.

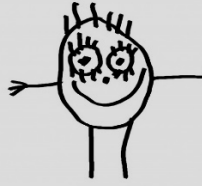
The QDPA Management Committee is the Approved Provider of 3 preschool services - Harris Park, Karabar and Waratah Preschools, and assumes responsibility for meeting all legislative requirements for these preschool services.

QDPA's Management Committee will:

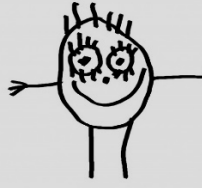
- Fulfil requirements as the Approved Provider
- Meet requirements of the appropriate funding agreements;
- Ensure appropriate employee provisions, wages and conditions under relevant employee awards;
- Work within the requirements of the Association Incorporation Act.

Specifically this will include;

1. Ensure suitably qualified staff are recruited and employed and performance managed as required and are provided with opportunities for supported professional development. Wages must be in accordance with relevant awards or agreements and that all grievances are quickly and fairly resolved.
2. Ensure ongoing quality improvement for QDPA is developed by preschool services and reviewed in consultation with key stakeholders. A yearly *Quality Improvement Plan* needs to be developed across all the 7 key quality operational areas at each preschool and should include maintenance of all assets and sound financial management.
3. Ensure that an annual budget is developed in collaboration with preschool Directors, the finance manager and QDPA committee Treasurer in accordance with the financial aims and plans of the Association. Financial statements are to be audited annually and ongoing updates are to be presented by the Committee Treasurer at each Management committee meeting, as well as at an Annual General Meeting in February each year, for all Association members. Audited financial statements are also to be provided to the funding bodies as required for funding accountability.
4. All required and suitable insurance policies are to be maintained and kept up to date. Regular reviews of insurance needs through a reputable insurance broker will ensure all Association insurances are relevant and appropriate for service structure.
5. Ensure information and reporting requirements (such as annual financial, enrolment and census data) are being completed and presented to the relevant regulatory organisations as required and within acceptable time frames.
6. Ensure QDPA sub-committees (such as a P&C Committee) are established as required and that their function is clearly defined. Ensure processes are in place to monitor and support the sub-committee and provide opportunities for sub-committees to regularly report on their progress.
7. Members of the QDPA Management Committee are welcomed and actively encouraged to participate in any or all QDPA preschool community events and activities, including but not limited to - staff meetings and events (i.e. termly Association Meetings), family events, program highlights, fundraising, end of year celebrations etc. wherever possible. Build ongoing communication processes and relationships with the QDPA Managing Director, preschool directors and staff to ensure they are supported in their daily work with children, families and community.
8. Professional members from the community who have indicated their support for QDPA should be actively encouraged and invited to be involved in the Association - through the QDPA Management Committee or otherwise.



# Management Committee Positions



## Chair (Executive Member)

The role of the QDPA Chair is to ensure that the job of the Management Committee is undertaken effectively. The Chair's role includes leadership of the Management Committee, liaison with Director/s and carry out required public relations by:

- Acting as the official spokesperson, signatory or representative for the QDPA Management Committee (i.e. work with QDPA Managing Director to draft any media or staff Association notices as required and speak on behalf of the QDPA within the broader community, represent or sign any paperwork in an official capacity on behalf of QDPA).
- Chair Management Committee meetings,
- Co-ordinate Management Committee roles,
- Work with and support the QDPA Managing Director to ensure that all preschools are aware of, and fulfilling, the requirements of the governing Framework, National Law and Regulations, Incorporated Association Constitution, State Government funding criteria and local government licence/lease criteria.
- Work with and support the QDPA Managing Director to assume a primary authority relating to staffing, employee contracts, remuneration, rosters, position descriptions and performance reviews as required (i.e. sit on any recruitment panel or support any staffing performance management issues).
- Support the Managing Director in ensuring procedures/processes are in place to secure all key documents, including licences, insurances, certificates, policy documents etc. and ensure that they are maintained (i.e. through annual audits, ongoing editing/changes to policy, renewal of licences, payment of fees etc).
- Ensure all hand over tasks for the Management Committee are completed in a clear and timely manner (i.e. co-ordinate/support the QDPA AGM, support the replacement of resigning Management Committee members and the induction of new committee members, ensure regular updates to QDPA Handbooks).

## Vice-Chair (Executive Member)

The role of the QDPA Vice-Chair is to support the QDPA Chair, and step into the role of Chairperson when required (for instance, chairing a meeting or representing the Association if the Chair is absent). This role tends not to be too arduous and includes the following;

- Chair meetings and represent QDPA in the Chair's absence.
- Assist the Chair in all duties outlined above where necessary.





## Secretary (Executive Member)

The role of the QDPA Secretary is responsible for maintaining Management Committee records. Secretarial responsibilities include;

- Keeping an up-to-date list of QDPA Management and P&C Committee Members and Preschool contacts, including addresses and contact email and phone numbers.
- Consulting with the QDPA Chair, Management Committee and QDPA Managing Director on preparation of a meeting agenda.
- Distributing an agenda for meetings, keeping in mind any requirements under the QDPA rules.
- Presenting applications for new Management and P&C Committee membership to the current Management Committee for approval in accordance with governing rules.
- Collecting, reporting and responding to relevant Management Committee correspondence as directed by the committee.
- Keeping the Management Committee's files in order and up-to-date.

## Treasurer (Executive Member)

The extent of the work of the QDPA Treasurer has been assessed in conjunction with our current practices across the Association. QDPA has delegated all day-to-day financial administration responsibilities of our Preschool services to the QDPA Managing Director and all records are maintained by a full-time Finance Manager. Therefore the role of the QDPA Treasurer is to check financial records and report on the financial position of QDPA to the Management Committee at each meeting and ensure;

- The service prepares an annual budget.
- Income and expenditure (profit/loss) is checked against the set budget and balance sheet.
- Accurate books and financial records representing the current financial situation of the Association are being kept.
- The Association is using secure and correct accounting procedures and keeps all associated documentation (i.e. invoices, receipts, bank statements etc.)
- Present annual financial statements and the auditor's report at the AGM.

Although the QDPA Treasurer's role is vital, the whole Management Committee is responsible for ensuring the financial viability and accountability of the Association and are responsible for making informed decisions about any financial issues that may present throughout the year.

## Public Officer (Executive Member)

The Public Officer role on the QDPA Management Committee is usually held by the QDPA Managing Director for administrative purposes. The Public Officer is responsible for lodging all paperwork in accordance with regulatory frameworks and being the initial contact point for appropriate authorities.

## Teacher Representative

Due to the nature of the role required of the Managing Director of all of our Preschools, it is expected that the Managing Director fills the role of Teacher Representative. The position on the Management Committee is intended to be advisory through representation of the views of teaching and support staff in line with regulatory frameworks.

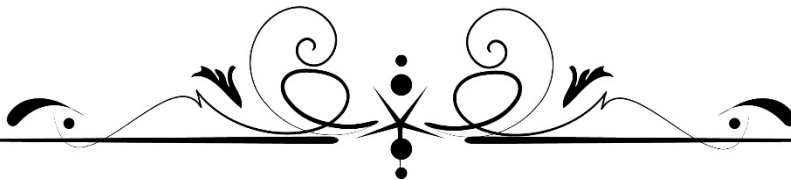
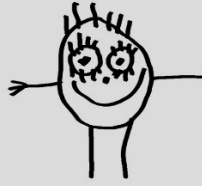
## Parent Representative

The Management Committee, although not necessarily current parents, will be supported by a Parent Representative. This role is intended to provide a current and future 'client' perspective to ensure the Management Committee is aware of current issues faced by families attending our preschools.

## General Committee Members (3 to 5)

In addition to the roles as outlined above, the Management Committee will also have a number of other members who may or may not have delegated responsibilities. QDPA Management Committee Members who do not take up an executive position work towards the objectives of the QDPA Management Committee as required. Tasks can include but are not limited to the following;

- Assisting Management Committee Executive roles during busy times.
- Filling Management Committee Executive roles (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary or Treasurer) when they are unable to do so.
- Serve on or support sub-committees (i.e. P&C Committee or any sub-committee formed throughout the year).
- Undertake any task as specified by the QDPA Management Committee.



## Responsibilities of the Management Committee

The QDPA Management Committee has overall responsibility to members of the Association and community for the sustainability, relevance and ongoing financial viability of the preschool services it manages. The Management Committee therefore is accountable to all members of QDPA (children, families, staff and the Queanbeyan community) for the performance of the Association. The Management Committee will direct its activities toward achieving all preschool goals and implementing the Preschool's *Quality Improvement Plan* in line with preschool objectives and QDPA philosophies. In carrying out its responsibilities the Management Committee will undertake to maximise the value and contribution of the preschool to the community, and to serve the interests of all preschool members (i.e. children, families and staff). In serving these interests there is an implicit understanding that the rights of the child are paramount in all decision making. The QDPA Management Committee is the employer of all staff of the preschool and are responsible for the management and control of the Association as the Approved Provider of education and care under the Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010 and the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

It is important that all Management Committee members are dedicated to the work of the Management Committee by sharing the workload, participating in committee activities and taking responsibility for the decisions it makes. The Management Committee needs to have common goals and shared interests as well as respect for one another's ideas and opinions.

## What makes an effective QDPA Management Committee Member?

It is important to remember that the key to being an effective Management Committee Member is the attitude and values that you bring to the position. Here are a few suggested principles to help you be an effective committee member;

- Try to attend Management Committee meetings regularly and take an active part in meetings.
- Support the preschool Directors, be aware of and keep up to date with what is happening at different preschools (for example read Preschool Parent Newsletters, understand Funding Agreements, read Directors meeting reports and the QDPA Annual Report).
- Always put the preschool and Association's interests above your own personal interests.
- Declare any conflicts to the Chair in any matter that could affect your decision making process and be prepared to step aside for votes or discussion when there is a direct or indirect conflict of interest.
- Use any information gained through the position correctly - that is, in the best interests of the Association.
  
- Ask questions and find out how proposed actions/changes will affect specific preschools or seek further information to clarify anything you do not understand.
- Work as a team with the Management Committee to make joint decisions and work towards shared goals, whilst making sure you act independently and not at the bidding of other members wishes





- Maintain the confidentiality of children, families, staff and the committee at all times.
- Take personal responsibility for ensuring the Association is meeting its legal and ethical requirements.
- Show respect to fellow management Committee Members and listen to their point of view.
- Have a sense of humour and enjoy committee meetings.

### **Ethical Management**

All members of the Management Committee should ensure that they comply with the key principles of ethical management, which include;

- Act honestly and in good faith
- Act with care and diligence
- Act loyally and avoid conflicts of interest
- Avoid abuse of opportunity and information
- Act in the best interests of the QDPA.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

Management Committee members are expected to carry out their roles impartially and to contribute to the successful achievement of the Association's goals. Under the Association Incorporation Act (2009) strong new measures were introduced to encourage improved governance of incorporated Associations. These measures include financial penalties and/or imprisonment for undisclosed conflicts of interest.

Definition: The NSW Associations Incorporation Act (2009) defines a conflict of interest as *an interest that appears to raise a conflict with the proper performance of the committee member's duties in relation to the consideration of the matter*. A conflict of interest in any situation in which decision-making is influenced by personal, family, financial, business or other concerns.

A conflict of interest can be actual, potential or perceived. A 'perceived' conflict of interest, is where there is the idea (whether it is true or not) that dishonest behaviour from a committee member has or could occur - this can be just as damaging to the organisation as an actual conflict.

Some examples of a conflict of interest include, but are not limited to;

- Purchasing products from a business in which a committee member has a vested or financial interest,
- Being a member of the committee while also working for a government agency that provides funding to the service,
- A committee member sitting on a recruitment selection or interview panel when one of the applicants is a family member,
- A committee member using information gained in the course of their role as a committee member for their own personal gain.

A potential or perceived conflict of interest needs to be managed properly to ensure that it does not become an actual conflict.



The existence of a conflict of interest does not necessarily exclude a person from committee membership, however, the conflict of interest must be declared so that the situation can be effectively managed. The conflict of interest needs to be dealt with transparently, and in a way that protects the best interest of the Association.

When a conflict of interest is declared or identified, the Association needs a process for ensuring this is managed effectively. As soon as a committee member identifies that they have a direct or indirect interest in a matter being considered at a committee meeting, they must disclose and register the nature of the interest. Once the conflict has been identified, the committee member should not be present during any deliberation of the committee with respect to the matter, or take part in any decision of the committee with respect to the matter. In some cases, for example if a committee member is directly related to a member of staff, it can be unworkable for that committee member to be an executive committee member, as they would need to be absent themselves from all staffing and pay related discussions and decisions.

*(Source: Community Connections Solutions Australia - Community Governance - Conflict of Interest Fact Sheet).*

## Working with Children Checks/Police Record Check

All members of the Management Committee must have a valid NSW Working With Children Check due to the nature of the role of the committee. Although rarely in contact with children as meetings are usually facilitated after preschool hours, it is a necessity to ensure compliance with relevant laws. Further information can be found by logging on to <http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/child-safe-organisations/working-with-children-check/apply/apply>

## Confidentiality Policy

Early childhood settings require personal information from families to provide appropriate and responsive care. This information needs to be maintained and will be managed by each preschool in a private and confidential manner.

QDPA will maintain private and confidential files for staff, children and families. These records are securely stored and maintained according to the National Privacy Principles.

Staff need to maintain children's information and store documentation according to QDPA confidentiality policies at all times.

All staff receive a copy of the QDPA Confidentiality Policy and need to sign their agreement to abide by this policy when signing their employment contract.

QDPA Management Committee members are also required to sign and abide by our confidentiality agreement (Attachment 1.)

## Decision Making

Responsibility for making decisions falls to the whole Management Committee (Office bearers and general committee members). When decisions are to be made, especially around practice or policy change, it is imperative that Management Committee are provided with or gather relevant material through research, benchmarking and networking. All members should have the opportunity to hear the issues/facts, discuss openly and be listened to so they can make fully informed decisions. Decisions are made through a voting process. Further information on this process is available in the QDPA Constitution.

## Strategic Planning and Risk Management

The Management Committee needs to plan beyond the end of their term of office to ensure the ongoing viability of the QDPA Association and our Preschool services. Strategic planning, strong service policies and clear risk management procedures help to focus the committee, staff and parents on working together towards the same long and short-term goals and thereby provide security and ongoing quality across the Association. A 3 year strategic Plan will be developed and maintained by the QDPA Management Committee in consultation with the Managing Director & individual Preschool Directors.

## Accountability and Transparency

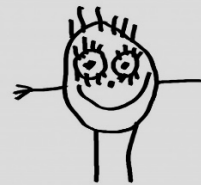
Open, transparent communication and decision making will help build confidence across the Association and ensure that everyone is working towards the same outcomes and provide for the best interests of the children, families and staff who are members of the Association. The QDPA Management Committee should therefore regularly distribute information to members and staff via newsletters, notices, meetings, bulletins, display boards etc as they deem appropriate for the issue at hand. It is also important that members of the Association are given opportunities to provide feedback to the Management Committee. As a minimum, an AGM must be held each year to provide a report to all members about the activities of the Management Committee.

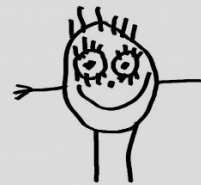
The Management Committee needs to meet at least 4 times each year. However, to ensure the committee is able to make informed decisions, it is usual for the committee to meet every 4 to 6 weeks. Prior to each meeting a notice of the meeting, an agenda and any major motion to be voted on will be sent out to each committee member. To conduct any business at the meeting there must be a quorum of at least (any) 3 members of the Management Committee (either physically or by proxy). During the meeting the minutes of the previous meeting are tabled, reports from Executive Members are tabled, motions are voted on and any further business is discussed

## QDPA Constitution

In regard to the QDPA Constitution the QDPA Management Committee will;

- Ensure that the QDPA Constitution is followed at all times,
- Ensure that the QDPA Constitution is reviewed every (3) three years,
- Ensure that each new member of the QDPA Management Committee is provided with a copy of the QDPA Constitution on their appointment to the Management Committee and is updated regularly on the progress of yearly *Quality Improvement Plans* for preschools within the Association.





# Committee Meetings & AGM

## Meeting Procedures

Sound meeting procedures ensure effective use of time and encourage committee members to attend. The following is designed to assist us in the preparation and smooth running of our Management Committee meetings. The QDPA Constitution indicates the minimum number of general and committee meetings that should be held each year - however as a rule QDPA Management Committee Meetings are held every 4 to 6 weeks. When holding a meeting it is important to be aware of;

- The quorum (the minimum number of members required to hold the meeting)
- The procedures for dealing with confidential issues
- The importance of respecting differing views and the ability to talk through options with dignity and respect.

## The Meeting Agenda

The agenda provides a framework for meetings by identifying a list of items to be discussed. It gives direction to the meeting and enables time to be kept. Ideally, agendas should be circulated prior to the meeting, so committee members and other interested people know what will be discussed. Preparation of the agenda is usually the responsibility of the secretary (or Chair if the secretary is absent) in consultation with the Managing Director (representing staff and services) and other committee members. If the agenda is lengthy, then items should be prioritised at the start of the meeting, to ensure important issues are adequately addressed, and given sufficient time. An agenda can be altered at a meeting if a motion of amendment is agreed on and approved by the meeting.

## The role of the Chairperson

The Chairperson is generally the spokesperson of the QDPA Management Committee and they need to ensure they;

- Understand the QDPA Constitution, particularly in relation to the conduct of meetings,
- Identify the purpose of the meeting,
- Have a pre-planned agenda, but are prepared to make adjustments (with the approval of the meeting)
- Have all the relevant information at hand (minutes of previous meetings, copies of reports, research etc.).



During a meeting the Chairperson needs to;

- Provide direction for the meeting, keep the meeting relevant and in accordance with agreed time, remain impartial, and avoid leading the meeting from the chair. If the chairperson holds a strong viewpoint on an item and wishes to participate in the discussion, they should allow another member to chair that particular part of the meeting.
- Provide opportunities for participation from all who are in attendance.
- Be aware of individual needs within the group (i.e. people who have English as a second language or are nervous speakers)
- Where a conflict occurs, it should be acknowledged but not allowed to dominate, be prepared to mediate by allowing each person to present his or her point of view.
- Move the meeting forward by calling for motions after a reasonable discussion period.
- Ensure that all voters understand all motions that are put forward at the meeting.
- Ensure that motions are recorded accurately and reflect the intentions of the mover and seconder, if the motion prescribes an action; the chair should call for or nominate a delegate to carry out the task.

It is important to remember that while the Chair of the Management Committee provides leadership and direction within the meeting, there is an onus on all those present at the meeting to take responsibility to ensure the success of the meeting and progress through the agenda.

## Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes are a concise and accurate record of decisions resolved at the meeting and are extremely important. They comprise the recorded history of the Association. Minutes should include;

- A copy of the agenda
- Date and commencement time of the meeting
- The name of the person chairing the meeting
- The venue (if the place varies)
- Attendees
- Apologies
- A motion confirming/accepting the previous minutes as a true and accurate record, or notes as to where previous minutes should be amended business arising from the minutes
- A record of correspondence (incoming and outgoing)
- A brief summary of reports presented during the meeting
- Items of general business (including a brief summary of discussions and any decision made).
- The time the meeting closed.



Meeting minutes should be written up as soon as possible after the meeting. Every meeting should start with a motion to confirm and accept the previous minutes or note changes. Once the minutes have been confirmed, the chairperson needs to sign each page of the previous minutes. It is good practice to keep the minutes in a book that does not allow pages to be easily removed (for instance, paste them into a book with numerically numbered pages). Minutes must be kept for the life of the preschool/Association. Distribution of the minutes varies, however, all members must have access to them. Therefore, it is important to be aware of how sensitive and confidential issues are recorded in the minutes. It may be necessary to record more confidential decisions in another place and refer only to the decision in very broad terms.

(Source: CCSA Community Governance, Roles and responsibilities of the Committee/Board - Fact Sheet).

## The AGM

The AGM is to be held in accordance with the QPDA Constitution. The election of the P&C Committee (a sub-committee of the Management Committee) is also conducted at the AGM. The QDPA AGM generally takes place in week 3 of Term 1 each year.



# Further Information

## Keeping Everyone Safe

### Our Work Health and Safety Policy

QDPA has a responsibility to protect the health and safety of each employee, student or volunteer at all times. Our health and safety practices affect your physical and psychological health and safety. We have a duty of care to provide all employees and our Committee members with a safe and healthy environment.

Each state and territory government has its own Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) legislation and regulations, which govern the standards of health and safety in the workplace. All QDPA preschools comply with the relevant WHS legislation.

QDPA *Work Health and Safety Policy* can be found in the Policy Manual along with all other policies. This is a significant policy because it enables all staff and others within our work environments to safeguard themselves, their co-workers and their workplace.

QDPA is committed to;

- Providing a duty of care that protects staff, students & volunteers from harm, injury, illness or abuse;
- Developing and administering WHS risk management systems;
- Auditing WHS procedures and practices;
- Consulting with all stakeholders when reviewing WHS policies;
- Maintaining and storing WHS documentation and records in accordance with WHS legislation requirements;
- Providing staff with WHS training;
- Developing policies as WHS legislation changes;
- Developing a program for employees returning to the workplace (i.e. after workers compensation)

Ensuring that all WHS policies are transparent and available



## Public Liability Insurance

All Management Committee members are covered under our insurance for accident or injury while on QDPA premises.

## Manual Handling

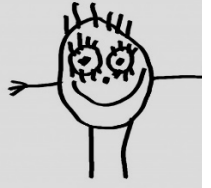
Manual handling means lifting, lowering, pushing, carrying, moving, holding or restraining any object, animal or person. Education and care service workers are prone to manual handling injuries.

Research has shown that a systematic approach which aims to assess the whole range of possible causes of injury during manual handling is the most successful way of reducing hazards in the workplace.

- Staff are encouraged to use their common sense and not to take unnecessary risks when handling large/heavy objects.
- Staff are discouraged from lifting children.
- Manual handling and correct lifting/back training will be provided to all employees.
- It is the responsibility of all staff to follow the Association's WHS procedures and assist by identifying manual handling hazards and risks.
- Staff must lift without twisting
- When staff lift a heavy object they should not stretch over and lift, but lean close to the object and raise the load as close as possible to their body.

Staff should;

- ✓ Kneel where ever possible;
- ✓ Avoid sitting on child-sized chairs where possible;
- ✓ Refrain from carrying children;



## Privacy and social media

It is a breach of confidentiality and privacy for staff members or committee members to make posts or comments about children, families, staff or any QDPA management or internal operational information on social media sites. It is also inappropriate to post pictures of children, families, staff or management information from QDPA on social media sites.

## Our QDPA policies and procedures

QDPA has policies and procedures for almost everything that happens in our preschools. This is required as a condition of our licencing approval by the state government and is designed to ensure that children receive consistent, quality early childhood education and care.

All staff members must be aware of QDPA policies and procedures and are provided with a copy of QDPA Policies and Procedures folder at the time of induction. Staff members are also required to sign that you have read and understand all QDPA policies.

A copy of all policies and procedures is readily available to staff, parents and committee members at each preschool and they are located in the office area, in each classroom, the staff room and in the foyer for families.

All staff members employed through QDPA are responsible for implementing our policies and procedures at all times. We also invite you as a member of the Management Committee to be aware of and provide feedback on changes or amendments to these policies and procedures.



