



**S<sup>t</sup>JOHN'S**  
PRE-SCHOOL ASHFIELD

# **Parent Information Handbook**

**2019**



## Welcome!

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

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 active and successful learners. Parents are encouraged to participate in the program by volunteering 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 keep 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  
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ABN: 16 609 632 762



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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

At orientation, you will be given an enrolment pack. It is essential that the following be returned on the day of orientation or before your child begins preschool:

1. Enrolment form
2. Signed fee agreement
3. Permission slips (Outside the gate and Church visits)
4. Up to date immunisation 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
7. Medical Management Plan if required for asthma / anaphylaxis etc

\*\* New legislation from 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 professional development, seminars and subscribe to periodicals to keep abreast of developments in the field of Early Childhood Education. Regular staff in 2018 include:

Position	Name	Qualification
Director & Nominated Supervisor	Stephanie Toovey	Bachelor of Science (Psychology), Diploma of Law, Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice
Finance & Office Administrator	Sue Lacoba	Speech Pathologist/Bookkeeper
Educational Leader and Room Leader Frangipani (W/T/F)	Jenny Kinsella	Bachelor of Education Early Childhood (4yr)
Room Leader Frangipani (M/T)	Natasha Zaitsev	Bachelor of Education Early Childhood (4yr)
Room Leader Jacaranda	Grace Murray	Bachelor of Education Early Childhood (4yr)
Room Leader Lilli Pilli	Beatriz Campos	Diploma in Children's Services
Room Assistant Jacaranda	Laura Faau	Diploma in Children's Services
Room Assistant Frangipani	Xiaoxi Yang Els Van Leeuwen	Diploma in Children's Services
Room Assistant Lilli Pilli	Laura Pagano	Diploma in Children's Services

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)  
Monday/Tuesday (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. Children must be brought into the classroom, signed in and the teachers made aware of their arrival before their parent/guardian leaves.

Children are encouraged to arrive within the first half an hour 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.

**NOTE: You are welcome to collect your child any time that suits you, but you should arrive NO LATER than 15 minutes before the end of their day. This allows you time to collect your belongings and discuss your child's day with their teachers. Late Fees will apply for all children who have not been collected at a rate of \$20 per 5 minutes or part thereof. Please read the Fee Policy and Fee Agreement for further details. Preschool gates will be locked at 4pm and all families should have left the grounds at that time.**

Our preschool terms operate as per the NSW School Terms (unless otherwise indicated by the Director).

### 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.

### 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 for the whole term's fees are issued by email in week 2 of each term. If you require a hard copy, please request at the office.

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

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 provide a new card when an old one expires. Failure to do this will result in fees being charged at the full fee rate.

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

#### Arrival and Departure

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.

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

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

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

If you wish to change or add authorised persons to your enrolment form, then please speak to the Director or Finance & Office Administrator. If you have Access (or custody) concerns, please inform the Director as a matter of urgency as staff are powerless to enforce wishes without court orders.

#### 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 park in front of the rear gates of the preschool as this is required for emergency access. Parents and children must enter and exit the preschool via our front gate.

### Preparing for the First Day

Please note: The preschool is unable to enrol children who are not fully toilet trained. If it appears that 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. Feel free to call us later in the morning leave to ensure that your child has settled.
- Have your own goodbye routine which you decide on together. A quick and happy goodbye builds confidence.
- Pass on any useful information about your child's experiences and interests to staff members.
- 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



**ST JOHN'S**  
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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 the child are shared with 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 a Christian philosophy, so the sharing of the Bible is part of our day. 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. Depending on the children enrolled, we may also restrict other allergens such as eggs, seafood etc.

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, cakes, sweet biscuits
- \* Lollies, chips, 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 a very special event for children, and we like to celebrate with them at Preschool! You are very welcome to bring a something to share to preschool if you wish.

20 iced cup cakes are the preferred option because they require minimal handling, therefore reducing the risk of cross-infection. Please ensure anything you provide does not contain alcohol, nuts or small choking items such as edible hard lollies.

**NOTE: No party bags or gifts should be brought to preschool to 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 either immediately or at the end of the day, depending on the severity of the injury. All full-time staff hold a current first aid certificate and are experienced in managing 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 or Director 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.

## Illness

Children who are unwell should not be sent to preschool. Children who have vomited or had diarrhea are excluded until 24 hours since the last episode.

If you have given your child paracetamol or other medication for illness in the morning, then they should not attend Preschool. Please inform preschool staff if your child has been given any medication.

If your child has a fever they should be kept home, and the preschool 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](http://www.imagineeducation.com.au/files/GapTraining/Staying_Healthy_5th_Edition.pdf)

If a child becomes ill at preschool, we will contact parents. If we cannot contact the parent/guardian, 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.**

## 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 up to date immunisation history statement or immunisation history form is required before your child can start Preschool. You must also provide updated immunisation statements as your children receive subsequent vaccinations (eg. When they turn 4).

You can find further information at [www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation)

## Asthma

If your child has asthma, a Medical Management Plan ("Action Plan") completed by the child's doctor must be provided to the Preschool on enrolment. Whenever a child with asthma is enrolled at our Preschool, or is newly diagnosed as having asthma, a Communication Plan and Risk Management Plan will be developed in consultation with parents.

In the case of an asthma emergency, medication may be administered to a child without written parent/guardian authorisation. If medication is administered in an emergency the parent/guardian of the child or the child's registered medical practitioner will be contacted as soon as possible.

If required, you must also provide an IN DATE Ventolin inhaler (or other medication) for whenever your child is at preschool.

## Allergy & Anaphylaxis Prevention

If your child has an allergy, a Medical Management Plan ("Action Plan") completed by the child's doctor must be provided to the Preschool on enrolment. Whenever a child with severe allergies is enrolled at our Preschool, or is newly diagnosed as having a severe allergy, a Communication Plan and Risk Management Plan will be developed in consultation with parents.

If required, you must also provide an IN DATE EpiPen for whenever your child is at preschool.

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

Hazelnut spread

Health food/Muesli Bars containing nuts

Yoghurts with nut accompaniments

Packets of any loose nuts

Nutella

Biscuits/cookies containing nuts

Chocolate bars with nuts

Satay sauces with meat or vegetable dishes

**Sometimes, as required and as advised, the preschool may also request that children avoid bringing other food items such as egg or fish.**

**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 Family and Community Service. Call the **Child Protection Helpline on 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 **1800 688 009**.

### 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. Court orders are the only way we can ensure your child is picked up by the correct and 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 conduct emergency evacuation drills at least once each term, as required by the Regulations. We may also conduct Lock Down drills from time to time. 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 sent by email to parents with an invitation to give feedback on the policies being reviewed. Policies being reviewed are also displayed on the noticeboard in the foyer.

## Parent Involvement

### Management Committee

Our Preschool is community based and encourages 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, who are the "Approved Provider".

Our Management Committee is made up of 4 elected parent representatives and up to 5 members nominated by St John's Church. Any parent can join the Association and stand for election to 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 first term and you will be notified the date and time. Emails to the Management Committee can be sent to [stjohnsps@optusnet.com.au](mailto: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](mailto: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

Feedback including comments, compliments and complaints from parents are important in helping us continue to improve our service and programs. Emails can be sent to [stjohnsps@optusnet.com.au](mailto:stjohnsps@optusnet.com.au) and will be re directed accordingly. In addition, you may speak freely with your child's room leader, the Director or President of the Management Committee.

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

- 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.
- Lunch Box - for their lunch
- Morning Tea Box - Fruit or another healthy snack food
- Spare underwear and seasonal change of clothes - in case of accidents, or messy play
- Water bottle

#### 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 and can bring a cushion to lie down on. 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

### Parent/Guardian Feedback Form

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
1. I feel welcomed and included at St John's Pre school				
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.