



## ***Site Based Preschool***

## ***Information Booklet***

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**Government of South Australia**  
Department for Education

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# **PHILOSOPHY**

The staff and Governing Council of Loxton North School welcome you to our Preschool. We value and care for all children and families within our service by providing a safe and caring learning environment. We aspire to provide a service that meets the learning and wellbeing needs of the children and parents / caregivers in a way that complements and supports the family.

We believe

- Children need an environment that is safe, welcoming, encouraging, stimulating, warm, secure, healthy and fun
- Children learn through play and we encourage connections through nature play
- Each child has a right to be heard, loved, cared for, accepted and safe
- Through socialising with other children and adults, children develop a sense of self-worth, confidence and social skills
- Parents are the primary educators of their children
- Parents have a right to be involved at any level with which they feel comfortable
- Each child is from a family with differing backgrounds, values and attitudes
- Open and ongoing communication between parents, caregivers and staff is essential
- Children benefit when staff reflect on their practice and engage in ongoing professional learning
- We work together with other agencies in the community and beyond, for the benefit of the children, parents and families in the Loxton North School Community

## **1. SESSIONS AND FEES**

If your child turns 4 before the 1<sup>st</sup> of May, your child is eligible to start preschool at the beginning of that year. All children attend preschool for four terms before starting school for an average of 15 hours per week. Aboriginal students are eligible to start preschool when they turn 3.

Currently, the sessions are as follows:

Tuesday 8.30 am – 3.00 pm

Thursday 8.30 am – 3.00 pm

Every second Friday from 8.30am to 3.00pm for terms one to three only.

This can be changed through agreement with Staff and Governing Council should the need arise.

Your child is entitled to attend the full day, however, the child's wellbeing is the most important factor and staff and families can monitor how they are going with the full day.

Fees are \$50.00 per term in 2019.

An invoice will be issued at the beginning of the year.

Payments can be made by using centrepay, cash or credit card.





## **2. HOME TO PRESCHOOL TO SCHOOL TRANSITION**

It is the policy of the School to ensure the transition from Home to Preschool to School is as smooth as possible for children and parents/caregivers.

We encourage the involvement of parents and children at Playgroup/Occasional Care as this opportunity provides time for your child to become familiar with the Preschool environment.

In the term before children commence preschool, children are invited to attend transition sessions, this is dependent upon the number of enrolments and staffing. Contact will be made with parents inviting them to attend an information session for transitions from home to preschool and preschool to school, further arrangements can be made with the preschool teacher and principal if required.

## **3. SPECIAL SERVICES**

Access to Special Needs services is facilitated through the Preschool. These services include Speech Pathology, Psychology, Physiotherapy, Behaviour Management and other services in response to individual needs. Please discuss any concerns you may have about your child's development with the staff as well as referring to your child's blue CAFHS book.



## **4. STAFFING**

The preschool's most valuable resource is the staff team. The staff have a range of qualifications and experiences in working with young children. They care for and respect children. In this caring environment they are able to identify and respond to individual children's developmental and learning needs. Ongoing professional development for staff is actively encouraged, so regular relievers are employed whenever possible to provide continuity and stability for children, staff and families. Presently our staff consists of:

Teacher – Jo Size – Bachelor of Early Childhood

Early Childhood Educator – Sue Jones – Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care

Occasional Care Educator – Laura Trower – Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care

## **5. GOVERNING COUNCIL**

Preschool parents are encouraged to join the school Governing Council which is nominated in February/March of each year. This Council is made up of representatives of parents and staff. The Governing Council is responsible for;

- making decisions about financial management
- policy development
- fundraising
- ensuring the development, monitoring and reviewing of the strategic plan
- reporting to the preschool community and Minister about the above

Experience is not necessary to join the Governing Council, just interest, enthusiasm and commitment.

## **6. ENROLLING AND SETTLING IN**

We encourage all families wishing to enrol their child to visit. The school principal or preschool teacher will show you around and explain all functions, routines and policies. You will have the opportunity to ask any questions and you are invited to spend time with your child in the preschool and to meet the staff. An appointment to enrol is required to ensure all information is accurately recorded on the enrolment form especially medical, special needs and emergency contacts. It is also important to keep information up to date so when you move or change phone numbers for example, please inform the school office as needed.

If your child experiences difficulties settling in please do not hesitate to discuss this with a staff member.

## **7. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

On arrival please ensure you and your child, greet a staff member and complete the morning tasks. After settling your child at an activity, please say 'goodbye' to your child even if this is difficult for you or child. It is important that he / she knows that you are leaving and that you will return. The staff are there should you need help.

The preschool session commences at 8.30am and staff need the time prior to this to set up equipment and activities. If you arrive early please stay at the preschool until 8.30am. You may be able to assist the staff or take time to participate in an activity with your child.

Please be prompt arriving at the end of a session as once again there are many jobs to do at the conclusion of a session. Being prompt at the beginning and end of the session develops good organizational habits for your child.

On arrival please

- Greet a staff member
- Help your child to place their bag in the locker
- Post their name in the box
- Place their water bottle, fruit in the appropriate trays and lunch into the fridge.  
(Please ensure all items are named.)

When leaving please

- Wait until a staff member has farewelled your child
- Help your child to collect their session's work and their belongings  
(Including lunch boxes, drink bottles and craft they have made).



## **8. SECURITY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN**

The safety of the children is of paramount importance to staff. Only parents and authorised persons nominated on the enrolment form may collect your child, unless you have advised the staff beforehand. If the staff are unclear about an unfamiliar person collecting a child, identification such as a driver's licence may be requested also children will not be released to another child or persons under the age of 18yrs.

If at any time a Family Court Order is made, the school office and preschool teacher must be advised immediately and be provided with a copy of any such order.

## **9. BUS TRAVEL**

In special circumstances, children living some distance from the preschool are allowed to travel on Department for Education buses. Please discuss this with the principal or bus coordinator at school before applying, as this is subject to transport policy conditions.

A FREE bus service is available after school transporting students to the location of Loxton OSHC. This assists families who work in town, appointments or children needing to attend OSHC. Please contact the front office to book your child in; this can be done on a permanent or temporary basis.

Morning transport via bus from the OSHC to the school is also available on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, at a subsidized cost of \$2 per child. Bookings for the morning route are organized through the Loxton OSHC.

## **10. WHAT DO YOU NEED TO BRING (Please label all items)**

- A bag with your child's items.
- 2 pieces of fruit (fresh, unprocessed fruit or vegetables, cheese and cracker biscuits or yoghurt are acceptable. Some children need more food than others so adjust the amount as needed.
- A healthy lunch (sandwiches, wraps, salad, finger food etc.) No lollies/chocolate/chips
- A water bottle
- Change of clothes, please ensure all clothing is sun smart, shoulders must be covered
- Sun safe hat. ie either broad brimmed, bucket hat or legionnaire. (No caps)

## **11. PROGRAMME**

Children grow and learn best in a safe and caring environment. Staff use the routines, planned activities and child initiated play as learning experiences. We believe that children have a voice in their learning, children learn, practice and develop skills best through play and staff continually support and challenge children through interactions.

Each term a term overview is prepared which gives a direction for the term's programme. A programme based on the National Early Years Learning Framework is then prepared based on the needs of the children, interests and special events. Please see a staff member if you did not receive a term overview at start of each term. We also work in partnerships with the school with the Kids Matter Program, Kimochi's, Mind up and run parental workshops to assist Parents with information with children's emotional well-being.

## **12. EXCURSIONS**

Excursions are included in the preschool programme generally once a term. You will be given details of any excursions and written consent must be received before your child can participate. Some excursion costs are subsidized which reduces the cost to parents/caregivers. Invoices will be sent home for excursions.

## **13. CELEBRATIONS**

Celebrations are an important and fun part of our lives. They promote a sense of belonging and positive self-esteem and this can happen in a variety of ways.

At the end of each term a term PowerPoint is prepared and we have a shared lunch with children and their families to celebrate the term & commence holidays. At the end of each year we have a Graduation ceremony for the children leaving preschool and commencing school. A small programme which all children participate in is held and all parents/carers and relatives are invited.

Christmas and Easter activities are included in our programme, however if for cultural or religious reasons you do not want your child to participate please inform the preschool teacher.

Each child's birthday is recognized. You are welcome to provide something to share to help celebrate your child's special day, e.g. balloons, party streamers.



## **14. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES – EVACUATION AND INVACUATION**

Emergency drills are practiced each term. Anyone present in the centre at the time will be asked to participate in the drill. In the event of a dangerous situation on the outside of the building an invacuation drill will occur whereby children, staff and any other people present within the preschool site will be taken to our safe area in the library. In the event of an evacuation staff, children and anyone present at the preschool will make their way to the school stadium on the sports oval. More information is available adjacent to the exit doors in the preschool.



## **15. ILLNESS AND IMMUNISATION**

The preschool staff will care for your child should they become sick while at preschool. You or your emergency contact will be notified and requested to collect your child as soon as possible.

As a general rule, children who are unwell should not come to preschool, even if they really want to – this decision needs to be the parents' – not the child's. We must ask you not to send your child if he or she has a cold or other infectious illness or condition. Children of this age do not have the consistent hygiene skills necessary to prevent the spread of infection. Included in the "Infectious" category are:

- Colds (runny nose, coughing, temperature, lethargic)
- Tonsillitis
- School sores
- Head lice
- Chicken pox
- Conjunctivitis
- Hand, foot and mouth disease

If ever you are not sure, ring the school. We have information here on all of the above and many other childhood health issues.

## **16. COMMUNICATION**

Communication is of great importance to your child's well-being, involvement and development of learning. We have a range of tools used to communicate and receive feedback from you on a regular basis. As part of the National Quality Standards we are required to gain regular input and feedback which we value to create further opportunities for your child.

A **Parent information board** is outside near the first door of the preschool, please check this board at drop-off. This board displays the recent and upcoming happenings at the preschool. In the preschool we use **'Assessment'** to communicate throughout the year about your child's learning and access to your child's photo journal. We also communicate to our parents via the **Skoolbag app**; if you need help with downloading the Skoolbag app please speak to the front office staff. The **Loxton North School website** has further information about our site.

A **school newsletter** is printed once a fortnight. Other information specific to the preschool such as excursions will be printed and placed in communication pockets. Along with the child's name, the name of the main care giver is also placed on the communication pockets to assist parents to learn the names of each other.

An **information session** for parents / carer's of new preschool children is held at commencement of your child's preschool journey, either during the day or on an evening. Please make yourself available to attend one of these during your child during their first term, or in the pre-entry session.

If you would like to discuss your child's development, you are most welcome to talk with a staff member informally or make an appointment for a more **formal meeting** with the preschool teacher. We welcome opportunities to discuss with families any concerns about your child's time at preschool or any issues to do with preschool matters, please talk directly to the preschool teacher. Staff also welcome and appreciate constructive feedback. **Parent Opinion Surveys** and other forms of feedback give us opportunities to share ideas and continually improve our service.

## **17. SUN SAFE**

Children and staff are required to wear a suitable hat, clothes and sunscreen whilst outside for most of the year. Together, Loxton North School and our preschool have a sun safe policy which encourages hat wearing all year except the winter months of June, July and August. In summer, parents are asked to apply sunscreen prior to coming to sessions. Sunscreen is also available at the preschool and will be applied to the children when necessary. Children who forget their hats will only play in shaded areas outside on hot days. We also ask that your child wear clothes that protect their shoulders (no singlets or thin strapped dresses).

## **18. MANDATORY REPORTING**

Our preschool is committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The staffs are mandated notifiers and are obliged by law to report any abuse and/or neglect.

## **19. POLICIES**

As a Department for Education preschool we abide by state policies, as well as others locally developed. Policies are in place to ensure the safety and well-being of your child.

Site specific policies are available on request, policies are constantly being reviewed and updated.



## **20. ASSESSING AND REPORTING**

Staff will maintain contact with you about your child's development throughout your child's time at the preschool. We offer parent teacher interviews twice a year and informal meetings such as chats or phone calls which occur regularly. Staff welcome parents request for any additional meetings if you have any queries or concerns during your child's preschool year. Parents are welcome to view their child's portfolio at any time; these can be taken home to share with family during school holidays. Families are welcome to make additions to the portfolio and provide written feedback for staff.

A summative report is given to parents at the completion of their child's year at preschool. A copy is also provided to the reception teacher and a copy remains at the preschool. Reporting is based on the Learning Outcomes from the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, which is our national Early Years' Curriculum.

***“Children are at the centre of everything we do”***

**Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Loxton North Preschool**

**Kind Regards**

**Vanessa Wainwright - Principal**