




Preschool Parent/Carer Handbook

CONTACT DETAILS:

Phone: 67 420603 Office

Email: admin@ooranga.com.au

Website: www.ooranga.com.au

 @ooranga

preschool playgroup & toy library

OUR CENTRES AND STAFF

Our pre-school centres operate during the school terms on the nominated days between the hours of 9:00am and 3:00pm except for Currabubula which operates from 9:15am to 3:15pm.

Boggabri Pre-school Father Dowd Hall Laidlaw Street BOGGABRI NSW 2382	Tuesday and Wednesday 9am to 3pm	0490 681471
Spring Ridge Pre-school Spring Ridge Hall Darby Street SPRING RIDGE NSW 2343	Monday and Thursday 9am to 3pm	0490 692317
Premier Pre-school Premier Medical Centre 61 Ellerslie Street PREMER NSW 2381	Tuesday and Wednesday 9am to 3pm	0490 661605
Carroll Pre-school Carroll Public School David Street CARROLL NSW 2340	Monday and Wednesday 9am to 3pm	0490 661383
Mullaley Pre-school Mullaley Hall Oxley Highway MULLALEY NSW 2379	Tuesday and Friday 9am to 3pm	0490 710597
Curlewis Pre-school Curlewis Scout Hall Cnr Pullaming & Pike St CURLEWIS NSW 2381	Monday and Thursday 9am to 3pm	0491 059283
Currabubula Pre-school Currabubula Public School Bolton Street CURRABUBULA NSW 2342	Thursday and Friday 9.15am to 3.15pm	0472 920603

The Ooranga office is open Monday to Friday between the hours of 9:00am and 5:00pm and is located at 112 Barber Street, Gunnedah.

Administration Manager -
Nominated Supervisor -
Educational Leader -
Toy Librarian -

Libby Whitehurst
Lana Boxsell
Mardi Fordham
Paula Jones

OORANGA PHILOSOPHY

Vision

Young children flourish within their local community

Mission

To support individual child development through the provision of high quality, mobile early childhood services to rural communities

Values

Child directed programs
Inclusion of all children and families
Respect in our interaction with others
Commitment to local communities
Learn through play
Excellence through continuous improvement

ABOUT OORANGA

In November 1979, a group of interested parents met with the view to forming an organization which could provide support and back up to small groups of isolated families who wished to provide playgroup activities for their pre-school children. A committee was formed and after much hard work, a grant was finally made available in June 1981. The committee purchased a van and educational equipment, then went about setting up the Toy Library and employing staff. The word “Ooranga”, comes from an Aboriginal word, meaning “*a place where children play*”.

Since the beginning of 1982, Ooranga staff have delivered playgroups to small communities around Gunnedah. Ooranga has been delivering preschool services for over 20 years. The service has grown to operate preschools for two days each week at seven different, geographically isolated venues across three Local Government Areas. The service employs part-time early childhood educators who are qualified with either a Bachelor of Teaching Early Childhood Education, a Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care or a Certificate III in Children’s Services supported by a full-time administration team. Ooranga consists of an office and mobile base located at 112 Barber Street, Gunnedah, providing services including Toy Library, Mobile Playgroup and Preschools.

Mobile early childhood services provide adaptable and innovative, educationally focused opportunities for communities that are isolated due to a variety of reasons. Ooranga strives towards best-practice preschool services, aligning with the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Framework (ACECQA) to prepare young children for the transition to school in their local community. Ooranga preschool venues are community owned facilities that are not purpose built for childcare and enable the service to deliver preschool in the local communities where no other reasonable access is available.

The services Ooranga provides are regulated by the Children (Education and Care Services) Supplementary Provisions Regulation 2012 and Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 S1 653). Preschool funding is received from NSW Department of Education and the Australian Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. This funding does not cover all expenses incurred in operating our services. Ooranga relies on fees, fundraising and donations to cover additional costs.

GOVERNANCE and MANAGEMENT

Ooranga Family Mobile Resource Unit Association Incorporated is a community based not for profit organization, managed by a volunteer committee. Our committee is elected each year at the annual general meeting. All Ooranga members are eligible and welcome to be part of the Executive Committee or a Committee Floor Member. Committee members provide strategic direction for the service, appoint, and monitor staff performance, ensure compliance with legal responsibilities, and ensure financial viability. The Ooranga Committee is supported by the administrative staff to provide information and carry out operational duties.

Ooranga Family Mobile Resource Unit Assoc. Inc. hold Committee Meetings on the second Thursday of each month at the CWA rooms at 112 Barber Street, Gunnedah. No meetings are held during school holidays. The AGM is held in September. All the Ooranga membership will receive an invitation to attend the AGM via email.

ENROLMENT

An enrolment form is to be completed for each child attending any Ooranga preschool service. Immunisation records must be provided with all enrolments. **A child cannot begin to utilise any of our preschool services until the required documentation is completed and returned to the office at 112 Barber Street Gunnedah. Paperwork will then be checked, and enrolments confirmed notifying parent/carer of commencement date.**

Ooranga preschool services cater for children aged 3 to 5 years of age. At times, children may be enrolled before they turn 3, dependent on enrolment numbers. Children are required to be toilet trained prior to attending preschool. Ooranga's educators understand that some children, due to medical or other reasons, may require the use of nappies/pull-ups. Please discuss this with your centre's Coordinator or the Ooranga Executive Officer prior to your child's enrolment.

IMMUNISATION

As per the NSW Government Public Health Act 2010, section 87 you are required to provide Ooranga with a copy of your child's up to date Medicare Immunisation History Statement or Exemption. This can be obtained from your myGov online account. Your child's enrolment cannot be confirmed until this statement has been received. If your child has not been immunized and there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease then under the Department of Health Guidelines, your child will be excluded from the centre for the duration of the outbreak. Documentation must be provided if for medical reasons your child is not vaccinated.

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK

At all Ooranga Preschools our programming is aligned with The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia – Belonging, Being and Becoming (EYLF).

The Early Years Learning Framework was created with input from the Early Childhood Sector, Academics and State/Territory Governments. The aim of the document is to extend and enrich children's learning and has emphasis on quality teaching and best practice.

This National Curriculum has five learning outcomes:

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

You will see reference to these learning outcomes in various forms of documentation. This may include our daily diary, program, observations, and goal setting. Each preschool has a copy of this document available for families to view or feel free to ask if you have any more questions.

Website: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au>

DIAGNOSED MEDICAL ACTION PLAN

All parents/carers of children who have a diagnosed medical condition (eg Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Diabetes) must provide a current Medical Action Plan. This will advise pre-school educators of specific instructions from the treating doctor relating to the treatment of the child's medical condition. All parents/carers will be issued with a copy of the Medical Conditions Procedure which outlines practices for managing identified medical conditions.

MEDICATION

Parents/Carers must complete a Medication Authorisation Form and Administering Record for any prescribed medication that is to be given to a child. Ooranga staff shall only administer a child's medication from original containers with the chemist label attached listing the child as the prescribed person and dosage information.

Medication will be stored in a lockable container at the preschool and must be collected at the end of each day. To ensure that medication is administered as prescribed, an educator will record the date, time and dosage given. This record will be signed and checked by two members of staff.

ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN

The staff at Ooranga continually carry out observations on individual children and records are kept on each child's progress. Please feel free to speak to any of our staff regarding your child's progress at any time. If we feel your child would benefit from extra assistance, given by professionals from outside the service, we will approach you first and discuss options available. If you feel your child requires extra assistance, please speak to your centre's Co-ordinator or the Executive Officer, and we can arrange for an assessment to take place.

STORYPARK ONLINE PLATFORM



Storypark is a private online service that helps educators, parents and families work together to record, share, and extend children's learning. It may include photos, videos, stories, moments and notes about your child's learning and development. We use this platform to share our daily program and your child's progress towards learning outcomes from the Early Years Learning Framework. Once your child is enrolled, you will receive an invitation via email to accept participation. There is no cost for families to utilize this service. More information about Storypark can be found at storypark.com.au

CHILD ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Each child must be escorted to and from the preschool venue by a parent/carer or nominee authorised by the parent/carer. The parent/carer must notify the Co-ordinator or known member of the teaching staff when dropping off or picking up at preschool. The parent/carer or authorized nominee must sign the child in each day on the sign in/out sheets provided at the centre. The name of the child, time of arrival and the signature of the person dropping off the child must be recorded. The name of the person who is to collect the child at the end of the preschool day must also be recorded. Details of time and signature of who picked up the preschool children must be recorded on the sign out sheet at the end of the pre-school day.

No child is to be taken from the playground or centre without the staff being made aware. Please keep your authorised nominees details up to date on your child's enrolment form for pick up/emergency release and drop off contacts. Any changes throughout the year are required in writing.

Should a person, other than those authorized nominees listed on the enrolment form, be required to collect the child at any time it will be necessary to inform the Co-Ordinator in person or in writing. No child will be released into the care of anyone who is under the age of 18 years. Parents/Carers should be punctual in collecting children. Children may not be left at the pre-school before 8.45am and must be collected promptly at 3.00pm.

MEMBERSHIP

A membership fee of \$20.00 per family, per year must be paid prior to utilising any of Ooranga's services. This fee will be charged on your child's first preschool term account for the year. Please let the office know if you are already a member of the Ooranga Toy Library or Playgroup.

FEE SCHEDULE

Preschool fees are charged on a per day basis, in addition to the Ooranga Membership fee. The fee payable is based upon the family's total income. Please speak with your Co-ordinator or administration staff regarding fee structure.

Level 1 Income < \$41, 999	\$15.00 per Day
Level 2 Income > \$42, 000	\$25.00 per Day

To receive the lower fee per day you must provide proof of income, otherwise the highest fee level per day will be charged.

Proof of income can be a current copy of a low-income health care card, Notice of Assessment from the Australian Taxation Office, Centrelink financial statement or a letter from your accountant. Accounts will be issued at the beginning of each term. Fees are always to be paid in advance. Regular payments are encouraged. Fees may be paid using netbank Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), cash or cheques. The Ooranga bank account details for netbank EFT payments into the Ooranga bank account are listed on each invoice. When paying accounts by netbank EFT please use your account invoice number or your surname as the deposit reference.

CENTREPAY OPTION FOR PAYMENT OF FEES

Ooranga is registered with the Centrelink office to offer families the Centrepay option for paying pre-school accounts. You can set up a Centrepay deduction if you have a MyGov online account via the Department of Human Services. If you require assistance, please don't hesitate to ring the office on 67 420603. The administration staff can discuss this payment option and calculate fortnightly fee amounts for Centrepay instalments.

CHILD CONSENT FORM

Ooranga is required to obtain consent from parents and carers to enable use of their child's personal information which is periodically disclosed to the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities. The consent form is attached to preschool enrolment forms.

OORANGA POLICIES

Ooranga Family Mobile Resource Unit Assoc. Inc. has developed policies and procedures which govern the day-to-day operation of its services. These are contained in the "Service Folder" which is always available at each centre and also on the Ooranga website. Policies are reviewed on a biannual basis by all members of Ooranga and policies are approved at Committee Meetings. Families are encouraged to read Ooranga Policies and ask staff if they have any questions.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents/Carers are encouraged to visit any of our services as often as they like. If you have a particular skill, talent or interest e.g. play an instrument or craft activities, please share it with us.

WHAT CHILDREN NEED TO BRING

Please send your child in play clothes, that are easily managed and comfortable, a hat and water bottle, all **labeled with the child's name**.

- A small bag clearly named.
- A healthy snack for morning tea (see Nutrition Policy for suggestions)
- A healthy lunch e.g. sandwich, cheese, sultanas, fruit etc.
- A drink for morning tea and lunch.
- Nappies/pull-ups (if required)
- Bedding for rest time: a small sheet, pillow, and a blanket for cooler days.

Please ensure all items are **clearly labelled with your child's name**.



SETTLING IN

We know that any new venture can be unsettling for children. It can also be very hard on parents to watch their children when they are upset. We hope the following suggestions are helpful to you and your child.

- Give positive reinforcement about the centre
- Acknowledge your child's right to cry or to be sad
- Allow your child plenty of time to settle in and stay with your child if required.
- Prepare your child by explaining how long you will stay in the morning (e.g. do a painting, puzzle etc.)
- Say goodbye to your child before leaving the centre no matter what the circumstances
- Phone the centre to enquire about your child if you are concerned in any way
- Arrive on time to collect your child, especially the first day

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a special occasion. If your child is celebrating a birthday, a cake may be shared with their group. If you wish to bring in a birthday cake, please bring the list of ingredients used for those children with allergies.

EXCURSIONS

Excursions form part of the Ooranga's services curriculum. Parents are requested to sign an excursion form for all excursions. Parents may also be asked to assist with children if numbers exceed ratios.

HEALTH

In the interest of the health and wellbeing of the staff and all children in the centre, the following limitations are set regarding the attendance of sick children.

Exclusion will be warranted if the child has:

- Significant fever: over 38 degrees Celsius
- Diarrhea
- Infectious Disease - conjunctivitis, chicken pox, measles, mumps, glandular fever, German measles, hepatitis, whooping cough
- Contagious conditions - impetigo, head lice, ringworm, scabies, hand, foot, and mouth disease.
- Children with coughs, throat and chest infections should also be excluded from the centre.

If your child becomes ill whilst at our centre, you will be notified immediately, where possible and collection of the child must happen as soon as possible.

Ooranga follows the guidelines provided by The Australian Government Health and Medical Research Council 5th Edition Staying Healthy (preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services) in line with Ooranga's policies and procedures.

ACCIDENTS

Whilst our educators take every effort to ensure your child is always safe, accidents can happen whilst at preschool for many reasons. Any accident that requires first aid by one of our educators will require an incident form to be completed. You will need to sign this form on collection of your child. In the event of your child having a serious accident which may require medical attention, such as a bumped head that may result in concussion or dental treatment, every effort will be made to contact you immediately. If we are unable to contact you, educators will make every attempt to contact other carers or emergency contacts. Educators may call an ambulance if deemed necessary by the Coordinator/Nominated Supervisor. An ambulance may also be called if no contact can be made with you, other carers or emergency contacts on your child's enrolment form.

SUN PROTECTION

Each child is to have a sun smart hat (bucket or broad-brimmed hat) to be worn during outdoor activities. In an effort to reduce the high incidence of sun cancer, Ooranga follows a **"NO HAT – PLAY IN THE SHADE"** policy. Children without hats must play in the shade. Sunscreen should be put on children by their parents before they attend any of Ooranga's services. Sunscreen must not be left in a child's bag. Sunscreen is available from our staff.

ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Ooranga can employ an additional needs assistant if and when the need arises. If you are concerned about any aspect of your child's development, skills or behaviour please speak to our staff. We can assist you and are authorised to arrange assessment and/or referrals to allied health services. If Ooranga educators are concerned regarding a child's development, then the parents will be notified. Our concern is that children be given every opportunity to develop to their full potential. Children on special needs programs are worked with on a one to one basis.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

The Behaviour Guidance Procedure provides guidelines for Ooranga educators to respond to challenging behaviours of children in the preschool environment. This procedure directly relates to Ooranga's Relationships with Children Policy (NQS Quality Area 5) to ensure children are supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts. This procedure is centred on the importance of respect and dignity for the child, acknowledging and accepting children's feelings, encouraging these feelings to be expressed while developing understanding of emotion regulation and self-control.

EMERGENCY PRACTICE DRILLS

Emergency drill evacuations are held regularly at preschool centres. Emergency and Evacuation policy and procedures are displayed at the centres and are reviewed every 12 months. In the event of an actual evacuation due to an emergency, parents will be contacted as soon as practically possible.

QUESTIONS/GRIEVANCES

Any questions you may have in relation to the program, your child's progress or anything related to our services, please do not hesitate to talk to our staff. Likewise, if you have concerns or complaints, do not hesitate to talk to our staff or Ooranga's Executive Officer and follow our grievance procedure. A grievance form can be distributed to you or collected from your pre-school.

All members are invited to write to the committee or speak to the Executive Officer or Coordinator of your service about any issue you think the committee should address.

WELCOME TO OORANGA

We look forward to working with your family