



# PRESCHOOL PARENT INFORMATION

➤ *All children. All abilities. All possibilities.*

# Welcome

## Dear Family,

We are glad you chose us for your child's education and care needs.

Koorana Child & Family Services is committed to supporting children's positive learning opportunities and strengthening families through the provision of inclusive and family-focused services delivered through a diverse range of early education, intervention and family support programs.

We are looking forward to welcoming you and your child at our preschool and hope you enjoy your time with us.

This Parent Information Booklet will provide you with all the important information you need to make the most of your time with Koorana, such as:

- › Koorana preschool programs;
- › Koorana policies as they relate to you and your child;
- › What to expect from Koorana preschools; and
- › What you can do to assist your child in making a smooth transition to preschool.

We currently have three preschools; Koorana Croydon Street, Koorana Phillip Street, and Koorana Orchard Road (opening in 2025!). We are licensed and registered with the Department of Education and work within the requirements of the National Quality Framework (NQF) and the National Quality Standards (NQS).

Remember, Koorana is your preschool as much as it is ours.

We actively encourage your participation and involvement in the preschool program, so please do not hesitate to ask us any question, or offer any suggestions.

Regards,



**Metta Booth**

Head of Early Childhood Education Services



# About Koorana

**Since 1976**, Koorana Child & Family Services as a not-for-profit, community-owned, social-purpose business has been providing a range of services to children and young people 0-18 years.

We are actively engaged in furthering children's learning and social development and strengthening families in their familial roles.

Our services are inclusive of all children of all abilities.

## > Our Vision

**All children of all abilities have the opportunity to explore all possibilities in safe, supportive and inclusive environments.**

## > Our Mission

**We empower children and their families through the provision of high-quality services and a collaborative partnership with community supports.**

## > Our Core Values



## > Who We Support

- 01 Children and young people of all abilities**
- 02 Families of all cultures**
- 03 Siblings of children with additional needs**

## Our Preschool

### > All children are individuals and unique

We believe that a sense of belonging is crucial in assisting children to settle and familiarise themselves to a new learning environment. Each child is different and will develop their sense of belonging in their own phase. This in turn helps them to become active and independent learners, who are eager to play, express themselves, explore, and experiment.

### > A familiar and welcoming environment

We believe in creating a safe and welcoming environment for our children & families. We take into account cultural heritage and identity of our community of learning.

### > Learning through play

Play allows children to follow their own interests and ideas with energy and enthusiasm. It provides them with opportunities to:

- Imagine, improvise, discover and create;
- Engage in critical thinking, solve problems and test out ideas;
- Talk to peers and educators;
- Create social groups and learn about fairness; and
- Look after their own physical wellbeing and that of others.

We provide a play-based curriculum in which the children can learn and enjoy themselves, so they become confident global citizens.

### > Educators

Our educators are warm, responsive and attuned to the children's needs, interests and personalities. Educators listen and follow up on children's suggestions and ideas which are incorporated into the learning program and daily experiences

### > Sustainability

We are committed to implementing sustainable practices and by educating children, their families and ourselves.

We teach children about sustainability and caring for the environment and our planet, as well as actively looking for ways to reduce, reuse and recycle our resources.

### > Families and communities

Families are the first educators and most important people in a child's life.

We encourage all families to play an active part in the Preschool community. Families' cultural beliefs, heritage, customs and beliefs are respected and acknowledged. Our Educational program also includes learning about and engaging with the wider local community.

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***Koorana has a deep commitment to nurture individual potential.***







## Our Preschool Program

Our preschool program is guided by Koorana's mission of providing learning opportunities to all children and their families in a caring environment.

### Our programs are based on the Australian Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)

Evidence-based research, theories and literature guide the preschool program. The Education and Care Services National Regulations ensure all preschools provide an educational program (Regulations, part 4.1, p.73) and reflects the national Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework captures the unique learning and developmental areas of children across the birth to five age range.

#### The five outcomes are:

- 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.

The National Quality Framework supports our preschools in meeting the requirements of the seven quality areas within the National Quality Standard. It highlights the importance of play based learning to children's learning and development. Play creates a brain that has increased flexibility and improved potential for learning later in life (Lester and Russell, 2008). Therefore, play based learning environments offer children the opportunities and experiences needed to promote healthy brain development.

We recognise that families are children's first and most influential teachers and we value the huge part you play in your child's life.

At Koorana Preschools, we create a welcoming environment where all children and families are respected and engage with us in curriculum decisions to ensure children's learning and wellbeing.

### Building foundations in the years before school

1. To build foundations in the years before school;
2. To build a love of learning;
3. To understand everyone is unique;
4. Provide a range of opportunities and possibilities for the children to learn and discover on their own or in groups; and
5. To build the 'Lifelong skills for learning'.

### Our educational approach and program lay the foundations in ways such as:

**Resilience:** To help the child learn to recognise when they need support and find ways to face challenges or go through uncomfortable situations

**Self-regulation:** To help children learn to understand, regulate and acknowledge their emotions.

**Self-help skills:** To support children to develop their self-help skills and independence.

**Confidence:** To role model positive social interactions and the ability to build relationship.

**Self-expression:** For children to feel safe in expressing themselves.

**Sharing and turn taking:** To support the children as they learn about fairness.

**Routines and boundaries:** To role model what is acceptable behaviour and support children in a positive manner as they learn about boundaries.

**Group settings:** To support children as they learn about group dynamics and how to work in both small and large groups. Learn about collaboration and problem solving in a group.

## Inclusive Practices

Koorana Preschools are inclusive of all children of all abilities. We support children's learning and behaviour through experiences & conversations that encourage children to reach their full potential.

Our program supports the children's social, cultural and linguistic diversity – including learning styles, abilities, gender, and family circumstances. This information influences our curriculum and decision making process.

The intent is to ensure that all children's experiences are recognised and valued. Also to ensure all children have equitable access to resources and participation, and opportunities to demonstrate their learning and to value difference. (Early Years Learning Framework, p.45)

## Start Strong for Community Preschools

We participate in the NSW Start Strong Program which ensures children have access to at least 600 hours of preschool education each year to give them the best start at school.

The program also ensures that preschool fees are affordable for families.

## OWNA

### *What is OWNA?*

OWNA is an all-in-one Childcare Management System used to allow teachers, educators and families to meet compliance needs at the preschools, including documenting and sharing the child's learning and development. Educators and family members can access OWNA by computer, iPad or phone app.

### *How is OWNA used at Koorana Preschools'?*

OWNA curriculum and programming feature allows families to view our inquiry-based learning, intentional teaching, spontaneous and planned exploration, plus upcoming events across the preschool.

Each child has an individual profile on OWNA that can only be accessed by their family.

Educators record the child's observations, learning, and development. This will be followed by collaborative planning highlighting extensions for play.

### *How can you contribute to your child's learning on OWNA?*

We encourage you to be part of contributing to your child's learning and development.

Families can share their own stories and photos of special events, highlights or developmental milestones of their child. You can also share comments and ideas through OWNA.



## At Koorana, we prioritise your child's safety and wellbeing

**Wellbeing describes a child's confidence, physical health and resilience. It compliments a healthy lifestyle which embraces all aspects including a balanced diet, exercise as well as social, emotional, cultural and economic aspects.**

Koorana Preschools support children's wellbeing by providing warm, trusting relationships, predictable and safe environments. "By acknowledging each child's cultural and social identity, and responding sensitively to their emotional states, educators build children's confidence, sense of wellbeing and willingness to engage in learning." (Outcome 3, EYLF p.30)

For many children a sense of wellbeing is connected to their increasing physical confidence and competence. It is important for educators to support the physical development of the children in an inclusive environment. Promoting and facilitating active and healthy lifestyles in preschool increases the likelihood that children will continue these habits after preschool.

We are licensed and registered with the Department of Education and work within the requirements of the National Quality Framework (NQF), and the National Quality Standards (NQS).

Our quality is regularly assessed against seven (7) quality areas under the National Quality Standard. The assessment is carried out by the Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate.

### **Educator to child ratios and supervision**

The Education and Care National Regulations (2011) determine the maximum number of children to educators and the qualifications required at the Preschools (1 educator to 10 children). Active adult supervision is critically important in providing a safe and protective environment for all children to support children's play. All of Koorana's policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safety and well-being of all children at all times.

### **Child Protection**

Koorana Preschools recognises and strongly supports the rights of children and young people to be safe from significant risk of harm and abuse. Our educators are trained in child protection and aware of the reporting obligations and procedures they are required by law to follow. All Koorana preschool educators are mandatory reporters. This means that we must make a report to Family and Community Services if we suspect any child is at risk of harm.

### **Infection Control**

When children attend preschool, their exposure to infectious conditions may increase. They may also be exposed to other children who are contagious without recognisable symptoms. Children need guidance and support to develop hygiene habits such as handwashing. We adhere to health mandates including the Education and Care Services National Regulations – regulation 77 (2), The National Health and Medical Research Council, and Staying Healthy in Childcare guideline.

### **Handwashing**

Handwashing, including drying hands, is one of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of infection.

**When teaching children to wash their hands the following points are a good guide:**

- use soap and running water;
- wash hands thoroughly while counting slowly from 1 to 15;
- wash all parts of the hands including sides and between the fingers;
- rinse hands well to remove soap;
- dry hands well to remove soap; and
- dry hands with a new paper towel.

### **Nappy changing and toileting procedures**

If your child is not toilet trained and using nappies, please provide enough nappies in your child's bag for the day. Our staff will also work closely with you if your child is being toilet trained. Please discuss to your child's toilet training routine and progress with the educators so that we can support you throughout the process.



## Immunisation

Effective 1 January 2018, the preschool is required by legislation to keep a record of your child's immunisation records. We only accept only an AIR Immunisation History Statement which shows that the child is up to date with their scheduled vaccinations, on a recognised catch up schedule, or have a medical exemption for not being immunised. No other form of documentation is acceptable i.e. Blue Book.

## Children who are unwell

Please don't bring your child to preschool if they are unwell. Infections spread easily amongst children while they play. This is especially important if your child has had any recent:

- vomiting, diarrhoea and/or norovirus (24-hour exclusion period – 48 hours in the case of an outbreak or norovirus);
- a fever of 37.5 degrees or above;
- skin infections such as cold sores on the mouth, chicken pox or hand foot and mouth;
- cough or respiratory symptoms; and/or
- cold or flu symptoms.

Educators will ask you to collect your child from the preschool if they consider your child is not well enough to attend. This may occur regardless of a medical certificate.

- **When notified your child is unwell, please arrange for your child to be collected from the preschool as soon as possible.**

We reserve the right to request a medical clearance from your doctor in writing stating the child is not infectious/contagious and is fit to return to preschool, if necessary. If a child is diagnosed as having a contagious disease, please let the staff at the preschool know straight away. The preschool is also obliged to notify the NSW Department of Health when we have multiple cases of certain infectious conditions, and we are then required to follow their advice in order to contain the outbreak.

We will advise parents when an outbreak of an infectious disease is reported to us by putting a notice up at preschool.

If your child needs medication while at preschool we will need the following:

- The medication authorization form is fully completed and signed;
- The medicine is in the original bottle, has the child's name on the label and is current;
- The Educator administering the medication will adhere to the instructions on the container;
- Parents need to ensure that the medication label and instructions match the information written on the medication record provided to the preschool;
- Educators must be advised of any non-prescription medication (Paracetamol, cough syrup, etc.) given in the last four (4) hours prior to attending preschool; and
- Educators are unable to administer non – prescription medication (Paracetamol, cough syrup, etc.) unless provided with a doctor or Health expert's written advice.

- **Under no circumstances should medication be placed in a child's locker or bag.**

## Ongoing Medical Conditions

If your child has a diagnosed medical condition, our preschool staff are here to support you so it is important that you let the staff know. Your doctor or paediatrician needs to provide you with a written Action Plan. This Action Plan will clearly outline how to manage your child's condition, including in the event of an emergency.

A copy of the Action Plan must be provided to the preschool for relevant medical condition any child has. Such conditions could include asthma, anaphylaxis, epilepsy/seizures, diabetes, allergies, or any other diagnosed conditions.

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## Starting at Preschool

### We have specific arrangements when starting in the Preschool.

#### Opening times

**Our licensed hours are 8:15am – 3:45pm.**  
We are unable to supervise children before 8.15am or after 3.45pm.

#### Drop off

At drop off time, please remember to:  
Sign In your child at our iPad Station

- Always say goodbye to your child and reassure them that you will be picking them up later.
- Remember to apply sunscreen on your child before you come to preschool every day!

#### Pick up

At pick up time, please remember to Sign Out at our iPad Station.

- You must be at the preschool before 3.45pm to collect your child at the end of the day.

**If you are running late**, please contact the staff to let them know as soon as possible. If staff cannot contact you, they will call someone you have authorised as an emergency contact to come and pick up your child.

On the enrolment form, please nominate which adults you authorise to do this on your behalf.

Unauthorised persons will not be allowed to remove a child from the preschool. Photo identification will be required before collecting the child.

- It is a legal requirement that you **SIGN YOUR CHILD IN ON ARRIVAL** and **SIGN THEM OUT WHEN YOU COLLECT THEM.**

The iPad Station has many important uses, including when we practice emergency evacuations with the children, which is a requirement of the National Regulations.





## Your child's first day

Starting your child in care can be intimidating, as children need to become familiar with the environment and staff.

This is why visiting the preschool before enrolling can help your child to become familiar with the environment.

### Preparing your child prior to first day:

1. Reading "my first day" social story included in your orientation pack.
2. Involving your child in preparing for their first day. Such as picking their outfit, packing their bag, lunch and water-bottle.

### When dropping off your child you can assist in your child settling in by:

1. Modelling greetings with Preschool Educators;
2. Reminding your child what to expect during their day; and
3. Saying goodbye.

When it comes to saying goodbye, your child may become upset. Allow your child to go with a staff member, tell them where you are going and that you will be back, and say goodbye.

Your child may become upset but will settle into an experience of interest with staff who will provide the appropriate care for your child.

- Delaying your departure may lead to your child's confusion and inevitably will become distressed.

### Remember to:

- Put sunscreen on your child.
- Take your child to a staff member upon drop off.
- Read the updates on OWNA
- Ensure that your child's enrolment details are up to date.

### What do you need to bring to preschool?

Knowing what to pack in your child's bag for preschool can be confusing. We've listed a few items below that should be in your child's bag every day for preschool.

- A change of clothes, including spare underpants and socks.
- Nappies if your child is not yet toilet trained.
- A hat (even if it is cloudy or raining in the morning).
- A drink bottle filled with fresh water.
- Morning tea, including a piece of fruit.
- A lunch box with a healthy meal for lunch.
- Clearly label all your child's belongings with their name.

As we move into the warmer months of summer, the likelihood of flies and mosquitos increases. As such, please make sure you put insect repellent on your child before coming to preschool. If you would like staff to reapply during the day, please label the bottle with your child's name and place in his or her bag, alert staff, and fill in a relevant permission form.

### ➤ Things not to bring in:

Please try not to let your child bring toys from home into the preschool. We have lots of toys for all the children to play with. Some children may need a comfort toy/blanket, and this is acceptable to bring in. If you are unsure, please check with the educators.

## Photography, CCTV and Safety

### Photographs

With your permission, photographs of your child may be taken by Koorana staff to be used for educational displays in the preschool, promotional purposes on our website, social media, professional development courses and conferences. You can view any photographs of your child at the preschool.

- **At Koorana we respect the privacy of others. Please do not take photographs of other children or parents on your personal camera or phone.**

### CCTV Cameras

We have installed Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) in our preschools in the common areas of the preschools.

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***These early years before school go by quickly and are the most important years in your child's life. We want their Koorana experience to be a positive one. We look forward to working in partnership with you and your family over the years.***

### Evacuation Procedures

Each preschool has an evacuation procedure on display. Please make sure you know where you would need to go to in case of an evacuation. If you arrive during an evacuation drill, you are required to follow the directions of the educators present and evacuate with the children. Evacuation drills will be held at different times of each day throughout the year.

### Confidentiality

Koorana is committed to ensuring the confidentiality and privacy of all your personal information. We are required by law to comply with privacy legislation and national privacy principles in Australia. Koorana is committed to complying with 1988 Privacy Act legislation and principles.

Koorana only maintains information about a client necessary to assess the need for a service and to provide the service. Client information is not shared without written consent of the client or their legal guardian/carer.

### Disclosure of information

Koorana will only disclose information for the purpose for which it was collected, and where appropriate, after obtaining the necessary consent from the individual.

Information may be disclosed for other purposes, with the specific consent to do so. Koorana will only disclose this information in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act and the National Privacy Principles. We may also be required to disclose personal information where the law requires such disclosure.

All of the above information is thoroughly explained in the Preschool Privacy Collection Statement.





## Fees and Payments

### At Koorana Child and Family Services we are committed to keeping our fees affordable for our families.

Our fees are reviewed annually or as required in conjunction with the requirement from the Start Strong Fee Relief funding.

We do not charge for school holidays (non-term time).

#### Some things to remember:

- All fees need to be paid two weeks in advance unless otherwise arranged.
- Please ensure that you have entered the most up to date direct debit details.
- Fees are payable even if:
  - you are on holiday
  - it is a public holiday (except if they fall in school holidays)
  - your child is sick and unable to attend preschool

#### Our preferred method of payment is by direct debit.

#### During an extended absence (e.g. overseas holiday), fees can be either paid:

- By regular direct debit on a fortnightly basis in advance (as usual); or
- In full in advance.

#### Flexible Deposit

- The deposit may be forfeited as a result of unpaid fees, failure to commence at preschool or failure to provide adequate withdrawal or change of enrolled days.
- The deposit will be carried over where a child's enrolment continues into the new calendar year.

All deposit will be refunded through Direct Debit, once all other fees have been paid.

#### Providing Notice of Withdrawal or Changing days

If you would like to withdraw your child from preschool or wish to alter the number of days your child attends, we require **two weeks' notice\*\***, preferably in writing.

#### Please note:

- Non-term time cannot be included in the notice period.
- The two weeks' notice can include the current week if it is given before the child starts their days for the current week (but not if the child has already started in that week). Full payment is required for the 2 weeks' notice period.
- \*\*Families giving their two weeks' notice with 4 weeks or less remaining in Term 4 of the calendar year will not get their flexible deposit refunded.
- Should a family withdraw their child from preschool before the child commences, the family will not get their flexible deposit refunded as per the preschools' fees policy. Fees paid in advance will be refunded in full or partially depending on when notice of withdrawal is given as per the above stated guidelines.



# Koorana Policies and Procedures

Koorana has Policies and Procedures that ensure your child's early education is provided in a positive and safe learning environment. These are readily available for you to look through at any time. Please seek the Preschool Director or educators for assistance.

Families must abide by the Policies and Procedures of the preschool. Please ensure you are fully aware of these requirements and take the time to be familiar with them.

## Open Door Policy

Our Open Door Policy means that you and your family are welcome to make an appointment to come into the preschool at any time to see how we help your child's development. We are proud of the part we play in your child's life and look forward to your visits.

## Communication

*If you have any concerns or questions, please speak to a staff member at the preschool.*

Communication between families and the preschool is important. We strive for clear and open communication between families, staff, and children. It is the family's responsibility to read all written communications from the Preschool, including updates on CCMS (currently OWNA), posted signs, newsletters, and other personal communications, and to respond when necessary.

Families need to notify the Preschool Director, in writing, of any important changes or information regarding their child's health, attendance, schedule, change of enrolment information, etc. We will do our best to ensure you are kept up to date with what's happening around the preschool.

Likewise, if you have information from home (such as a change of routine or events to share) it is important to keep us informed, so we can understand and support your child as best we can.

## Interpreters

*If you would like an interpreter, please let us know and we'll organise it for you.*

## On Enrolment

- Enrolment form must be filled out in its entirety.
- Families will be asked to complete a "Getting to know your family" profile outlining the child's routine, interests, and any additional information about developmental requirements, for example sleep, toileting, food intake and medical needs.
- Preschool Information Session

## Compliments and Complaints

*If you have any compliments, complaints or suggestions you can:*

- Speak with the Preschool Director, Educators or Preschool Office Coordinator;
- Fill in the Compliments and Complaints form; or
- Phone, email or write to the Preschool or our Head Office.

In the first instance, please speak with the educators.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of the initial discussion with the educator, please approach the Preschool Director and then our Head Office.

## Head Office:

1300 566 726  
enquiries@koorana.org.au

## NSW Department of Education

Early Childhood Education  
1800 619 113  
eecd@det.nsw.edu.au

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education>





**Koorana Child & Family Services Ltd**

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