

Mitcham



Preschool  
Centre

# Mitcham Pre School Centre

## Information Handbook

## **Mitcham Pre School Centre**

2 Mitcham Community Ct

150 Belair Rd, Hawthorn

SA 5062

Tel: 82712042

Fax: 82728272

Email: [Chris.Catt906@schools.sa.edu.au](mailto:Chris.Catt906@schools.sa.edu.au)

Web: [www.mitchampre.sa.edu.au](http://www.mitchampre.sa.edu.au)

Director: Mrs Chris Catt

When visiting.... You can find us by taking Mitcham Community Ct which runs between the Mitcham Library and the Shell service station, off the main Belair Rd.

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# WELCOME TO THE MITCHAM PRESCHOOL CENTRE

Welcome to your child's first term at Mitcham Preschool.

Mitcham Preschool Centre is nestled away in the leafy surrounds of the Mitcham Community Court, just off Belair Rd, Hawthorn. The kindergarten is adjacent to a beautiful park and the Mitcham Library with the centre hosting plenty of safe off-road parking.

There is "room to move" at Mitcham Preschool, with large outdoor play spaces for the children and spacious areas throughout our beautiful heritage-listed building.

At Mitcham Preschool, we offer a high quality, educational, play-based program with an inquiry based approach to learning that follows the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). In particular, we pride ourselves on delivering a strong literacy and numeracy focus, an extensive motor coordination program, strong commitments to healthy eating and physical activity programs, and a dedication to communication and collaboration with parents and carers.

We hope you find the following information about Mitcham Preschool Centre, informative, comprehensive and helpful. Should you have any further queries or comments please feel free to speak with one of the staff. We are always happy to help.

We hope that your time with us at Mitcham Preschool is happy and rewarding for both you and your child.

## STAFF INFORMATION

### CURRENT PRESCHOOL STAFF

**Director** – Mrs Chris Catt (Full time)

**Teachers** – Laura McPherson (Full time)

Amber Lee (Part time)

**Early Childhood Worker** – Carol Uznik (Full time)

Robyn Hillier (Monday AM, Wednesday & Friday all day)

Lyn Kromer (Monday AM, Tuesday & Thursday all day)

Preschool Directors and Teachers have a minimum of three years of teacher training. Early Childhood Workers (ECW's) support trained staff in implementing the educational program and the day to day running of the centre.

The Mitcham Preschool Centre is staffed from 8.30 a.m. to 3.45 p.m. - Monday to Friday

## PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

***At Mitcham Preschool Centre we strive to provide excellence in preschool education – providing an innovative and challenging environment which fosters a desire to learn and which nurtures each child to their full potential.***

- As skilled, professional educators, we aim to foster each child's love of learning, through creating an environment where they can laugh, play and enjoy being children.
- Our role is to provide a happy, safe, relaxed and enriching environment which challenges and stimulates each child's skills and abilities, extending their interests and facilitating wellbeing.
- Our educators acknowledge the importance of learning through play. Children develop social, emotional, cognitive, physical and creative skills through engaging in a play based curriculum.
- We are committed to building and maintaining positive, respectful relationships; between staff and children, children and children, families and families, educators and families, educators and educators.
- The diverse needs of our community are reflected in our inclusive practices. We respect what each child brings to the Centre; values, beliefs and culture.
- Our curriculum is based on the Early Years Learning Framework which underpins our reflective practices and our commitment to continuous improvement.
- We value enquiry based learning as a way of broadening children's perspectives to facilitate deeper understanding.
- We provide opportunities for intellectual stretch and promote the development of growth mindsets, by inspiring children to accept challenges, take risks, persist in a safe, encouraging and nurturing environment
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- Staff and children work together to learn about and promote the sustainable use of resources and to develop and implement sustainable practices. These practices are embedded in daily routines and procedures at the service
- Staff encourage children to be independent, resilient, self-directed learners who develop positive interpersonal relationships, and acquire the skills and competencies that prepare them to be lifelong learners and active members of the community.

## OUR SHARED VISION

Mitcham Preschool Centre is recognized within the community as providing excellence in preschool education – providing an innovative and challenging environment which fosters a desire to learn and which nurtures each child to their full potential

*We will do this because of our commitment to:*

- Equity and opportunity to access all aspects of the program
- valuing diversity & demonstrating multicultural perspectives
- valuing the importance of literacy & numeracy for every child
- learner health & well being – wellbeing is the combined physical, social, emotional, cognitive & spiritual state of being
  - developing partnerships with parents and carers
- fostering community awareness and developing sustainable practices
- strengthening liaisons with local schools and child care centre's
  - providing a play based learning program
  - provision of a safe environment
- providing the opportunity for each child to reach their full potential as confident, independent people who are willing to take risks

***Our vision is based on the following qualities and principles shared by our preschool community***

Equity/ caring, consideration & compassion / honesty & integrity / respect for self & others / perseverance / tolerance / optimism / resilience / responsibility / encouragement / self belief / trust

## **CURRICULUM**

The learning program at Mitcham Preschool, offers numerous opportunities for your child to develop a range of skills, abilities, and knowledge, in a fun, stimulating and challenging environment.

The learning program is based on the “Early Years Learning Framework for Australia – Belonging, Being and Becoming” This framework is a National Curriculum document and is used in all South Australian Preschools. There are 5 main learning outcomes that we plan to, when programming for the children’s development and needs.

The learning outcomes are:

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

The curriculum is also based on the following beliefs:

- Play is the most powerful way children learn.
- Parents have a unique knowledge and understanding of their child and are their first and foremost educators.
- Children have prior knowledge and abilities when starting kindergarten.
- The learning environment is stimulating, safe and enjoyable.
- There is respect for children’s diverse range of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and dispositions.
- Children develop at their own individual level and in different ways - emotionally, intellectually, morally, socially, physically and spiritually.
- Children learn when they are involved in initiating and negotiating their own learning, which is enhanced and supported by positive, challenging interactions.
- Children are encouraged to develop life skills, which foster a sense of resilience and optimism within themselves.
- Children need lengths of uninterrupted time and space (space to be alone, with a friend or with a group of friends) to maximize learning opportunities.

### **AN INQUIRY APPROACH TO LEARNING**

At Mitcham Preschool, we value an Inquiry Approach to Learning. This approach allows students to be actively engaged in their learning and provides opportunities for them to develop knowledge, thinking and research skills in a motivating and fun environment. An Inquiry Approach to Learning allows children to participate in activities according to their individual needs, interests and abilities.

All students are provided with the opportunity to make inquiries. The framework is progressive and consists of a series of steps. They are:

1. Pre- assessment. A brainstorm is held during large group time, allowing students to identify their knowledge on the inquiry subject. All comments are acknowledged and listed.
2. Tuning in. Students are presented with a variety of resources allowing them to be immersed in the inquiry. They may be provided with posters, information books, songs, music, presentations from knowledgeable people and where possible, are able to handle and observe objects and creatures.
3. Student questions. Whilst observing and handling resources, students are encouraged to develop a sense of wonder. Children are allowed time to ponder and develop a sense of curiosity and are encouraged to ask & answer questions. All questions and comments that follow are then recorded.
4. Research. A brainstorm once again takes place, identifying student awareness and knowledge on how to find answers to questions. Some questions are answered at kindy group time. Others are taken home to be answered with a supportive family member.
5. Summative assessment. Students reflect on knowledge learnt.

## **THE CHILD PROTECTION CURRICULUM –**

DECD have developed a curriculum to support children / students in developing skills to look after themselves in situations in which they may feel unsafe. This is a mandated curriculum & is compulsory for us to incorporate into our program. This curriculum spans all levels of schooling and is relevant to the different age groups. At each level of schooling there are 2 themes

1. We all have the right to feel safe
2. We can help ourselves to feel safe by talking to people we trust.

There are 4 focus areas

1. The right to be safe
2. Relationships
3. Recognising & reporting abuse
4. Protective strategies

At Mitcham Preschool, our focus of learning for term 3, each year is “All about me and people in my world” and incorporates the child protection curriculum. An information session for parents / carers is held prior to the introduction of the Child Protection Curriculum.

## **SOCIAL SKILLS PROGRAM**

We believe a cohesive environment (an environment which allows for social learning) together with a positive attitude towards social learning, provides the best opportunity for children to develop social competence. Social skill development is encouraged by:

- Working with everyday incidental social issues, such as sharing equipment, taking turns.
- Encouraging children’s independence in dealing with social issues.
- Positive modelling of social skills by adults.
- Providing individual support where necessary, such as coaching, modelling.
- Playing co-operative games.

## **FUNASTICS MOTOR COORDINATION PROGRAM**

Each year at Mitcham Pre School we implement a “funtastics” motor coordination program aimed at developing and extending children’s gross & fine motor skills, ball skills, listening and concentration skills & social skills such as working cooperatively, sharing & turn taking. The program runs fortnightly (or every 3 weeks) and the children are placed in small groups and complete 6 separate activities. The planned activities incorporate the learning focus for the term. Whilst the children really enjoy Funtastics, the program allows staff to monitor children’s development in a range of areas.

## **EXCURSIONS AND SPECIAL EVENTS**

Excursions are an important part of the kindergarten curriculum, as the children best learn through participation and exploration. All details of an intended excursion will be given to parents with a permission slip, which must be returned to the kindergarten before the day of the excursion. A high adult/child ratio is required to provide adequate supervision and a worthwhile learning experience.

## **ACTIVITY KITS**

There are a range of kits available for borrowing. Borrowing occurs each Thursday (blue group) and Friday (gold group). The kits are a much loved resource & provide a fun way of developing children’s literacy, numeracy & physical skills at home.

## **ASSESSMENT & REPORTING**

Staff regularly reviews children’s progress during their year at preschool, based on observations, information from parents, collecting work samples & photos and working on a 1 on 1 basis with your child. This information is used when planning activities for individuals and groups of children and to monitor children’s learning.

There are many opportunities for informal discussions about your child’s progress which can be initiated by either you or staff members. An interview occurs between parent and teacher in your child’s first term and final term, to discuss their progress.

A summative report is compiled for each child at the end of their preschool year. You will receive a copy of the report and it is also passed onto your child’s reception teacher, with your permission.

## SERVICES

### SESSIONAL PRESCHOOL

With the introduction of the “Same First Day” Policy in 2014, there is only 1 intake of children into preschool per year, which is in term 1. Children must turn 4 years of age **on or before April 30th** to be eligible to commence preschool at the start of the school year. Children turning 4 years of age on or after May 1st, start preschool at the beginning of the following school year. The DECD preschool enrolment policy is located at <http://decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/PreschoolEnrolmentPolicy.pdf>

### PROOF OF AGE

When returning your child's completed enrolment form to the centre, it is necessary for you to bring proof of age documents with you. Proof of age documents can include one of the following - full birth certificate, passport, or official Centrelink Documentation stating the child's name & birth date

### Attendance at Preschool

Children attend preschool for four terms before commencing school. If children have additional needs, approval may be given for either early entry or an extension of time.

Children may attend a maximum of five sessions per week. At Mitcham Preschool children attend two full days (which counts as four sessions) and one half day per week. Session times are set out in the table below.

<b>Blue Group</b>	<b>Gold Group</b>
Monday 8.45am – 11.15am	Monday 12.30pm – 3pm
Tuesday 8.45am – 3pm	Wednesday 8.45am – 3pm
Thursday 8.45am – 3pm	Friday 8.45am – 3pm

### SPECIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Specialised help is available free of charge through the Department of Education and Children's Services from qualified Speech Pathologists, Social Workers, Psychologists and Special Education Advisors. It should be noted however, that waiting periods are likely to be lengthy.

Special integration services are also available for families with special/additional needs. During enrolment, parents are asked to identify any special needs that their children may have so that extra support and assistance can be sought.

Children can also be affected when families are under extra stress and/or difficulties. The staff can talk to you in confidence about any issues that may affect your child's learning and socialisation.

### PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABLE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN.

- Preschool Bilingual Support Program – to provide bilingual support to children and families who have English as a second language.
- Preschool Support Program – to provide support for children with additional needs.
- Early Intervention Program – to provide support within the kindergarten to support and extend children's learning

### CHILD AND YOUTH HEALTH SERVICE

A Health check is organized here for your child prior to going to school if you wish to take advantage of it. You will receive information about these checks and are requested to attend with your child.

### DENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

Preschool children are eligible to attend government Dental Health clinics for general dental care for a limited fee. The closest clinic is situated at Mitcham Primary School, Hillview St, Kingswood 5062. Ring the clinic for more information, 82710371



## **SCHOOL TRANSITION PROGRAM**

During your child's last term of preschool, your chosen school will arrange orientation visits for you and your child. State schools in the area also conduct tours each term for parents of preschool children

# **ROUTINES**

## **WHAT HAPPENS AT PRESCHOOL**

Having a predictable routine helps children to feel safe, secure and confident about what will happen next. The following is a snapshot of what happens at preschool on the full days.

- **8.45am – 9am:** Inside activities. These activities vary but consist mainly of fine motor skill development, creative and construction activities, puzzles and books, to name a few.
- **9am – 9.15am:** Large Group time – May includes looking at the calendar, discussion of focus areas of interest, brainstorming or singing songs.
- **9.15am** – small group activities – literacy / language / numeracy based
- **9.40am** - Free choice of inside and outside activities / includes snack time. During this time we plan a special activity based on our learning focus
- **11am** – group activity based on curriculum focus.
- **11.30am – 12.20pm** – free play
- **12.20pm – 1.15pm:** Relaxation, lunch time in small groups, including a quiet time after lunch to participate in puzzles and activities in the small lunch groups
- **1.15pm – 2.20pm:** Free choice of inside and outside activities.
- **2.20pm** - Pack up time / pack bags
- **2.40pm** – Large group / songs & games
- **3.00pm** –children are dismissed.

## **WHAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS EACH DAY**

1. A named bag which is easy to open and close. Please put your child's name clearly on the outside of the bag, as many children have similar bags.
2. Fruit or a snack such as cheese, vegetable, dried fruit. (refer to nutrition policy)
3. Lunch on their full day (refer to nutrition policy)
4. A named bottle of water
5. A named hat. We follow the Cancer Council recommendations of wearing a hat when UV rating is 3 and above (usually terms 1 & 4). However we recommend having a hat in your child's bag everyday.
6. Comfortable, practical clothing suitable for active and sometimes messy play. Clothes should be easy for the child to manage when toileting. Overalls and long dresses are particularly unsuitable. Footwear needs to be sturdy - thongs, crocs, scuffs and platform soles are unsuitable for play and prevent children from participating fully in physical activities.
7. Please apply sunscreen before you come to preschool. If you forget, we have some in the kitchen which you may use

## **PLEASE NAME ALL BELONGINGS CLEARLY.**

This includes clothing, shoes, bags, hats, drink bottles and lunch boxes (on the outside and lids if possible). Children often have identical items and they are easily mixed up. By clearly naming items, you ensure that children, parents and staff can keep track of items and reunite owners with their belongings. It also helps children to develop independence and responsibility for their own things. The lost property is kept in the blue box above the lockers. Please check it regularly.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **FOOD CONTAINERS**

Snack containers stay in their bag

Lunch containers: Please help your child put their lunch box in the crates with their name on it, located near the main entrance

### **SIGN IN & SIGN OUT**

It is a requirement to sign your child in (on arrival) and out (on departure) each day they attend. You will find a sheet for the current day, with your child's name on it, on the sign in table, located to the right as you enter the main doors to the centre. If someone other than yourself drops off or collects your child, they will be required to sign the sheet.

### **ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES**

When children arrive each day, they must play inside until after "mat time". Children are not allowed to go outside until there is a staff member outside to supervise them. It is important that staff members know who will be collecting your child each day. If there is a break in routine, please write the details in the parent diary which is on the sign in table..

For their own safety, children are dismissed from the mat by a staff member. They must not leave the mat until that time. When entering and leaving the grounds, please ensure that the gate is shut and only your child leaves with you.

### **ARRIVAL (DROP OFF) PROCEDURE**

Please accompany your child safely **into the building** every day and remain with your child until a staff member is present. For their safety and security, children must not be left at the gate. It is appreciated if you arrive and depart on time as staff need time and space prior to each session to prepare activities, ensure that the preschool environment is clean and safe and exchange information.

### **PICK UP PROCEDURE**

At the end of the session a staff member will farewell your child once their parent or caregiver has arrived. Your punctuality is essential to ensuring minimal disruption to the sessions and adequate time for staff preparation. Should an emergency arise, where possible, telephone so that the staff can reassure your child, as late collection can be stressful and upsetting for the child.

**Should you leave early with your child please ensure that you notify a staff member.**

### **CHILD ABSENCES**

If your child will be absent for more than a couple of days, we ask you to phone to let us know what is happening. It is not necessary to ring us if your child is absent for a day or two. However, please notify us if your child has a contagious illness such as chicken pox, measles, mumps, skin complaints or head lice so we can notify other parents.

### **SEPARATION ANXIETY**

Adjustment in the first few weeks of children's preschool experience varies from family to family. Staff are sensitive to these differences and aim to respond to individual needs of children and their families. Separation trauma is difficult for both children and parents, however staff members are experienced in dealing with children and generally they respond to a warm, caring adult. If you feel your child will be extremely upset, we can talk about and work out strategies to alleviate the problem. Circumstances will be different for every child and we will work out our strategies together, to suit both you and your child. Some children won't want their parents to stay at all. This is great, but if your child isn't one of those, try not to worry too much—they all work through their separation anxiety eventually

### **COMMUNICATION**

Good communication is essential between parents, carers and staff and we hope you will feel comfortable approaching us with any areas of concern you may have. If you have an issue which could require prolonged discussion, please make an appointment so staff are not taken out of the teaching environment for extended periods of time.

Please check your note pocket, which is hanging in the passageway for any notices and newsletters. The whiteboard outside the front door is also used to let you know of anything special that may be happening in the centre.

Newsletters are distributed fortnightly.

### **MESSY PLAY**

When children are actively involved in play with paint, water, clay and sand, it is almost inevitable that some of those materials will end up on their clothes. We provide smocks for children to wear for most messy activities but, unfortunately,

they do not always prevent messy clothes. During the warmer months in particular, the sand pit and water course are a popular play choice. While children are able to remove shoes and socks, clothes frequently end up wet and sandy. We make no apology for this. The “mess” happens in the context of some wonderful cooperative and challenging learning experiences. Sometimes children are reluctant to participate in some activities, particularly messy activities, because they fear reprimands from parents if they get dirty or sandy. Please send your child to preschool in old clothes, then you will not be upset if they get them dirty. We do have spare clothes at preschool but you may choose to keep a spare set in your child’s bag.

### **TOYS FROM HOME**

We discourage children from bringing small or precious toys which may be lost or damaged. We encourage the children to be observant and welcome items from nature or any object which may pertain to our program.

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/ HEALTH STATE ETC**

Please inform the Director of any change of address and/or telephone number, health needs (eg allergies), emergency contact person or their details. It is essential that our records are kept up to date.

### **FRIENDSHIP LIST**

As your child develops new friendships at preschool you may wish to contact other families from the centre. The preschool friendship list is developed for this purpose. At the time of enrolment you will be asked if you wish to have your contact details included on this list.

### **BIRTHDAYS**

We celebrate children's birthdays by blowing out the candles on our pretend cake and singing "Happy Birthday". Due to many children having allergies, we ask that parents do not bring cakes or sweets please.

### **PHOTOGRAPHS**

A professional photographer photographs the children individually and in a group during Term 2 each year and the photographs are available for purchase. We regularly photograph the children using our digital camera. These photographs are often displayed and children receive them in their folder when they leave preschool.

### **PARKING**

There is plenty of car parking in the public car park adjacent to the preschool and near the bowling club. There is also parking over the bridge in the “Over 50’s” club car park. Please be aware of the disabled parking sign near our building. For the safety of all children and adults, please abide by the speed limit of 10km per hour. Thank you for your cooperation.

### **TERM DATES**

Preschool terms follow State School terms. Information about term dates is available from the Preschool and from DECD both on their website

<http://www.decs.sa.gov.au> and via a recorded message (phone 8226 1803).

## **FEES and PAYMENT**

The Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) are responsible for employment of staff and payment of staff salaries. Fundraising and fees cover approximately 80% of all other remaining operating expenses including cleaning, telephone, power and water, maintenance, security, consumables such as paint, paper, toiletries and the purchase of new equipment and materials for the children. For several years now, the Governing Council has implemented a fundraising levy, which is a component of term fees. The Governing Council believes this is a fair and equitable way for all pre school families to contribute to the financial needs of the Centre. As a result Governing Council limits its fundraising activities to one event per year. The Governing Council can therefore devote more time to strategic planning for the Centre and social activities. Any costs to families for social activities will be only those required to cover costs incurred for the event or activity.

At the time of paying term fees there is also an opportunity to give a donation. All donations are most gratefully received.

## **FEES FOR 2018**

- Preschool - \$210.00 per term (fees include fundraising levy per term, per family & an excursion / incursion levy)

Fees are due to be paid by week 3 of each term. Payments by cash or cheque can be placed in an envelope, labelled with your name & amount paid and put into the brown box near the kitchen. This is collected daily and a receipt will be placed in your notice pocket by the Treasurer. Alternatively you can pay on line via your bank. Bank details are BSB 105-084 / Account Number 32323 1040

If you have any problems with payment please speak with the Director. All conversations will be in strictest confidence

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Staff and Governing Council of the Mitcham Preschool Centre value the involvement of parents in day-to-day activities as well as in planning social activities, community events and in management roles.

There are numerous ways to be involved in the preschool session, such as:

- Reading stories and playing games
- cooking with a small group
- sharing some talent you have with the children (such as playing a musical instrument, teaching them a new song, a craft idea or demonstrating a skill such as spinning etc.);

At times there may be a special focus or curriculum area in which you have particular knowledge or skills. Your input would be welcome. Speak with a staff member if you would like to participate in some way or if you have an idea or suggestion.

If you do not wish to come for a session, there are many other ways you can take part. You may be able to:

- participate in the governing council (management committee) which is comprised of mainly parents
- prepare art materials at home (cutting up paper, material, wool etc)
- attend a social event.

## **RAN-EC TRAINING FOR ALL VOLUNTEERS**

All Governing Council members and people wishing to volunteer on excursions, walks, helping with funtastics etc, must attend the RAN-EC (Responding to Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care) training for volunteers. Each year the preschool offer training which occurs in the evening at the centre.

## **THE GOVERNING COUNCIL**

Mitcham Preschool is governed under the DECD model of local management. The Governing Council is elected annually and is made up of a group of interested and dedicated parents working for the benefit of all children at the Preschool.

Some of their activities include:

- Financial management of the Centre
- Developing Centre policy
- Encouraging parent involvement
- Supporting the children and staff in organised activities
- Keeping informed of recent developments in early childhood education
- Having valuable and valued input to the Mitcham Preschool's curriculum and other areas of its day to day running
- Organising opportunities for parents to meet and get to know each other, e.g. regular coffee mornings

Please see the Director or the current chairperson for more information. The Governing Council meets at the Preschool twice each term to discuss any current issues. They work for the benefit of YOUR child but can only achieve maximum effectiveness with the support of all families attending the Preschool. Please help in any way you can.

**New members are always welcome!**

## POLICIES

The Governing Council have developed a number of policies, in line with the National Quality Standards. On the sign in table, you will find the policies located in the "Policy Folder". The centre's policies are also located on our website.

## HEALTH POLICIES

### MEDICATION AND MEDICAL MANAGEMENT PLANS

**If your child has a medical condition it is critical that the Director is advised at the time of enrolment.**

This enables an appropriate management plan to be developed and authorization from your medical practitioner for the administration of medication.

Preschool centre staff are unable to administer medication unless the relevant forms have been completed by parents and signed by a medical practitioner. Please see the Director for forms if this is relevant to your child.

Should parents/ caregivers feel that a child may require medication of any type for a temporary ailment e.g. Panadol, Ventolin, antibiotics or any other during the preschool session, it is strongly recommended that they remain in the home environment. Even if the child seems well and wants to come to preschool, staff are unable to administer medication under any circumstances without the appropriate forms completed by both parent and medical practitioner.

Children should not have medication in their bags at any time in the interests of safety for all children in the centre. Please see staff if medication needs to be left for the person collecting your child.

### FIRST AID & HEALTH PRACTICES/PROCEDURES

Precautions against the spreading of colds, viral infection and contagious diseases are essential at preschool. Parents should keep a child at home who is running a temperature or showing any signs of being unwell. Resting at home aids your child's recovery, as well as preventing the spread of infection.

***Children who have had vomiting or diarrhea must be kept at home for 24 hours after the last episode. Children who have been prescribed antibiotics must have had that medication for a minimum of 24 hours prior to attending preschool.***

Please notify the staff immediately should **your child contract an** infectious disease (i.e. Chicken Pox, Conjunctivitis, Giardia, Glandular Fever, Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease, Head Lice, Impetigo, Infectious Hepatitis, Measles, Mumps, Ringworm, Rubella, Fifth Disease (Slapped Face), Scabies, or Whooping Cough).

When a child is unwell at preschool, they will be cared for and their parent or an emergency contact person will be telephoned to collect the child. For this reason it is essential that contact numbers are kept up to date. Staff are able to treat only minor injuries and illness e.g. those that respond to affection, a band aid or minor first aid. Other injuries and illnesses are a parental responsibility and will be referred to parents/caregivers.

### **NUTRITION POLICY** (full policy available on website)

Statement of Intent:

In line with the DECD initiative (*Right Bite* strategy) our aim is to promote healthy eating ideals amongst preschool children. *"Healthy eating supports children's learning, health & well being"*

In support of this, we encourage children to eat healthy foods at our Centre and therefore ask that you send healthy foods for them to eat at snack time. It only needs to be a small snack rather than a large meal. Please remember it is a snack between breakfast / lunch or lunch / dinner.

We have based the suitable food items on the following criteria

- Safe to eat eg minimal choking hazard
- Limited in salt, fats & preservatives

<b>Foods that <u>are</u> suitable for snack time</b>	<b>Foods that are <u>not</u> suitable for snack are</b>
Fresh fruit	Cakes & muffins
Dried fruit	Sweet biscuits & flavoured crackers
Vegetables	Roll ups
Cheese	museli & fruit bars
Savoury sandwich (eg vegemite, ham, fritz, cheese)	yoghurt, fruche etc (Yogurt is permitted for lunch when children are accessing a full day, to ensure they receive their daily requirement of dairy)
Rice cakes, plain crackers (Eg plain sakatas)	Chips, chocolates & lollies
	Packaged & processed food such as cheese & biscuits (eg cheese & dip packets)

Some children have dietary requirements, for health reasons, and may need to have specific foods when attending the centre (eg diabetes / jelly beans). These foods maybe included on the list of foods “not suitable for snack”. However, in the interests of children’s health, safety and welfare and following discussions between the director & parent, these foods will be deemed suitable in individual circumstances.

**Any food item from the “suitable foods” list is fine for lunch on the full days. We do allow yoghurt as well for lunch on a full day. It is advisable to keep food cool over the long day, with a freezer lunch box pack. Lunches are not refrigerated.**

### Eating At Kindergarten

Our snack time at Kindergarten is a flexible time when children are encouraged to decide for themselves when they want to eat. We do not stop them from playing so they can all eat together. There are times when children are not hungry, or when they are working productively and don’t want to stop, or when they want to wait and eat with a friend. We do however remind them to eat their snack before pack up time. Children are not able to have their snack once we have started to pack up, so if they tell you they weren’t allowed to eat it, that may be the reason why. We expect children to ask if they need help.

***A copy of our Nutrition Policy will be given to when your child commences Preschool.***

### **ALLERGY AWARE POLICY** *(full policy available on website)*

Anaphylaxis is a life threatening condition caused by an extreme allergic reaction. Currently at our centre we have a child attending with this condition. The child has an allergy to all nut products. We therefore have a policy of NO NUT PRODUCTS at our centre. This includes spreads, muesli bars, some bread, breakfast bars, or any items cooked in nut oil. When cooking we use “nutelex”.

Children are expected to wash their hands before eating or cooking.

### **SKIN PROTECTION POLICY** *(full policy available on website)*

We have revised the Skin Protection Policy and a full copy will provided upon commencement of preschool. In short, the policy states

- Sun hats must be provided in your child/children’s bag everyday
- Sun hats are compulsory for outside play in Term 1 and Term 4
- It is not compulsory for sun hats are to be worn for outside play in Term 2 and Term 3 unless the UV Rating is above 3 for the day

This Sun Hat Policy is in line with the recommendations outlined by The Cancer Council and D.E.C.S. (Department of Education and Children’s Services)

**EXTREME WEATHER POLICY** *(full policy available on website)*

To ensure that children attending Mitcham Preschool Centre enjoy a safe and comfortable learning environment, we have adopted a hot weather policy in addition to the existing Skin Protection Policy.

**Hot Weather Measures**

If the Bureau of Meteorology forecast the maximum daytime temperature to be 36°C or greater, or extreme humidity, the Preschool will adhere to the Extreme Heat strategies dictated by the Dept of Education and Child Development. The curriculum will be modified according to the BOM website. Modifications to the curriculum may include:

- Limiting outdoor activities to the shaded areas of the Preschool; or
- Limiting outside access to the verandah for quiet activities. Time spent outside will be limited to no more than 15 minutes; or
- Indoor activities only.
- Snack will be eaten inside.

Educators will ensure that children drink water more frequently during this time.

**MANDATORY REPORTING**

Under the Children's Protection Act, 1993, along with doctors, primary and secondary school teachers, early childhood educators are obliged by law to report any reasonable suspicion that a child has been maltreated or neglected to the Department for Family and Community Services.

The requirements of the above Act override the requirements of the Information Privacy Principles. Therefore, where a staff member believes a child's safety is at risk, the usual confidentiality obligations may be waived.

**SMOKE FREE ZONE**

Both inside and outside areas at Mitcham Preschool Centre are smoke free zones. In the interests of both children and adults, please do not smoke on the property.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

**A number of policies have been developed in line with National Quality Standards. These policies include**

- Parent Concern and Complaints Policy (available at the commencement of preschool)
- Priority of Access Policy
- Behaviour Policy (See Below)

**BEHAVIOUR POLICY (inc Anti-Bullying Policy) POLICY** *(full policy available on website)*

**At Mitcham Preschool, we believe that:**

- All children have the right to learn in a safe, secure, caring environment.
- Children come to Preschool from a variety of social backgrounds. Preschoolers need time, opportunity and space to learn how to play, share, take turns and care for others and their environment.
- Appropriate behaviour is influenced by developmental ability, temperament, interactions, life experiences and environmental factors.
- Educators, parents and caregivers need to share the responsibility, being consistent and modelling appropriate behaviours.

**The Preschool philosophy is underpinned by the following qualities and principles:**

**Equity; caring; consideration & compassion; honesty & integrity; respect for self and others; perseverance; tolerance; optimism; resilience; responsibility; encouragement; self-belief and trust.**

- 1. We encourage behaviours that support these qualities and principles, including:**
  - Participation in a variety of activities
  - Organisational skills
  - Sharing and respecting equipment and materials
  - Taking turns

- Actively listening and responding to others
- Cooperating with others
- Being inclusive of each other – accepting each other’s differences, cultures and backgrounds
- Tolerance

**We maximise these positive behaviours by:**

- Providing a safe, secure and supportive environment in which children are successful in learning appropriate behaviours
- Explicitly teaching what is acceptable and that the children are role models
- Using a positive approach to behaviour management that takes into account child and contextual factors
- Addressing challenging behaviours in a timely and appropriate manner

**2. Behaviours which are not acceptable or appropriate include:**

- Any behaviour that puts a child or others at risk, ie bullying, hitting, kicking, pinching, biting and consistently not following safety rules
- Any behaviour that is disruptive to the child’s or group’s learning, ie not listening or distracting others
- Any behaviour that is not socially acceptable, ie spitting
- Any behaviour that excludes others from play
- Any behaviour that involves verbally abusing others, ie name calling or negative language

**Strategies for minimising challenging behaviours include:**

- Discuss safety in the Preschool and involve children in settling and understanding rules, behaviour expectations and the consequences
- Children will be encouraged to use their words to resolve difficulties. All educators working at the Preschool will be aware of the importance of role modelling and discussing the consequences of unsafe behaviour as they occur
- If unsafe or inappropriate behaviour reoccurs the child will be supported by educators to make an alternative choice
- If there are continual episodes of unsafe behaviour or bullying, a behaviour management plan will be developed in consultation with parents
- If it is deemed necessary, Department of Child Development (DECD) support will be accessed

**With regards to supporting the qualities and principles that form part of the Behaviour Policy, all members of the Preschool Community have responsibilities.**

**1. Parents and Carers can support the Policy by:**

- 1.1. Reading and understanding the Behaviour Policy on commencement of their child at Preschool
- 1.2. Developing a culture of mutual respect and trust between parents and educators
- 1.3. Reinforcing behaviours at home and on site, where educators can provide strategies for parents

**2. Educators are responsible for :**

- 2.1. Providing opportunities for children to take risks and experience success
- 2.2. Being positive
- 2.3. Encouraging children to take responsibility
- 2.4. Helping children recognise and express their feelings in an appropriate manner and giving them the strategies to do so when needed
- 2.5. Make learning relevant and manageable for children
- 2.6. Be consistent in expectations
- 2.7. Informing parents when necessary

**3. The Preschool Director will be responsible for:**

- 3.1. Development, implementation and review of the Preschool’s Behaviour Policy annually in consultation with educators and Governing Council Members



- 3.2. Ensuring that all new families to the Preschool are provided with copies of the Preschool's policies (including Behaviour Policy)
- 3.3. Ensuring all families have continual access to the Behaviour Policy
- 3.4. Providing access to relevant professional development for educators
- 3.5 Managing incidents of unacceptable behaviours or bullying in a consistent manner

## DECD

Mitcham Preschool is part of the Mitcham Plains Partnership, of the Department for Education and Child Development. The Education Director is located at the Mount Barker office and can be contacted on 83914705.

Further information about DECD programs and services is available on the web at [www.decs.sa.gov.au](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au)

*Children and young people are at the centre of everything we do*



**Government of South Australia**

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