



# Parent Handbook

Owl and the Pussycat  
Preschool

Collaroy Plateau



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## Welcome to the family

Welcome to the Owl and the Pussycat Preschool. We look forward to making many happy memories with your family. We are a small, family owned preschool, and we pride ourselves on being a quality, nurturing environment. We have a small team of regular staff, and we encourage you to really get to know them. We want to get to know you as parents and grandparents, and as the ones who know your child the best, we so value your input, so we can see your child thrive!

If you have the time, feel free to linger at pick up, enjoy seeing your child play, and meet some of the other parents. The season of life with young children can be isolating; we love seeing local families connecting and supporting each other.

Throughout the year we have social events, which our families really enjoy. We look forward to spending more time with you then.

## Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that this land belongs to the Gai-mariagal people. We acknowledge and integrate learning about the history between Indigenous and non Indigenous people at our centre. We value and celebrate diversity of culture and support inclusiveness of everyone.

## Confidentiality and discretion

When you come to us, be reassured that the information you share with us, both written and verbally, will be treated with discretion. If you require a private discussion with either Sam or a classroom educator please contact us and this can be arranged at any time during the year. We also have annual Parent-Teacher interviews for children in the Owls and Blue Pussycats rooms to discuss your child's progress and any recommendations or concerns you have.



## Opening Hours

Hours of operation: **Monday to Friday, 7.30am to 6pm.**

These hours are **not** flexible. You will be charged \$50 for the first 15 minutes that you are late, and \$2 per minute after that.

**We are closed for two weeks over Christmas and New Year each year.**

2021 dates: Centre opens: Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Centre closes: Friday 24<sup>th</sup> December 2021

2022 dates: Centre opens: Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Centre closes: Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2022

Children who have graduated from the preschool, ready to start primary school the following year, do not return for the weeks preceding school in January. Schools are connected with OOSHC (Out of school hours care) which can usually provide vacation care if booked in advance. There are also several long day care options in the community such as sports and creative arts providers.

## Regulatory Authorities

How do you know we are a safe centre that provides quality education and care?

We were thoroughly assessed by the NSW Department of Education in November 2018. We were deemed to meet the National Quality Standards set out by Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

This assessment is done every three to five years unless they are concerned about our standards.

All our staff continually strive to ensure that our centre is the best it can be, and a safe place for your child.

If you are concerned about safety, education, or the quality of our centre, please speak to us!



## Fees

Fees for 2021, before Child Care Subsidy (CCS):

<b>Class</b>	<b>Red Pussycats</b>	<b>Blue Pussycats</b>	<b>Owls</b>
<b>Age*</b>	2-3 year olds	3-4 year olds	4-5 year olds (year before school)
<b>Fee</b>	\$128	\$128	\$118
<b>Bond</b>	\$350 (refundable provided all fees are paid upon leaving the centre)		
<b>Enrolment Fee (includes sheets and wet bag)</b>	\$150 (non-refundable)		

You will **not be charged for public holidays** or for the two weeks over Christmas and New Year when our centre is closed.

Fees are based on the room that your child is in, not their age.

You are still required to pay for sick days and holidays aside from public holidays.

Fees are collected in full for the month, in the first week of each month, using direct debit, via DebitSuccess. You will also receive a monthly statement via email in the fourth week of each month.

Fees increase from time to time. You will be given at least four weeks notice before a fee increase.



## Child Care Subsidy

The Australian Government approves families for a child care subsidy based on combined family income and level of activity. The subsidy is calculated on a sliding scale, with more financial support available to lower income families.

Check the Australian Government website for more details:

[www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy](http://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/centrelink/child-care-subsidy)

**This does not happen automatically. You have to apply for the subsidy on myGov and annually complete your income and activity estimate.**

Once your application is approved, we reduce the amount of fees we charge you, as the government pays us the subsidy directly.

## Absences

You are still required to pay for sick days and holidays aside from public holidays. The government also has a cap on how many absent days you can receive subsidy for.

Please let us know if you are going to be away ahead of time. This helps us with catering as well as staffing.

## Sickness

In the event of illness, please email [sam@owlandthepussycat.com.au](mailto:sam@owlandthepussycat.com.au) or use the KindyHub app to let the educators know that your child will not be attending.

Depending on the illness, we may require a medical certificate before your child can return to preschool. Please see the exclusion criteria and if in doubt, always check with our educators before returning to preschool after sickness.



## Withdrawals or Changes of Days

We require four (4) weeks written notice should you withdraw your child from our centre during the year.

If you have accepted a place for the following year, but wish to withdraw, you must give notice no later than 1<sup>st</sup> November otherwise are liable for:

- Two weeks of January fees if notice given between 1<sup>st</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> November
- Four weeks of January fees if notice given after 22<sup>nd</sup> November

**This understanding is a condition of enrolment at the centre.**

### Reducing days

Should you wish to reduce days, we also require four weeks written notice.

### Increasing days / casual days

Pending availability, you can increase days at any time during the year.

Casual days are occasionally available. Please email Sam for casual day requests.





## Priority of Access Guidelines

We are an approved child care centre. This means that you can use a child care subsidy with us. This also means that by law we have to prioritise children on our waitlist according to the following:

When filling vacant places, a service must fill them according to the following priorities:

- Priority 1 – a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- Priority 2 – a child of a single parent who satisfies, or of parents who both satisfy, the work, training, study test
- Priority 3 – any other child.

Within these main Priority categories, priority should also be given to children in:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- families which include a disabled person
- families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold of \$43,727 for 2015-2016 or who or whose partner is on income support
- families from a non-English speaking background
- socially isolated families
- single parent families.

Under the Priority of Access Guidelines a child care service may require a Priority 3 child only to vacate a place to make room for a higher priority child. The service can only do so if:

- the person liable for the payment of the child care fees was notified when the child first entered care that the service followed this policy, and
- the service gives the person at least 14 days' notice of the requirement for the child to vacate the place.



## Our Daily Routine

We value **play based learning** and giving children the opportunity to explore and problem solve throughout the day. **They learn best when motivated from their own interests and we love to involve them in planning each day.** This means that sometimes our activities don't go exactly as we imagined they might, because we'd rather stop and value the process and experience, then rush on to the next item on the schedule.

We do know, however, that children thrive on predictability and routine so we have a daily routine to help everyone feel at home and settled.

The daily routine moves between indoor and outdoor play areas, giving children as much time as possible in natural light and with opportunities **to exercise and move.**

We back onto Collaroy Plateau Park, and enjoy making use of the extra space for nature excursions and sports.

By law, we must give every child an opportunity to **rest** – they really need it after our busy mornings. We never force any child to sleep, nor do we force any child to stay awake. The older children have quiet reading time. If a child falls asleep, we always allow them to have at least one full sleep cycle (approx. 40 mins). We will record if your child has slept, as well as include this information on your KindyHub daily update.



## Toileting and toilet training

Your child does **not** need to be toilet trained before they start. We will welcome them at any stage in their toilet training journey. We know it can take some children a number of months to 'get it' and we will work with you during this process.

Our daily routine includes toileting and hand hygiene and many children develop a sense of pride as they master toileting skills.

Whilst eventually our routine helps your child to avoid accidents, it is normal for children to have more accidents when they start at the centre, as they adjust to a new environment, with new carers, and are often having a lot of fun engaged in activities.

Please always pack spare clothes for your child, and at least three outfits (including socks and undies) for any child in the process of toilet training.

We provide pull ups for children who still require them.



## Our Daily Routine – Red and Blue Pussycats

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>7.30AM</b>	Family groups are kept together Breakfast available by request until 8AM Outdoor play, weather permitting, including sandpit and climbing frames
<b>9AM</b>	Children transition to their own rooms Indoor play experiences, including craft, drawing, cooking, literacy activities
<b>10AM</b>	Toileting, nappy changes, hand washing <b>Morning tea</b>
<b>10.30AM</b>	Indoor and outdoor experiences Small groups / preschool program Music and movement, language
<b>12PM</b>	Toileting, nappy changes, handwashing <b>Lunch time</b>
<b>12.30PM</b>	Preparing for rest time, toileting, nappy changes / pull ups on for rest time Making beds, settling down with quiet music or stories
<b>1PM</b>	<b>Rest time / Quiet time</b> All children are encouraged to rest Those that do not sleep are given books to read
<b>2PM</b>	Quiet activities commence as children begin to wake up Toileting and nappy changes, handwashing Sunscreen reapplied Beds are packed away by 2.30PM
<b>2.30PM</b>	Afternoon reflection / mat time
<b>3PM</b>	Toileting, nappy changes, handwashing <b>Afternoon tea</b>
<b>3.30PM</b>	Outdoor play
<b>5.15PM</b>	<b>Late afternoon snack</b> Transition to quieter group activities
<b>6PM</b>	Centre closes



## Our Daily Routine – Owls

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>
<b>7.30AM</b>	Family groups are kept together Breakfast available by request until 8AM Outdoor play, weather permitting, including sandpit and climbing frames
<b>9.30AM</b>	Class into two groups for play experiences, including craft, drawing, cooking, literacy activities, and outdoor play. Acknowledgement of country, roll call and class news.
<b>9.30 – 10.30AM</b>	Toileting, hand washing <b>Progressive Morning tea</b>
<b>10.30AM</b>	Indoor and outdoor experiences Small groups / preschool program Music and movement, language
<b>12PM</b>	Toileting, handwashing <b>Lunch time</b>
<b>12.30PM</b>	Preparing for rest time, toileting, Making beds, settling down with quiet music or stories
<b>1PM</b>	<b>Rest time / Quiet reading</b>
<b>1.30PM</b>	Quiet indoor activities Sunscreen reapplied
<b>2.30PM</b>	Music / Movement / Gross motor activity
<b>3PM</b>	Toileting, handwashing <b>Afternoon tea</b>
<b>3.30PM</b>	Outdoor play
<b>5.15PM</b>	<b>Late afternoon snack</b> Transition to quieter group activities and indoor play
<b>6PM</b>	Centre closes



## Meals

We provide **morning tea, lunch** and **afternoon tea** for all children. Our daily routine encourages the children to sit and enjoy each meal.

We can provide **breakfast** for children arriving between 7.30AM and 8AM on request.

We also provide a **late afternoon snack** for children who stay at the centre after 5PM.

We use **Kids Gourmet Food**, who source all their food from local markets and support Australian farmers. Their menu is developed by nutritionists and dieticians, and made by professional chefs. Fruit and vegetables are served with every meal (and lots of hidden veggies too!)

We can cater to dietary requirements and are a strict nut-free centre.

Children are encouraged to regularly drink water throughout the day from their water bottles, which we can refill.

## Birthdays and special foods

We love celebrating birthdays!

If you would like to send in something special for your child's birthday, please send in individual items (eg cupcakes, ice blocks or jelly cups) rather than one large cake. Please also check ahead of time with the educator as to the number of children expected on that day.

We do have children with allergies, so we recommend talking to the educators about which treats everyone in the class can enjoy.



## Breastfeeding

The World Health Organisation recommends exclusive breastfeeding up to 6 months of age, with continued breastfeeding along with appropriate complementary foods up to **two years of age or beyond**. Breastmilk continues to enhance a toddler's immune system (making them less prone to colds, ear infections and other sicknesses) and provides comfort, even over the age of two.

You are welcome to come and breastfeed your child at our centre at any time, and if you do, we will provide you with a comfortable, private area to do so.

You can also send expressed breast milk for your child to drink. Please see our separate policy for expressed breast milk to ensure all milk is labelled correctly and stored safely until used.

## Playball

Your child can opt in to a sports and life skills activity, for \$11 a week. This runs on a Tuesday and Wednesday and is booked into and paid for directly with Playball: <https://playball.com.au/franchise/new-south-wales/northernbeaches/>

Small groups are taken to Collaroy Plateau Park, while maintaining safe child : educator ratios. Children who do not sign up for Playball continue with class activities.



## Centre Safety

### Carpark management

Please take care in our carpark.

- Do not let your child get out of the car before you are ready to hold their hand
- Slow down in your car
- Check twice for pedestrians before reversing
- Obey traffic signs
- Never leave children unattended in vehicles

### Workplace safety

Our workplace safety policies are available to parents should you wish to review them. Please just ask! This includes how we restrict access to potentially dangerous products throughout the centre. We have locked cupboards and doors with “Red Hands” on doors to signal to staff and children that special care must be taken around these areas to keep your children safe.

We welcome your feedback about the centre, and ways we can improve the building, equipment and our practices to keep everyone safe. Please chat to us or send us an email!

### Fire, emergency and lockdown drills

We carry out drills regularly so that the staff and children are familiar with procedures. Evacuation routes and muster points are displayed at all times at the centre. It is helpful for you to talk to your child about these as they can be both exciting and unsettling for them.





## Child protection

You have trusted us to care for your children, and we take that responsibility seriously. Your children will also come to trust us, and we want to take good care of them. All our staff members are mandatory reporters and legally obliged to lodge a report with Family and Community Services (FACS) if we have reason to believe your child is **at risk of harm**. The parent is usually, but does not have to be notified.

We have a comprehensive child protection policy in our parent library, or pdf available via email.



## Sun protection

### Sunscreen

Please apply sunscreen to your child every morning before drop off. We have sunscreen in the foyer. Please use the stamp on the back of your child's hand once sunscreen has been applied.

We regularly reapply sunscreen throughout the day. We use Cancer Council SPF 30+ on all exposed areas of skin. If your child has allergies and requires a specific sunscreen, please provide a bottle and we will label it for their exclusive use.

### Hats

Hats are compulsory for all outdoor play. Please provide a wide brimmed hat that covers the neck.

In winter, children can also bring in a beanie/warm hat, but please continue to pack the wide brimmed hat as it can still be warm and sunny in the middle of the day.

### Clothing

We want your child to have fun, be free to move and get messy at preschool. Please dress them in (or help them to choose) weather appropriate clothing, that you wont mind them wearing in the sandpit, gardening, or doing craft.

- Tops must cover the shoulders to provide sun protection – no singlets or strappy tops / dresses
- Please provide layers so the staff can help the children to be comfortable for both indoor and outdoor play
- Avoid clothing with cords and necklaces that can lead to choking or entrapment issues.
- We recommend tops/shirts with collars to provide the best sun protection
- Shorts and skirts need to be knee length to provide good sun protection
- Please pack a jacket during winter so your child can enjoy outdoor play



## Shoes

Your child needs supportive, enclosed shoes for preschool. Try to choose a pair of shoes your child can learn to put on for themselves (zips and Velcro, not laces) as they will take them on and off during the day's activities. We recommend runners or styles shown below so they are well supported for sports activities as well as excursions to the park.

We cannot allow thongs/flip flops, open sandals, or ugg boots due to safety, as they do not support the foot properly. Please reserve gum boots for very wet weather as these also provide very little foot support.

Shoes can be expensive but good quality shoes will last and result in fewer trips back to the shops!

Having a designated pair of shoes as 'preschool shoes' can also help eliminate decision making dramas in the morning.





## Sleep Safety

We follow the Red Nose (previously 'SIDS and Kids') recommendations. Our full policy is available on request. Children are to use the sheets provided and a light blanket. Their heads or faces are not to be covered with bedding or hats / beanies. Bibs and any restrictive items around the neck are removed.

We stay close and monitor sleeping children every 15 minutes.

Our beds are certified for safety.



## Health and illness prevention

### COVID Guidelines

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic we have been required to closely examine our practices to ensure we are providing the safest environment for children, their families, and staff. The government has also provided a comprehensive guideline for Early Childhood Providers. We follow all mandated instructions from the NSW government, and have carefully considered the recommendations in the guideline<sup>1</sup>.

Childcare centres have mostly avoided outbreaks as children do not appear to significantly contribute to the spread of COVID<sup>2</sup>. We also regularly disinfect our centre throughout the day, teach, model and supervise thorough hand washing with the children, and follow strict criteria regarding the spread of illness and symptoms that require your child to be cared for at home.

Whilst universal temperature checks have not been shown to effectively prevent COVID<sup>3</sup>, using hand sanitiser on arrival, before and after touching the sign in iPads, in addition to any normal hand washing occasions, is good practice for limiting the spread of any disease between children, parents, and staff.

We will keep you updated as to any additional measures that may be required to limit the spread of COVID via our regular emails, and should you have any concerns, please talk to us.

If you or a family member become unwell, please also closely follow government requirements for COVID swabs and isolation periods, to keep us all safe.

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<sup>1,2,3</sup> **COVID-19 guidelines for ECEC services**, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020, NSW Government, <https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/coronavirus/advice-for-services-and-providers>



## Immunisations

It is mandatory for all children to be immunised as per the government schedule in order to be enrolled at a child care centre. Children who cannot be fully vaccinated due to medical conditions are exempt from this legislation. Please talk to us if this affects you.

You will have provided a recent immunisation statement for your child with your enrolment paperwork. Please provide an updated statement after each immunisation (age 4, plus any vaccinations on an approved catch-up schedule).

## Adult immunisations

We strongly recommend that **you** also have immunisations as per the government recommendations to reduce the chances of you or anyone in your family becoming unwell.

Please see the link below for the Australian Government recommendations.

<https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation/immunisation-throughout-life/immunisation-for-adults>

## Headlice

Please check your child's head for lice or eggs (nits) **weekly**. If concerned, use conditioner and a fine comb to more closely examine.

Prevention tips:

- A dilute mix of tea tree, lavender and water in a spray bottle applied daily deters lice
- Tie back hair as soon as it is long enough
- Regularly wash hats
- Have separate hair combs / brushes for each family member

If we are concerned about your child, we may discreetly and respectfully examine your child's head for lice, and you will be called to pick up your child if we find lice or eggs.



## Exclusion criteria

Children should not attend preschool if they are unwell. This includes children who may be ‘feeling well’ but have **yellow or green runny noses, continuous coughing**, or have had **vomiting or diarrhoea in the last 48 hours**.

Preschool is a highly stimulating environment, which can lead to tiredness on a normal day. Your unwell child will take longer to recover if they aren’t given an appropriate opportunity to rest.

They also put other children and our staff at risk of illness.

Please familiarise yourself with the following government website (information as per August 2019 update also provided in this enrolment package) as it has up to date medical recommendations for **when to keep your child at home**, and **how long to wait before you send them back to preschool**. This is the resource that we will refer to when talking to you about whether your child is well enough to attend.

On occasions when this document states ‘until they are well’ or ‘until symptoms cease’ we require a 24 hour period of wellness (i.e. no symptoms) before they return.

For example, with conjunctivitis, the document states ‘*unless discharge from their eyes has stopped*’. We require **24 hours** from when discharge ceased. This is because symptoms can often appear to cease, but return at certain times of the day.

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets/Pages/childhood.aspx>

If your child is sent to preschool unwell, or becomes unwell during the day, we will call for immediate pickup. We require that children be picked up within 30 minutes, and in the meantime we will provide them with comfort and care, and quiet activities. If you work further than 30 minutes away, please ensure that you have an emergency contact listed in your enrolment paperwork who can arrive within this timeframe.



## Medical certificates

We require a medical certificate if your child is returning after a contagious illness, or if they are returning with a rash, discharge or sores that have been deemed non-contagious. If you have taken your child to the doctor, **please always specifically ask your doctor if your child is well enough to return to preschool, and if yes, ask for a medical certificate to support the decision.**

## Medications

Educators can administer prescribed medication to a child provided:

- A medication form is completed and signed
- The medication is labelled with a prescription for your child ONLY (i.e. not another family member)
- Medication is within expiry date and in original packaging
- Medication is handed to an educator to store in a locked container in the fridge
- DO NOT leave medication in your child's bag

First 24 hours of antibiotic treatment must be completed at home.

## Asthma and Allergies

It is a government requirement that a medical practitioner completes an **Asthma Action Plan** and/or **Allergy/Anaphylaxis Action Plan**. This must be reviewed **annually** or as circumstances change. We are required to display these plans with a photo of your child.

We are a strict nut free centre. Our kitchen staff are also trained in allergy awareness.





## Accidents, Incidents and Emergencies

In case of an injury, first aid will be administered to your child. All staff members hold current Senior First Aid certificates, Asthma and Anaphylaxis training.

You will be given an incident form to outline what occurred, and our actions. You are required to sign this form on the day of the incident.

In the event of a severe injury, and if deemed necessary, an ambulance will be called. We recommend that your family has **ambulance cover**. You do not need full health insurance to have ambulance cover. Staff will endeavour to contact the parent or nominated emergency contact, and if they do not arrive in time, a staff member will accompany the child to hospital until the parent or carer arrives.



## Drop off and Pick up

You can drop off and pick up your children any time within our opening hours.

Our peak times are 8AM – 9.30AM and 3PM – 4.30PM. Please take extra care, and be aware of moving cars in the car park.

All children are to be brought to and collected from the centre by a responsible **authorised** adult.

Please sign in and out on the iPads in reception using your mobile phone number.

We need written permission (via email or hand written letter) from parents before allowing someone else to pick up your child. Please ask them to bring photo ID with them so that we can confirm their identity, and inform them that we will need to photocopy this for our records.

Please always make contact with a staff member before leaving the centre with your child. Our educators enjoy sharing the events of the day with you, as well as having an opportunity to hear your feedback.

## Court Orders

Families can be complicated, but we cannot stop a particular parent from collecting their child unless there is a court order stating the same. If this is the case, please provide a copy of it. If there are sensitive family matters affecting pick up and drop off please talk to Sam.



## Communicating with us during the day

You can call us any time to hear about your child's progress and their wellbeing. We are always happy to update you, especially when your child is first settling at the centre.

You can also send messages directly to the room educators via **KindyHub**. This is also a great platform for sharing your child's interests and family news. We love seeing photos of what you get up to on the weekend or on holidays!

We keep a record each day of :

- Meals eaten
- Sleep times
- Activities

This record is available on the daily KindyHub diary, as well during pick up from the classroom educators.

We will set up your KindyHub account so you can see photos of your child and classroom activities. Teachers also use KindyHub to communicate with you about class topics, excursions and events.



## Settling in

Children thrive on predictability and routine, surrounded by people they love and who love them. The Owl and the Pussycat Preschool will provide this for them, but in the first few weeks, everything and everyone is new! It can take time for your child to feel settled, as they adjust to a new routine and a new group of friends and educators.

You can help your child to settle by:

- Coming for a few playdates (approx. 1hr long, where you stay with your child)
- Talking about preschool, their teachers, their classmates, and fun activities with them
- Organising preschool items with them – involve them in packing bags, choosing suitable shoes and a hat
- Choosing a comfort item and let your child know that this will be coming with them (eg soft toy, 'blankie', dummy for sleep time etc)
- If possible, starting with shorter days (eg 9am-3pm) and gradually increase the length of the day.
- Fill in the 'About Your Child' form and regularly let us know what your child likes and activities that might help them to settle after drop off.
- Let your child know what will happen at drop off, for example
  - o Finding their name label
  - o Putting their bag and water bottle away
  - o Finding a teacher
  - o Having a cuddle and saying goodbye
  - o Letting them know you will be back later
  - o Leave promptly

It is normal for some children to protest strongly when you leave, and sometimes it doesn't happen in the first week, but a few weeks into the year. As they develop connections with educators and friends and learn the new routine, it will become easier at drop off.

Even if your child is protesting, we recommend a quick drop off, as staying longer after you have told your child that you will be leaving can be confusing for them and can prolong the 'settling in' period.

You can call any time during the day to ask about your child.



## Parent, Grandparent and Family Involvement

We encourage and welcome your contribution of ideas, experiences and skills.

**Do you have a profession, cultural activity or skill that you could share with your child's class?** This might be a cooking or craft activity, story time, or short talk. We love having our families visit and share with us who they are what they do. Please speak to or email Sam or the class educators.

## Grievances

We hope that always feel you can talk to us about the centre. We are always open to recommendations of how we can do things better. Should you have a particular grievance you would like us to address, please be assured we will investigate it thoroughly.

Please email Sam with any grievances.

We will investigate complaints using the following steps:

1. Investigate the grievance with relevant staff / parents
2. Communicate with you the result of the investigation
3. Document the result and process
4. Offer external review to the grievant
5. Obtain feedback about the complaint process
6. Track similar complaints within the centre and act to rectify issues.



## Our Curriculum

### Early Years Learning Framework

We develop individual learning plans using the **Early Years Learning Framework**.

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) is developed by the Australian Government with the vision that “All children have the best start in life to create a better future for themselves and for the nation”.

It recognises that children naturally explore, experiment, discover and problem solve through play. They learn best when motivated from their own interests. Our teachers support this learning through interactions that aim to raise each child’s level of thinking, with high expectations of what each child is able to achieve.

The EYLF also recognises the importance of communication and language, and the development of social and emotional intelligence. We have literacy programs across the classes and speech pathology screening throughout the year.

We love chatting to you about your child’s progress and their individual interests.

There are five Learning Outcomes:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators.

At times, there can be barriers to learning such as diverse circumstances and abilities. Our educators continually work to find effective ways for all children to have the opportunity to achieve these outcomes.

We also respect and enjoy the diversity of our community, and acknowledge the range of preferences in parenting and families when developing our curriculum.

We are continually reflecting upon our education, and involve the children in reflection as well. We also value your feedback.



## Learning through play

Construction play	Playing at the park
Cooking	Nature walks and discovery play
Water play	Grandfriend's visits (currently suspended due to COVID)
Sensory play	Sports
Gardening	Climbing frames
Role-play and dramatic play	Playball (Opt in, additional fees)
Group games	Sandpit play
Music and movement	Cultural experiences, including languages (Spanish, German, Mandarin)
Story time	
Show and tell / news	

## Receiving feedback about your child's development

We take observations of your child's development each day. We will send you more detailed observations throughout the year. It is a legal requirement that we keep these records for at least three years after your child leaves the centre.

If your child's educator feels there is an area of concern, such as hearing, speech or behaviour, they will inform you and suggest where you can find appropriate support for these issues, eg a speech therapist. It is your choice as parents in how you follow up this information, but our educators will actively support your efforts by continuing any strategies developed by allied health professionals.



## School Readiness

There are many important elements to 'school readiness', including social and emotional intelligence. Please talk with our educators, as they can give you crucial insights to help you decide the right time to send your child to school, as not all children are 'ready for school' by age five.

We help children transition to school by developing not just literacy and numeracy skills, but by focusing on building resilience, independence, and emotional regulation skills. We also develop specific skills, such as those needed for unpacking a lunch, getting dressed, and toileting independently.

We connect with the local primary schools to ease the transition into primary school.

## Guidance and Discipline

Each child needs a safe, loving environment, to expand their learning and experiences.

Our centre has a consistent policy for guiding behaviour. We focus on each child developing **self-discipline, respecting one another, respecting property, and respect for self**. We also value honesty and problem solving, and in social conflicts, we involve the children in conflict resolution. We focus on and encourage the kind of behaviour we want to see more of, rather than focusing on negative or undesirable behaviour. If we do need to address a negative behaviour, children are taught to think about the outcomes and consequences of their behaviour, to understand why it isn't acceptable. Children are treated with respect and dignity throughout behavioural guidance.

We have plenty of resources relating to behavioural guidance and discipline. Please ask the educators if you would like access to these.





## What do we need to bring?

On your first day:

- Family photo for our Belonging Tree

Every day:

- Bag – backpack that can hold your child’s belongings, to be hung on their own hook (labelled)
- Washed sheets (sheets that smell like your normal laundry are more settling)
- Additional blanket from home, similar size to sheets to snuggle under at rest time (labelled)
- Comfort toy / dummy / blankie inside the sheet bag (labelled)
- Fully toilet trained children: 1x change of clothes including undies and socks (all labelled)
- Toilet training children: 3x change of clothes including undies and socks (all labelled)
- Wide brimmed sun hat (labelled)
- Beanie / woollen hat (in colder months) (labelled)
- Water bottle (labelled)

**Please clearly label all items with your child’s name.**

On smaller items, please use your child’s initials.

## What do I need to do now?

- Book in at least two playdates in the weeks prior to your child’s start date.
- Check your start date (as we have staggered start dates).
- Ensure you have provided all paperwork to Sam, including up to date vaccination schedules and ‘About Your Child’ form.

**We look forward to your child starting at the Owl and the Pussycat Preschool!**