

# Queanbeyan & District Preschool Association

## Family Handbook 2024

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# Who is Queanbeyan & District Preschool Association?

Queanbeyan & District Preschool Association (QDPA) is a community based not for profit organisation. The management of QDPA is overseen by the Executive Officer – Ashleigh Daly, and a volunteer Management Committee, who meet each term to discuss and make decisions about the overall operations of the Association.

QDPA is made up of four Preschools – Harris Park Preschool, Karabar Preschool, Waratah Preschool and Mura Preschool, all located within Queanbeyan NSW. Each Preschool is managed by a Director who is responsible for the day-to-day staffing, educational practice and operation of that service.

The Directors of our Preschools in 2024 are;

- ❖ Harris Park Preschool – Dorcas Hancock
- ❖ Karabar Preschool – Jenny Farnhill
- ❖ Mura Preschool - Carly Smith-Beeson
- ❖ Waratah Preschool – Joanne Crammond

Further information about the individual Preschools is available on our website at [www.qdpa.com.au](http://www.qdpa.com.au)



# The History of QDPA

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Queanbeyan and District Preschool Association (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 endeavors as president and later as patron 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 Queanbeyan Palarang Regional Council retains ownership of the land.

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 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 running at a loss (due to underfunding and dwindling enrolment numbers), Jingera Preschool at Captains Flat was closed by QDPA.

# The History of QDPA continued...

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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 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 an Executive Officer to oversee operations of Preschools across QDPA.

In 2020, the Association purchased a former Family Day Care and a Community Centre located at 181 Cooma Street, Karabar. This was made possible through years of careful budgeting and fundraising by the Association and extensive searching for a suitable site. In 2021, renovation/construction commenced on the fourth Preschool comprising of three Preschool classrooms - for the Association to work towards meeting the extremely high demand for places in the region. Following consultation with Ngambri Land Council and seeking community input, the name Mura Preschool was selected. The ability to progress with this project was assisted by receiving a capital works grant of \$600,000 from the NSW Department of Education.

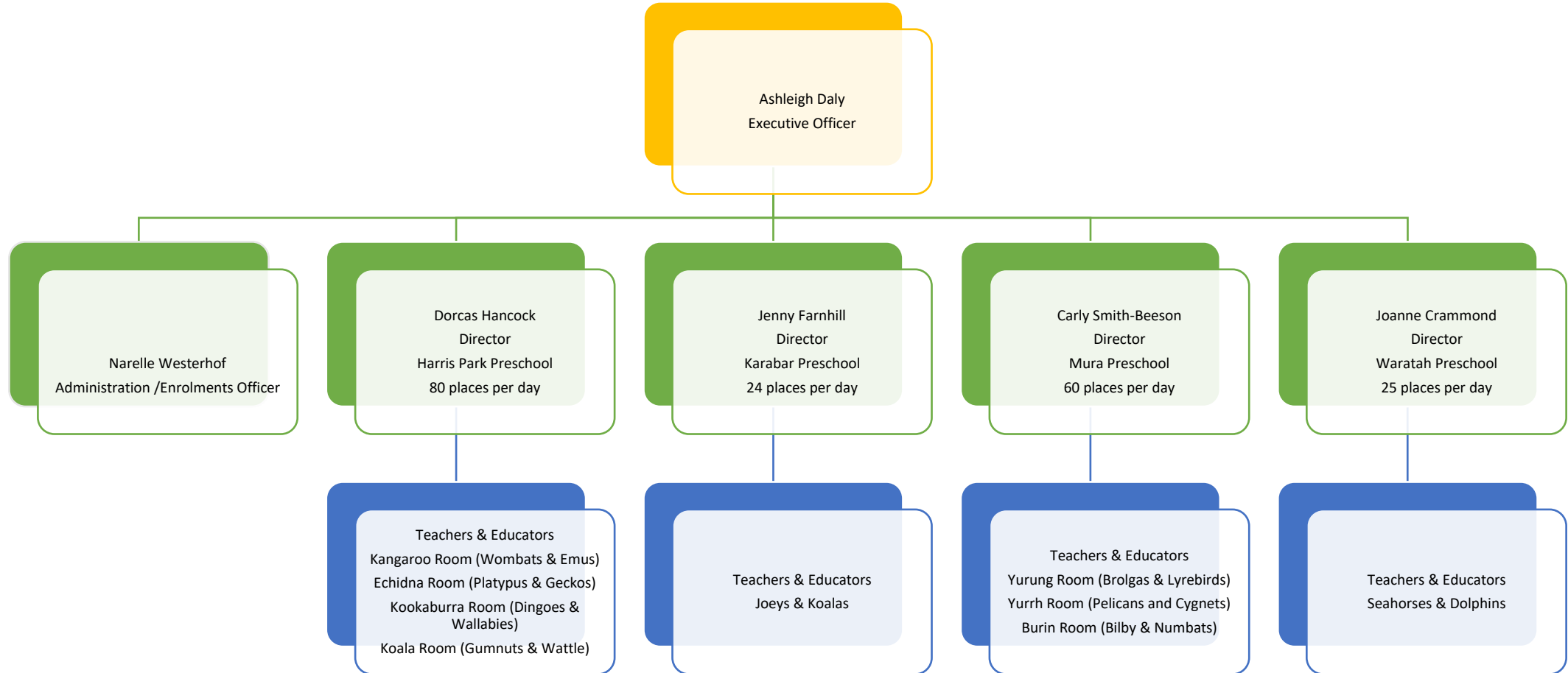
Mura Preschool received its licence in March 2022 and the official opening event was held in May 2022.

The Association was successful in securing a long-term lease of a tract of land on Hoover Road, and future plans include the construction of a fifth preschool in the Association.

# Our Programs

<b>Harris Park Kangaroo Room</b>	<b>Harris Park Echidna Room</b>	<b>Harris Park Kookaburra Room</b>	<b>Harris Park Koala Room</b>	<b>Mura Yurung Room</b>	<b>Mura Yurrh Room</b>	<b>Mura Burin Room</b>	<b>Karabar</b>	<b>Waratah</b>
<b>Wombats</b> Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 9:15am – 3:15pm	<b>Platypus</b> Monday, Tuesday, 8:15am – 3:45pm	<b>Dingoes</b> Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 8:45am -2.45pm	<b>Gumnuts</b> Monday, Tuesday 8:15am- 3:45pm	<b>Brolga</b> Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 8:45am -2.45pm	<b>Pelicans</b> Monday & Tuesday, 8:15am – 3:45pm	<b>Bilby</b> Monday & Tuesday 8:30am – 4:00pm	<b>Joeys</b> Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 8:45am – 2:45pm	<b>Seahorses</b> Monday & Tuesday 8:30am – 4:00pm
<b>Emu's</b> Thursday & Friday 8:15am – 3:45pm	<b>Gecko's</b> Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 8:45am -2.45pm	<b>Wallaby</b> Thursday & Friday 8:15am – 3:45pm	<b>Wattle</b> Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 9:15am – 3:15pm	<b>Lyrebirds</b> Thursday & Friday 8:30am – 4:00pm	<b>Cygnets</b> Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 9:00am – 3:00pm	<b>Numbats</b> Thursday & Friday 8:15am – 3:45pm	<b>Koala's</b> Thursday & Friday 8:15am – 3:45pm	<b>Dolphins</b> Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 9:00am – 3:00pm

# Organisational Structure of QDPA



# QDPA Mission and Vision Statement

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

We are committed to the continued provision and support of accessible, high quality Preschool services for children and families within the Queanbeyan and Districts community.

The best interests of children are 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 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 our services are self-sustaining with any surplus reinvested back into the QDPA Preschool services.

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



# Preschool Administration

Prior to commencing at Preschool, you will be required to complete all enrolment documentation online on the OWNA enrolment form which will be emailed to you. It is essential that you provide us with copies of your child's **Birth Certificate {Non Commemorative}** and **Immunisation History Statement from MyGov** before commencement along with any documentation in support of your child's learning needs (if required). For example, Speech Therapists/Paediatricians/ Early Intervention services/ CIFTS (Child, Infant and Family Tertiary Service) reports.

NSW Health encourages parents to have regular health checks done by a nurse or doctor from the birth of a child to age 4. This is explained in *My first health record* which is given to all parents of newborns. These checks help to detect any delay in a child's development or learning. If you have any developmental concerns for your child, you can contact the below numbers to organise an appointment. We also have the NSW Eye Screening occur in the Preschool year conducted at Preschool and you will need to return a form for permission for your child to be tested by the health nurses onsite.

We believe in a partnered approach to Early Intervention and therefore we can do referrals to health services and other child development support services upon your consultation.

Please understand that it is essential we have up-to-date information in case of an emergency. It is important that you notify our office administration staff of any changes to enrolment information including:

- Address
- Health
- Telephone/mobile numbers
- Contact details
- Family changes
- Emergency contact information details etc.



# Enrolment Process

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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 if you change your mind after 1 December.



If your child attends for a second year, the enrolment levy is required to be paid again on confirmation of placement.

# Fee Payments

In 2024, QDPA's fees are \$37 per day, or \$12 per day for eligible equity families (e.g. Indigenous, Health Care Card, Early Intervention).

The NSW Government have also announced the 'Affordable Preschool' funding package for 2023. We anticipate this funding package to continue in 2024, however this has not been formally announced. Should this funding continue in 2024, it currently allows each enrolment to access \$4220 of funding towards their fees. This means, our two day programs will be fully funded, with our three day programs having a small out of pocket cost of \$55 per term, if on the full fee rate. This fee will be invoiced each fortnight.

Families not electing to have the funding allocated to their preschool placement in 2024 if the funding package continues, will be invoiced fortnightly; fees are charged one week in arrears and the current week, and fees must be paid on the due date of the invoice. Failure to pay fees on time will result in termination of care as per our fee policy.

Fees can be paid via direct debit, direct deposit, eftpos or cash.

Fees are not charged over schools holidays or NSW public holidays.

If you have any issues or questions in regards to your fees or fee payments, please call Narelle on 02 6297 1640 or email [admin@qdpa.com.au](mailto:admin@qdpa.com.au) between 8.30-3.45 Monday-Friday.

# OWNA

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At QDPA, we are proud users of the app “OWNA”. This app is a ‘one-stop-shop’, allowing parents to sign children in and out, mark their children absent from preschool; as well as being our platform for documenting, planning, and programming.



Administratively we utilise OWNA as our communication platform – notices, updates and newsletters are all sent to you via the app.



Children’s stories, photos and videos are collated under their profile and families can access these daily.



On confirmation of enrolment, you will be emailed an invitation to OWNA – we strongly encourage you do this and engage with the app on a regular basis to ensure you don’t miss any important information come through.



# Medication

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If a child requires medication whilst at Preschool, families must complete an authorisation form online in our OWNA app, clearly stating the name of the medication, the dosage, the time it was last given and the expiry date. If this form is not filled in correctly, the medication will not be administered. It must also be signed and dated which can be done electronically.

All medication must be physically handed to a staff member, and must not be left in the child's bags. Medication must be in its original packaging. Prescription medication must have the pharmacy label clearly visible, stating the child's name and the prescribed dosage. Medication will not be administered if it is not in its original packaging. It will also not be administered if it has passed its expiry date.

All medication is stored away from children in lockable containers in the fridge. 'Long-term Medication' such as EpiPens and Ventolin will be kept in an emergency medication bag for easy and quick access. These bags are labelled and colour coded, and also includes a copy of the child's action plan and risk minimisation plans. Expiry dates are also recorded on the individual bags. Families are required to complete a long term medication authorisation form which will be kept in the health and wellbeing folders as well as in the medication bag. When long term medication is administered, the long term medication form will be completed, as well as completing an electronic medication administration log on OWNA.

Medication that is not prescribed will not be administered unless it is accompanied by a medical authorisation from a medical practitioner, however, each Preschool does have Panadol on site that can be administered with the verbal permission in case of a serious fever before parents/guardians arrive.

Families are reminded that children are unable to attend the Preschool for the first 24 hours after the commencement of any course of antibiotics or administration of pain relief (e.g., Panadol, Nurofen) regardless of the reason for the administration of such pain relief.

# Incident and Illnesses

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At QDPA, we are guided by “Staying Healthy in Childcare”, which includes outlining minimum exclusion periods for illnesses. If we need to send a child home due to illness, the parent/guardian (or emergency contact) will be contacted to collect, and must be reminded to ensure they have collected within 30 minutes to stop the spread of infection at the service.

Educators will then be required to complete an illness report under “*Incident Reports*” in the OWNA app, detailing the symptoms and any first aid/actions applied. Once published on OWNA, this gets sent to the family to sign electronically.

Should a child sustain an injury at Preschool requiring any treatment of first aid, an Incident Report will be completed. This is completed in the same way as an illness report. Again, this will get sent via the OWNA app for digital signing.



## Immunisation

From 1 January 2018, children who are unvaccinated due to their parent's conscientious objection cannot be enrolled in Preschool. The Public Health Act 2010 prevents NSW education services from enrolling children unless approved documentation is provided that indicates that the child:

- Is fully immunised for their age
- Has a medical reason for not been vaccinated
- Is on a recognised catch up schedule and has made effort for this to be done

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

You can obtain a copy of your child's immunisation statement at any time by:

- using your Medicare online account through [myGov](#)
- using the [Medicare Express Plus App](#)
- calling the AIR General Enquiries Line on 1800 653 809

Children with medical conditions or natural immunity for certain diseases will be exempt from the requirements provided the appropriate documentation has been provided.



# Sun Protection

All preschools at QDPA are verified sun smart services, and we have a comprehensive UV protection policy. Therefore, we endorse safe sun play practises and actively encourage the wearing of appropriate clothing for outdoor play all year round.

QDPA sun safe hats can be purchased at any time at your preschool, or you can alternatively supply your own.

Each preschool provides sunscreen and ensures that it is applied for all outdoor play. If your child requires a specific sunscreen, you are welcome to supply your own.

We ask that you apply your child's sunscreen before arriving at to Preschool to ensure it has had enough time to take effect, but sunscreen is available for you to apply when you arrive.

When signing your child in for the day, the app will allow you to acknowledge that you have applied sunscreen to your child. Sunscreen is then applied every two hours and/or 20 minutes prior to going outside.

You can also help us by ensuring that your child is wearing clothing with collars and sleeves and that their footwear allows them to play safely.





# Food and Nutrition

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At QDPA, families provide children's meals for their day at preschool. We follow the 'munch and move' early childhood guidelines for healthy eating.

Our preschools will share information on healthy lunchbox ideas to families via OWNA to inspire lunchbox creations.

Each preschool is nut free, however, other foods may be added to that list if a child is enrolled with anaphylaxis – a notice will be on display in the foyer of each preschool alerting you to any foods not able to be brought to preschool in your child's lunchboxes.

Each child must also bring a labelled water bottle for their day at preschool.

<https://healthykids.nsw.gov.au/downloads/file/campaignsprogram/HealthyLunchboxes.pdf>



# Emergency Procedures

## Evacuation and Lockdown Drills

To ensure the safety of all children and staff, emergency procedures such as evacuation and lockdown drills will be conducted each term. If families are present at the Preschool at the time of the emergency procedure, they are legally required to participate in the procedure.

The procedures are displayed in each Preschool for all families, children, staff, and visitors to view. In the event of an emergency, the priority is to remain calm and ensure the safety of all the people within the Preschool. All people on the premises will assemble at the designated area and staff will mark rolls to ensure all persons are present via the OWNA app.

## Asthma and Anaphylaxis

If a child needs long term or emergency medication, the Centre will require additional information from families.

Families will be required to complete a medication authorisation form and will need to provide a medical action plan from a medical practitioner. In some cases, a photo of the child, with permission to display in the Preschool may be requested. A risk minimisation plan will also be developed in consultation with the child's family upon enrolment, which will be kept in the child's file and in the rooms' health and wellbeing folder.

# Signing in and out

Families or authorised persons must sign your child in and out of the Centre at the time of arrival and departure. This is a legal requirement in accordance with the National Law and Regulations. There is an iPad available in central spaces in each preschool for you to electronically sign your child in and out on arrival and departure. The app will also alert you to any missed attendances that have not been signed for you to rectify this and ensure your attendances are accurately recorded for compliance.

Families are requested to notify a staff member of their arrival and departure for safety reasons, and children are not to be left in any space of the Preschools unsupervised under any circumstances.

Children will only be released to people authorised by the parents/legal guardians in writing. Persons unknown to staff will be asked for photographic identification (preferably a driver's licence). Children will not be released to any persons not authorised and listed on the enrolment form, so if you need to add a contact, please ensure you notify your Preschool Director in writing to update your child's records. Persons under 18 can also not be an authorised contact for collection of children at the service.

Our app, OWNA, allows you to mark your own absences and we strongly encourage you to do this to accurately reflect non-attendances and allow the educators to plan effectively including staffing rosters and arrangements for pre-planned leave dates.



# Self-Assessment & Quality Improvement Plans

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The aim of a QIP is to help providers self-assess their performance in delivering quality education and care, and to plan future improvements. The QIP also helps regulatory authorities with [assessing the quality of the service](#).

A QIP must:

- include an assessment of the programs and practices at the service against the National Quality Standard and National Regulations
- identify areas for improvement
- include a statement about the service's philosophy.

A QIP should also document and celebrate the service's strengths.

Self-assessment against the NQS drives continuous improvement and is essential to providing quality outcomes for children. Self-assessment is an important part of the quality improvement planning process. [NQS Element 7.2.1](#) requires an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process to be in place.

A Self-assessment Tool helps us identify service strengths, areas of compliance, practices that are Exceeding NQS, and areas and opportunities for quality improvement.

Our Quality Improvement Plan's for each Preschool are completed online through the OWNA portal, and can be viewed by all families and staff.

# National Quality Framework

The National Quality Framework aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency in education and care services and includes;

- ❖ National Law and National Regulations
- ❖ National Quality Standard
- ❖ Assessment and Rating process
- ❖ National learning frameworks.

The National Law sets a national standard for children's education and care across Australia.

The National Regulations support the National Law by providing detail on a range of operational requirements for an education and care service.

The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets a high national benchmark for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services in Australia. The NQS includes seven quality areas that are important outcomes for children.

Services are assessed and rated by their regulatory authority against the NQS and given a rating for each of the seven quality areas and an overall rating based on these results.

Under the National Law and Regulations, services are required to base their educational program on an approved learning framework. This should focus on addressing the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, while considering individual differences.

The nationally approved learning framework which outlines practices that support and promote children's learning to be used in our Preschools is:

- ❖ Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) - Approved learning framework under the NQF for young children from birth to five years of age.

Further information regarding these requirements can be referenced at [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)

# Early Years Learning Framework

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) guides educators in developing quality programs for children. It describes the early childhood pedagogy (principles and practice) and the outcomes required to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, including their transition to school.

The EYLF has a strong emphasis on play-based learning, as play, as described by Lev Vygotsky, "In play, the most important thing is not the satisfaction the child receives through playing, but the objective use and objective meaning of their play, of which the child himself is unaware. This meaning, as is well known, involves the development and exercise of all the child's powers and latent strengths" (Bodrova, 2008, p. 359). Abbott (1994, p. 52) also states that "We believe that it is vital for all adults with responsibilities for young children to recognise that, for them, play is a good deal more than recreation. It has a fundamental role in early childhood education, supplying the foundation upon which learning is built."

The EYLF also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development. "Play that is well planned and pleasurable helps children to think, to increase their understanding and to improve their language competence" (Abbott, 1994, p. 41).

The learning outcomes of the EYLF are:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity.
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
4. Children are confident and involved learners.
5. Children are effective communicators.

We also believe that some of the best opportunities for learning through play is 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 – rain, hail, or shine, jumping in muddy puddles, climbing trees, building forts and cubbies and cooking mud pies in the mud kitchen.

# Goals for your child at Preschool

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With a collaborative approach between each family, child, and our team of educators, we will create a range of short and long-term goals for your child that we will program for and observe which will be based on the outcomes in the Early Years Learning Framework and include:

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



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

# Relationships with Children

## Interactions with Children

Research shows relationships are central to children developing acceptance, self-esteem and higher functioning thinking skills that contribute to positive learning and life outcome. Positive relationships early in life help children to connect with others, build positive friendships and support children to self-regulate their emotions.

For relationships to be meaningful, interactions need to be warm, caring, and responsive. When attention is given to building connections and maintaining them over time, children are more likely to feel a sense of security, well-being and belonging.

Educators need to be emotionally available to assist children. Being aware of and clear about your feelings and relationships with children and others shows empathy and can help children recognise and manage their feelings.

## National Regulation 155: Interactions with Children

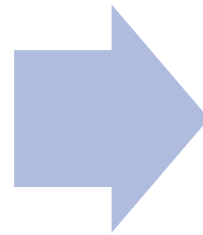
An approved provider must take reasonable steps to ensure that the education and care service provides education and care to children in a way that:

- a) Encourages the children to express themselves and their opinions; and
- b) Allows the children to undertake experiences that develop self-reliance and self-esteem; and
- c) Always maintains the dignity and rights of each child; and
- d) Gives each child positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour; and
- e) Has regard to the family and cultural values, age, and physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being educated and cared for by the service.

# Behaviour Guidance

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For the children to feel safe, secure and know the boundaries with behaviour, the educators must ensure the children experience a consistent approach to behaviour guidance. This involves developing the child's awareness of what is appropriate to do, what is not appropriate, what is safe, what angers or hurts others while developing the child's capacity for self-discipline.



No child will be subject to punishment that humiliates, frightens, or threatens them. Where possible, behaviour guidance should be based on positive redirection and prevention of incidents occurring, rather than management after a problem has occurred.



# Rest and Relaxation

Queanbeyan and District Preschool Association recognises that supporting healthy sleep, rest and relaxation development in early childhood is vital for ensuring that children can flourish and meet their individual potential. As with other areas of a child's development, there is considerable individual variation in children's sleep and rest needs across the early childhood and in particular the Preschool period. The importance of supporting early sleep and rest development is reflected in both the National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care, as well as under regulation 168 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations (81 - Sleep and rest). We aim to make rest time a relaxed, pleasant time for all children. We provide quiet areas for children to access when they need to relax



# Relationships with families

At QDPA, we strive to always demonstrate positive and open communication with families to create a responsive and inclusive environment for all children, staff, and families. Interactions with families help to inform Educators' knowledge of each child's distinctive interests, skills cultures, and abilities. This helps to build a positive experience and a safe learning environment that encourages children to expand their knowledge and understandings.

QDPA and its employees will therefore:

- ❖ Treat all families equitably without bias or judgement, recognising that each family is unique.
- ❖ Provide families with information and resources in their first language where possible.
- ❖ Greet families and children in a warm and respectful manner.
- ❖ Establish two-way communication leading by example and asking questions and a willingness to offer information about ourselves.
- ❖ Use common terminology (not jargon) when talking to parents regarding their child's development.
- ❖ Always respect privacy and confidentiality

Further information on this can be found in the QDPA *Interactions with Children, Families and Staff policy*.

# Family Involvement

Our Preschools rely on the active participation of families. QDPA recognises that working parents have high demands on their time but encourages them to contribute to maintaining the quality service provided by the Association by understanding the value of a not-for-profit service and the organisational structure.

There are many opportunities families can become involved which include:

- Becoming a Parent Management Committee member. The PMC works in consultation with the Executive Officer on determining policy, approving budgets, sets fees, and generally works to better the conditions at the Centre.
- Assist with fundraising activities.
- Assist with day-to-day repair of equipment and materials.
- Make equipment (e.g., sewing dress ups, garden beds).
- Share special skills with the children (e.g., storytelling, playing musical instruments, cooking, talking about interesting holidays or showing slides or artefacts). Families from different cultures are also encouraged to devise activities which reflect their own cultures. Experiences could also include cooking, music, dancing, costume, or celebration of national holidays.
- Contribute a special skill to the running of the individual Preschools or the Association. Skills which are always needed include carpentry, plumbing, painting, garden design, employment conditions, industrial relations, legal, accounting, information technology; and
- Help with projects such as writing grant submissions to obtain funding or help lobby for changes to early education policy.



# Mandatory Reporting (Child Protection)

Mandatory reporters in NSW, are people who deliver the following services, wholly or partly, to children as part of their paid or professional work. All staff have a responsibility to recognise and respond to concerns for safety, welfare and the wellbeing of children and young people, and to report these concerns to management.

According to the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998*, mandated reporters (including people employed in children's services and unpaid managers of these services) must make reports if they suspect on *reasonable grounds* a child is at risk of significant harm because:

The child's basic physical or psychological needs are not being met or are at risk of not being met

The parents or other caregivers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for the child to receive necessary medical care

The parents or other caregivers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for a school age child to receive an education

The child has been, or is at risk of being physically or sexually abused or ill-treated

The child is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence and they are at risk of serious physical or psychological harm

The parent's or other caregiver's behaviour means the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious psychological harm

Source: Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection Act) NO 157 Chapter 3 > Part 2 > Section 23

# The NSW Child Safe Standards

**PROTECT**

Protecting children & young people  
from abuse is our responsibility



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The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse recommended 10 Child Safe Standards, drawing on its findings, research, and consultation about what makes organisations child safe.

The Child Safe Standards provide a benchmark against which organisations can assess their child safe capacity and set performance targets. The Standards provide tangible guidance for organisations to drive a child safe culture, adopt strategies and act to put the interests of children first, to keep them safe from harm.

The 10 Child Safe Standards are:

- Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture
- Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
- Families and communities are informed and involved
- Equity is upheld and diverse needs are taken into account
- People working with children are suitable and supported
- Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child-focused
- Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training
- Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur
- Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved
- Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe

The Office of the Children's Guardian is an independent statutory body that promotes the interests, safety and rights of children and young people in NSW. The core functions of the Office of the Children's Guardian include administering Working with Children Checks, Reportable Conduct Scheme and implementation of the Child Safe Standards.

All employees will be required to undergo the Child Safe Standards training within 3 months of employment.

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations then embed the Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission. The National Quality Framework (NQF) review is currently exploring options to embed these under the NQF.



# Diversity within our community

An anti-bias approach underpins the philosophy of our Preschools, and we recognise and value the similarities and differences that exist within our preschool community and the wider community. The role of Teachers and Educators is to encourage children to share and learn about the individuality of each child and their family, to assist children in developing acceptance towards the diversity of our community. This approach aims to assist children to form positive social relationships and to learn to accept the diversity of members of the Preschool community.

Children from all family backgrounds are welcomed; this includes children from two parent families, single parent families, same sex families, blended families, foster and extended families, and children with additional needs. Through discussion and ongoing learning, Educators will actively encourage all children to accept and respect different family compositions.

For our Teachers and Educators to develop cultural competence, they will undertake ongoing professional learning to ensure that their knowledge and skills reflect current community perspectives. Educators who are culturally competent respect multiple cultural ways of knowing, seeing, and living, celebrate the benefits of diversity and have an ability to understand and honour difference.

‘Children belong first to a family, a cultural group, a neighbourhood, and a wider community. Belonging acknowledges children’s interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. In early childhood and throughout life, relationships are crucial to a sense of belonging. Belonging is central to being and becoming in that it shares who children are and who they can become’ (EYLF, 2009, p.7)

At QDPA, we recognise and value the similarities and differences that exist within our Association team and wider community and that we have a role encourage children to share and learn about such diversity. We are particularly focused on building our inclusivity and as such, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people, those from various cultural backgrounds, all genders, all levels of ability and members of the LGBTQI community are welcomed in our team.

# Excursions & Incursions

Excursions play an important role in QDPA's vision and mission, as well as within our curriculums across the Preschools.. We believe by providing children opportunities from a young age and valuing each child's competence and capabilities in all experiences, including excursions, assists in developing a range of skills in each individual.

Risk assessments are conducted for all excursions, and we assess the staffing ratios for each individual experience. Often though, additional staff attend each excursion on top of the ratios determined in the risk assessment/permission notes. Our Preschools will never plan or implement an excursion or experience where the children's safety is jeopardised or compromised.

Families will be given written notice of the planned excursions, and families will be required to sign the permission form to enable their child to participate. Children will not be able to participate without the signed permission form. All families have the choice of whether their child attends an excursion, and this choice is respected for those who choose for their child to remain behind.

Special performances and events are also planned and arranged for on a regular basis within each Preschool. An events calendar is available for viewing on OWNA so you can see what special performances and events have been planned and arranged for well in advance. Some dates and times may change so it is important to check in regularly, however, the details are finalised and confirmed in the permission notes, so be sure to check those details.

# Embedding Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Culture & History

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QDPA acknowledges the Ngunnawal and Ngambri people as the traditional caretakers of this land. Our Preschools are committed to promoting the perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island history and culture. We actively do this by:

- Contributing to, developing and extending on each Preschools Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) through the Narragunnawali platform;
- Supporting children in developing an awareness of the Traditional Custodians of the land and the languages spoken;
- Working collaboratively with children, families, and the local community to develop an Acknowledgement of Country that signifies respect for Aboriginal culture, history and beliefs;
- Caring for and learning from the land;
- Exploration of how living things are interconnected and the interdependence between land, people, plants and animals;
- Developing knowledge about places of cultural significance in context of our local region;
- Exploring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history through the context of our program;
- Developing collaborative partnerships with local networks such as the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) and the Koori Interagency Network Group (KING);
- Engaging with local Elders and community members in the provision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in our program.

Each of our Queanbeyan & District Preschool Association services has written a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Our RAPs have a Working Group which comes together to plan and discuss goals and achievements and all families are invited to join our RAP Networking Group. If you are interested in playing a role in the Group, please speak to your Director.





# Grievances and Disputes

QDPA believes that disputes and grievances are best handled through an open, transparent, respectful and immediate procedure.

In the first instance, please address any concerns with your child's educators, teachers or the Preschool Director.

In more serious or unmanageable circumstances, the issue must be raised with the QDPA Executive Officer.

# Privacy Policy Statement

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To provide you with the highest standard of service our organisation is required to collect personal information from you about you and your child/ren before and during their enrolment in our service. We are committed to protecting your privacy and we abide by the National Privacy Principles contained within the Privacy Act. Privacy of your personal information is important to us, and we conduct our business with respect and integrity.

Basic details are usually collected directly from parents such as names, addresses and phone contacts. It is also necessary for us to collect details such as each child's name, date of birth, medical details, health, routines, likes and dislikes. This information goes to make up a personal profile on each child.

Staff responsible for planning room programs will also collect information on children through observations they may make. These observations will be used to map each child's development and be included in their personal profiles. Much of this information is of a personal nature and some of it might be regarded as 'sensitive' and not to be unnecessarily disclosed to others.

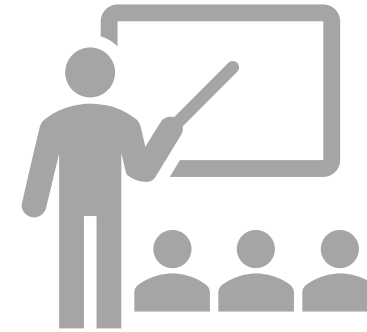
We assure you that:

- Our educators will only use this information to provide the highest standard of education and care.
- It will not be disclosed to those not associated with the care of your child without your expressed consent.
- You may seek access to the information held about you and your child and we will provide that access without undue delay.
- This access might be inspection of your child's records or by providing copies of information.
- We will always take reasonable steps to ensure that the details we keep about your family are accurate, complete, and up to date.
- We will take reasonable steps to protect this information from misuse or loss and from unauthorised access or disclosure.
- Our educators are always committed to respect these principles.
- If a student has a valid training requirement that involves the gathering of certain information pertaining to your child or family, the student must have written consent from you and the Centre Director.

# Privacy and social media



It is a breach of confidentiality and privacy to make posts or comments about children, families, staff or management from QDPA on social media sites. It is also inappropriate to post pictures of children, families, staff or management from QDPA on personal social media sites. We ask that families do not post photos and images of other children on any social media account (personal or public).



Each Preschool and the Association has social media pages that are used to share significant events and achievements as a way of positively promoting the Association, as well as networking with other relevant services in the community. Administrators of these social media pages must ensure that all content that is shared is written professionally and ethically, and any photos used have obtained written permission from families prior to posting to these platforms.



## Our Office Team Ashleigh & Narelle

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## CONTACT US



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Welcome to Queanbeyan  
& District Preschool  
Association

