



S⁺JOHN'S
PRE-SCHOOL ASHFIELD

Parent Information Handbook

2018

Welcome to St John's Preschool!



We are located at 64 Bland St, Ashfield, on the site of St John's Anglican Church, and was established in 1946.
We are licensed to accept 60 children per day between the ages of 3 – 6 years old.

Our preschool is renowned for its commitment to providing a Christian preschool environment that is warm, nurturing and inviting to all families within the community. Highly qualified and experienced staff provide an individualised educational program that aims to meet the diverse needs of all children who attend.

Educational programs are underpinned by the National Quality Framework which includes the Early Years Learning Framework. Staff embrace the concept of children being successful learners. Parents are encouraged to participate in the program by volunteering at the centre and communicating their expectations for their child's learning with staff. The children learn through play and interest based activities that are developmentally appropriate for each child's age.

We continue to welcome children with additional needs and work to support families in accessing funding to provide extra support and a positive preschool experience.

We trust that you and your child find the time you spend with us both rewarding and enjoyable. Please retain this Parent Information Handbook as a guide for future reference.

" I am the vine, you are the branches." John 15v5

St John's Preschool Ashfield Incorporated
64 Bland Street, Ashfield
(02) 9797 6392
stjohnsps@optusnet.com.au
ABN: 16 609 632 762



Belonging, Being, Becoming

PLAY based learning, which is stimulating, active, challenging, fun, risky and inclusive; with children as active participants making their own choices.

RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS with children, families, staff and the community.

EDUCATING children through a wide variety of engaging activities and environments.

SUSTAINABILITY and the environment - enjoying, respecting and nurturing our natural environment both inside and outside the gate.

CHRISTIAN based, child-centred environment, aiming to serve our local community and provide high quality early childhood education regardless of a child's background.

HAPPY and welcoming preschool for children and staff from many different cultures.

ONGOING IMPROVEMENT to our preschool through feedback from our community and regulatory authorities; and to ourselves through ongoing professional development.

OUTCOMES based on a curriculum reflecting the principles and practices of the Early Years Learning Framework and the National Quality Standards.

LEARNING TOGETHER and aiming to instill a lifelong love of learning!

Enrolment



Enrolment Paperwork

Upon enrolment, a family will be given an enrolment pack. It is essential that parents return the following on or before their first day of preschool:

1. Enrolment form
2. Signed fee agreement
3. Permission slips (Outside the gate and Church visits)
4. Up to date immunization statement available from Medicare**
5. A birth certificate (can be copied at the office)
6. Up to date health care card/pension card for parents claiming a low-income discount on fees

** New legislation passed in September 2017 requires parents to provide proof of immunisation before their child starts Preschool. Families from overseas will need to take their proof of immunisation to a GP and have them transfer the information to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR). Parents can then request an AIR Immunisation History Statement. Unfortunately, we cannot accept copies of blue books as proof of immunisation.

Please note a copy of your child's immunisation details can also be obtained 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

Staff Information

St. John's Preschool teaching staff are all professionally trained in Early Childhood, regularly attend in-services, seminars and subscribe to periodicals to keep abreast of developments in the field of Early Childhood Education. Regular staff in 2017 include:

Position	Name	Qualification
Director	Stephanie Toovey	Bachelor of Science (Psychology), Diploma of Law, Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice
Nominated Supervisor/ Room Leader Jacaranda Educational Leader	Erin Spahn	Bachelor of Education Early Childhood (4yr)
Room Leader Frangipani	Natasha Zaitsev Jenny Kinsella	Bachelor of Education Early Childhood (4yr) Bachelor of Education Early Childhood (4yr)
Room Leader Lilli Pilli	Beatriz Campos	Diploma in Children's Services
Room Assistant Jacaranda	Xiaoxi Yang	Diploma in Children's Services
Room Assistant Jacaranda	Laura Faau	Diploma in Children's Services
Room Assistant Frangipani	Els Van Leeuwen	Diploma in Children's Services
Room Assistant Lilli Pilli	Laura Pagano	Diploma in Children's Services
Finance and Office Administrator	Sue Lacoba	Speech Pathologist/Bookkeeper

In addition, the preschool employs regular excellent casual staff who are trained in early childhood education.



Age

Children may be enrolled from the age of three (3) years to six (6) years or until eligible for enrolment at school. Children must be fully toilet trained before commencing preschool.

We offer a two day/week program for children aged 3-4 (Monday/Tuesday or Thursday/Friday) and for 4 year olds who will be starting school the following year we offer a 3 day/week program (Monday – Wednesday; Wednesday – Friday) or a 2 long days/week program (Thursday/Friday).

Attendance Patterns

4-5 year olds

Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday (9:30am – 3:30pm)

Wednesday/Thursday/Friday (9:30am – 3:30pm)

Thursday/Friday (8:30am – 4:00pm)

3-4 year olds

Thursday/Friday (9:30am – 3:30pm)

Monday/Tuesday (9:30am – 3:30pm)

Parents are asked to adhere to the session times set out above. Staff are not responsible for children outside of these times. Children must be brought into the classroom, signed in and the teachers made aware of their arrival before their parent/carer leaves.

Children are encouraged to arrive by 10am to ensure that they can settle into their day with their peers and participate in the morning routines which foster the child's sense of membership to their class group.

You are welcome to collect your child any time that suits you, between 2:30 and 3:15pm. This allows you time to collect your belongings and discuss your child's day with their teachers.

NOTE: Please arrive no later than 3.15pm to collect your child. This allows for you to be able to speak with your child's teachers and leave the Preschool in a timely manner. Late Fees will apply at 3.30pm for all children who are still on the premises. Please read the Fee Policy and Fee Agreement for further details.

Term 1 commences on Tuesday 30th January 2018 and we follow the NSW School Terms (unless otherwise indicated by the Management Committee). The final day of the year will be decided by the Management Committee.

Absences

- Children who are unwell should not be sent to preschool. Children who have vomited or had diarrhoea are excluded until 24 hours since the last episode.
- If you have given your child paracetamol or other medication in the morning then they should not attend Preschool.
- If your child has a fever they should be kept home and staff should be notified as soon as possible.
- Please do not send your child, even when he or she insists that they want to attend, when there is a risk of passing on a contagious condition to others. For more information, please see our Infectious Disease Policy and here: http://www.imagineeducation.com.au/files/GapTraining/Staying_Healthy_5th_Edition.pdf

If a child becomes ill at preschool, we will contact the parents. If we cannot contact the parents/primary carer, we will contact the first emergency contact on your enrolment form and proceed through the list until an authorised person is contacted.

NOTE: Fees are charged regardless of your child's attendance. Costs are the same whether your child attends for the day or not. Fees are charged for the exclusive reservation of that place for your child, not their attendance.



Funding

The Preschool is a 'not for profit' organization, funded by the New South Wales State Government and the fees paid by the families whose children attend the centre.

We are a **Registered Childcare Provider** with Centrelink. Our Carer Provider number is **210536266H**.

Families using registered care are entitled to the minimum rate of CCB for a maximum of 50 hours if care per child per week, but are not entitled to the CCR. You may be able to claim some of your costs back from Centrelink.

CCB for registered care is not paid through the service; it is paid directly to families on lodgment of receipts from the service.

Further information about the Childcare Benefit Scheme is available from Centrelink.

Fees

Fees are payable by the due date on the invoice, by **internet transfer or bank deposit only**. A **Fee Agreement** must be signed by parents on enrolment and the conditions set out in the agreement need to be adhered to. Late payments will incur a \$30 charge. Invoices are issued by email or in hard copy upon request at the office. If you have not received an invoice by the end of the third week of term then please contact the office.

Receipts will be issued for all payments by email or upon request at the office.

Centrelink approved receipts are issued to all families during the school holidays following a completed term.

The bond is refundable upon leaving the preschool provided your child has attended for at least 3 months, all outstanding payments have been made and the notice period of 4 weeks written notification has been acknowledged in writing by the Director.

The bond should be paid directly into our account with the reference "BOND – your child's name).

Withdrawal of a child

If you are intending to withdraw your child from preschool, **4 weeks' notice must be provided to the Director in writing**. Failure to do so will incur a charge of 4 weeks' fees. Bonds will not be refunded if notice less than 4 weeks is given.

Discounted fees

Discounted fees are available to children who are listed as dependents on a Health Care Card. If this applies to you, please provide your current card to be copied at the office. To continue to qualify for discounted fees, you must bring in any renewed card for further copying. Failure to do this will result in fees being charged at the full fee rate once the card expires.

We also offer a discounted rate for two or more siblings attending our preschool at the same time.

Arrival and Departure

Parents are encouraged to help your child to wash their hands on arrival and departure to reduce the risk of cross-infection.

A sign in/out sheet is in each classroom. Children must be signed "in" - stating the actual time of arrival and "out" each day the child attends.

Who can pick up your child?

Please make sure that you document names and contact details of people who you authorise to collect your child on your enrolment form.

Under no circumstances will your child be released to anyone who is not confirmed in writing as a person authorised to collect.

All people authorised to collect your child must be at least 18 years of age. They must provide photo I.D. the first time they collect your child on your behalf, unless you introduce them in advance in person, to your child's educators.

If you wish to change or add authorised persons to your enrolment form, then please speak to the office staff. If you have Access (or custody) concerns, please inform the Director as a matter of urgency because staff are powerless to enforce wishes without legal documentation.

Parking

Car parking is available on Bland and Alt Streets, in addition to at the rear of the preschool, accessible from Alt St.

Please do not drive down the small walkway/driveway in front of the Preschool. Please do not park in front of the rear gates of the preschool. Please ensure that Emergency vehicle spaces are left vacated during Preschool hours.

Preparing for the First Day

The preschool is unable to enrol children who are not fully toilet trained. If we find that an enrolled child is not fully toilet trained, the enrolment will be suspended until the child is toilet trained.

Separation from home and saying goodbye to Mum, Dad or Carer can cause anxiety for some children. To ensure that your child experiences a happy, relaxed and confident entry to preschool, we suggest the following:

- Ensure your child knows what to expect when starting preschool. Talk about what will happen during the day
- Ensure they know a direct route to the bathroom
- Ensure your child can eat morning tea and lunch without help
- Be positive and happy about leaving your child at preschool
- It is helpful for children to be able to put on their socks and shoes, independently
- Ensure that they are confident that you are going to pick them up
- Teach your child a hygienic toilet routine (wiping themselves and washing hands)
- Learn the teachers' names with your child
- Maintain an air of confidence. If your child becomes distressed, try to resist turning back. Call us later in the morning after you leave to ensure that your child is settling
- Have your own good-bye routine which you decide on together. A quick and happy goodbye builds confidence. Make time to pass on any useful information about your child's experiences and interests.
- Help your child to make connections - find out who they enjoyed playing with and invite them to play out of preschool hours.

Share observations and any concerns with your child's teacher. Stay informed about the program and contribute where you can. Some children will be at ease and comfortable from the beginning, however, most children will demonstrate anxieties in a variety of ways.

Preschool Program



At St John's, our aim is to provide a program which is reflective of and based upon, the current 'best practice' – the Early Years Learning Framework. This Framework is now the basis for all early learning throughout Australia.

This program caters for the children's individual and group interests.

Through the Framework's 5 Learning Outcomes our Educators will provide your child the opportunities to develop:

- A strong sense of their own identity
- Connections with their world
- A strong sense of wellbeing
- Confidence and involvement in their learning
- Effective communication skills

The stage is then set for learning by providing a variety of activities and materials, both indoors and outdoors.

Children make their own independent selection of material with which to work and the teacher guides each child in the use of this material.

The purpose of providing a Preschool program is to help each child to reach their developmental potential in all aspects of growth - physical, social, emotional and intellectual (cognitive). Provision is made for guiding the children's progress including:

- Building relationships with adults to give them a sense of security, confidence in their abilities and to learn about and understand their emotions.
- Fostering positive and satisfactory relationship with the other children. Increasing within themselves an understanding of the world and their relation to the world. Developing the ability to be creative and to think imaginatively, to reason accurately, to solve problems and to develop an inquiring mind.
- Developing a sense of achievement and learning to cope with strong feelings in appropriate ways which result in positive attitudes.

Storypark

All families are invited to join our online program called Story Park where the daily diary and individual observations of their child is made available to parents. Parents will receive an invitation from their child's teacher and then create a password to access the site. Parents are also able to make comments, upload their own stories and invite friends and relatives to access their child's page. At the end of the year the cumulative report can be saved by families and printed at home if desired.

Bible Time

Our preschool has at its heart a Christian philosophy, so the sharing of the Bible, both old and new Testaments is a priority. Bible time is held most days for 15 mins for each of the class groups. During this time, the children are introduced to God and Jesus in a caring and child centred way. The concepts and ideals of the Christian faith are taught in a manner which is meaningful to our children and at a level which they can understand. Stories, songs and discussion all make for an exciting and interactive time.

If you have any questions about the program, please speak with the Director or a staff member.

Food & Water

All food must be provided from home and divided into morning tea and lunch containers with your child's name clearly written on the container. The preschool does not heat food for the children, so a cold lunch should be provided. We are a **nut free** preschool.

The Preschool encourages and promotes healthy eating habits whilst being sensitive to the cultural backgrounds of families who attend the service. Foods deemed to be unacceptable will be sent home. These may include:

- * Chocolate in any form, cakes, sweet biscuits
- * Lollies, chips, twisties, nuts,
- * Flavoured milk or fizzy drinks

Children are encouraged to drink only water through the day. Please supply a water bottle with your child's name clearly printed on it so your child can access water as needed. No other drinks are required or recommended.

Birthdays

Birthdays are always a special event for children, and everyone's birthday is celebrated at Preschool. You are very welcome to bring a cake and serviettes to preschool if you wish.

Please ensure the cake you provide does not contain alcohol, nuts or small choking items such as edible hard lollies.

20 iced cup cakes are the preferred option because they require minimal handling, therefore reducing the risk of cross-infection. No party bags or gifts should be handed out.

Sunscreen Policy

St John's Preschool is a registered Sun Smart Centre. Sunscreen is available for your use at the preschool. Parents are requested to apply sunscreen to their children when they drop them off in the mornings.

All children must wear a broad brimmed hat while playing outdoors and shoulders should be covered. We do not lend hats, so please make it your child's responsibility to put their named hat in their bag before coming to preschool.

Health and Safety

Accidents

Although all care is taken to prevent mishaps, accidents may occur which involve your child. When a child is injured, a staff member will administer first aid immediately, comfort your child and notify you. All full time staff hold a current first aid certificate and are experienced in managing the minor injuries which may occur. If the injury is minor, we will monitor your child's recovery.

If the injury is serious or to the head we will contact you immediately and formulate a plan of action. We will ask you to come to collect your child if an injury is deemed more than minor or to the head.

In line with Child Protection legislation, if we cannot contact you or your contacts or you will not come to collect your child, we will call **000** for an ambulance. The room leader will remain with the child at the hospital and await your arrival.

All injuries are recorded on an Incident/Illness form and parents are requested to read and sign it. These records are used to monitor the frequency of accidents and evaluate our practices to maintain an optimum level of safety.

Medication

If your child is receiving any regular medication, then this will only be administered with your written authority. Speak to your child's room leader for a medication form to fill out. All medication must be in its original packaging with a chemist label that clearly has the child's name and dosage printed on it.

- If a child's temperature goes up above 38°C during the day we will call you to come and collect them. At that time, we will ask you if you wish us to administer an age appropriate dose of Panadol whilst we await your arrival.

Immunisation

The NSW government requires that all children, unless medically contra-indicated, are immunised for childhood diseases according to the NSW immunisation schedule.. An immunisation history statement or immunisation history form is required before your child can start Preschool.

You can find further information at www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation.

Asthma

If your child has asthma, please ensure that the preschool is made aware of the severity of their condition. Forms are available for you to complete giving permission for staff to administer medication in the event of an emergency. An Asthma Management Plan must also be given to the Preschool.

Allergy & Anaphylaxis Prevention

If your child suffers with allergies a Management Plan for your child must be supplied to the preschool. In addition, an epipen needs to be brought each morning with your child.

Parents who do not have children with allergies are asked to help those who do by avoiding supplying food that contains nuts such as:

Peanut Butter	Nutella
Hazelnut spread	Biscuits/cookies containing nuts
Health food/Muesli Bars containing nuts	Chocolate bars with nuts
Yoghurts with nut accompaniments	Satay sauces with meat or vegetable dishes
Packets of any loose nuts	Lollies/lolly bags

NOTE: If your child has peanut/nut products for breakfast, their hands and mouth should be washed before attending preschool.

Child Protection Policy

The N.S.W. Department of Education give clear and specific guidelines regarding Child Protection Issues. In accordance with these guidelines the staff are trained to recognise the signs of possible child abuse and are obliged by law as Early Childhood Professionals and mandatory reporters, to report any incidents of suspected abuse to this department. Call the **Child Protection Helpline (FACS) - Ph. 132111** if you have doubts about the safety or well-being of any child.

If you need support to prevent abuse, contact **CAPS - Child Abuse Prevention** Service, which is a 24-hour telephone counselling service, on **02 9716 8000**.

Parenting Arrangements

In the event of a separation in the family where one parent has the care of the child and where restrictions may be in place, relevant Court documents must be given to the Director. These orders are the only way we can ensure your child is picked up by an authorized adult.

It is also necessary to inform your teacher and the Director of any changes which may have occurred so they can help accommodate your child's individual needs.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

We have an emergency drill with our two day and three day groups, each term, at various times of the day, as required by the Regulations. Everyone who is in the preschool at the time must take part, listening and responding to staff directions while assisting us with the children. These drills are vital to ensure that staff and children are prepared to take appropriate action in the event of a genuine emergency.

The drills are evaluated each time to enable us to continuously improve our procedure and practices.

Policies

Please speak to your room leader, the director or office staff if you would like to view the policies of the Preschool. They are available in each classroom and in the parent resources in the Preschool foyer and upon request for all parents.

Policies are reviewed regularly, and an email sent to parents to invite feedback on the policies being reviewed. Policies being reviewed are also displayed near the sign in sheets in your child's classroom.

Parent Involvement

Management Committee

Our Preschool is community based and encourages strong parental participation. The day to day operation of the Preschool is organised by the Director and Staff. The professional welfare of the staff, the buildings, as well as policy making decisions, are the responsibility of the Management Committee of which parents of the children attending the Preschool are encouraged to belong. Any Parent is eligible to be one of the 4 elected Parent representatives on the Management Committee. In addition, the minister of St John's Church and its council hold positions on the Committee.

It is through this committee and the general meeting of parents, that you can have a say in the sort of Preschool we have and how it is run. Please plan to attend our next Annual General Meeting, where our parent members will be elected. It will be held during the First Term and you will be notified of its specific date and time. Emails to the management committee can be sent to stjohnsps@optusnet.com.au and will be re directed accordingly.

Conflict Resolution

Any complaints about our preschool can be made to the Director, Stephanie Toovey, by email (stjohnsps@optusnet.com.au), phone (97976392) or in person.

For a detailed discussion of conflict resolution please speak to any of our staff or refer to Quality Area 7 in our Policies documentation.

Feedback

Comments, compliments and complaints from parents are important in helping us continue to improve our services and programs. A mailbox is in the parent resource area in the foyer and is available for you to submit any written feedback you wish to make. In addition, you may speak freely with your child's room leader, the Director or President of the Management Committee. Emails can be sent to stjohnsps@optusnet.com.au and will be re directed accordingly.

We also send out regular surveys to parents and this is another great way to have your input into the running of the preschool.

What to Bring

Please clearly label all belongings

Daily Requirements

- Small school bag or backpack - big enough for children to fit their lunch and morning tea boxes, spare clothing, paintings etc
- Hat for outdoor play. A broad brimmed style is required. Baseball style caps are not recommended.
- Lunch Box - for their lunch
- Morning Tea Box - Fruit or other healthy snack food
- Spare underwear and seasonal change of clothes - In case of accidents, or enthusiastic water play
- Water bottle - filled at home

Toys

We ask that toys from home are not brought to Preschool (unless a special day has been organized by teachers). We have lots of toys to enjoy at Preschool and individual children's toys may be lost or broken.

Rest

All children attending the 3-year-old program (2 days) are provided with the opportunity to rest during the afternoon. Children do not have to sleep and are provided with quiet learning activities after lunch.

***If you have any questions regarding anything stated in this
Parent Information Handbook, please speak with the Director or your child's room leader***

ST JOHN'S PRESCHOOL ASHFIELD

Please feel free to submit at any time during your stay at the Preschool

Parent/Guardian Feedback Form

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
1. I feel welcomed and included at St John's Preschol				
2. The Preschool takes my concerns seriously				
3. The Preschool provides helpful information				
4. I feel as though I can talk to the Educators about my child's progress.				
5. The Preschool values my help and interest				
6. The Educators provide a challenging and stimulating environment for my child				
7. The Educators care if my child is not doing as well as they can				
8. The Preschool has a safe and secure Environment				
9. The Preschool seeks my input and looks for ways to improve its service delivery through consultation with parents and the community				
10. The Educators and Staff regularly praise children				
11. The children are the Educator's main focus				
12. I share in the education of my child				
13. I receive adequate notice of preschool events				
14. Newsletters/ updates/ information are regular and informative				
15. The Preschool aims to improve the learning outcomes for its children through the provision of quality programs				
What do you see as the strengths of the Preschool?				
In which ways do you think the preschool could be improved?				
In which ways would you like to be more involved in the preschool?				
What, if any are other areas of the preschool you would like to know more about?				
What cultural celebrations do you observe and when? We would like to add these into our programme.				

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this survey.