

Girraween Preschool

Parent Information Book

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Principal: Megan McKenzie



A CHILD'S THOUGHTS ON STARTING PRESCHOOL

(Downs Syndrome Association, South Australia Inc. Journal, March 1986)

1. Please plan the beginning of the day so I don't have to be rushed there or I get confused or worried or irritable.
2. Don't push me inside the door and run. It makes me feel unhappy – as if you wanted to get rid of me. Come and look with me at all the interesting things I can do.
3. Please don't slip away without saying "Goodbye," or I will be afraid that you may leave me for good. When you leave, tell me when you will be back and try to be on time, or I will worry.
4. Sometimes I spend a lot of time making something and I am proud of it. If you laugh at it or call it rubbish, half of it seems rubbish, half of it seems wasted. But if you show you value it too, it makes me feel happy and successful and ready to tackle more difficult things.
5. I like you to visit me when I'm at Preschool. When you come I will feel proud and say to my friends, "That's my Mummy" or "That's my Daddy."
6. Please don't talk about me when I'm in earshot. I don't miss much and I worry about what I hear. The teacher will always be happy to find somewhere out of earshot to talk with you about me.
7. Send me to Early Years in clothes that I am comfortable in and that are easily washed, so that I can inquire in them without fussing about getting dirty.
8. When you come for me, please don't ask me, or the teacher, if I've been good. I try to be but sometimes things go wrong and I don't like to be reminded of my mistakes.
9. What makes me feel good is, if you show that you are really pleased to see me and are ready to look when I have something to show you.



WELCOME TO PRESCHOOL

at Girraween Primary School

We hope you and your child will enjoy your educational journey with us. This handbook contains some information your family will need for your child's smooth start to Preschool. If you are unsure about anything, do not hesitate to ask the staff.

GIRRAWEEN SCHOOL LOGO AND MOTTO

At Girraween the whole child is valued and we promote social, emotional, academic and physical development.

Our logo takes the form of an acacia tree, which is common to our area and has a pathway leading to it. It says that along our learning pathway there will be many choices to make or branches to take in order to achieve. Our Motto '**Rising to the Challenge**', supports our logo by recognising that there will be many different challenges to face along the way and that no matter the challenge we will grow, and the solid trunk of our learning will support us.

The school has a set of clearly defined core values called '**Seeds of Success**'.

These values are what the school community believe are important for successful learning and living. They are:

Respect
Responsibility
Personal best
Care
Fairness.



Zoning / Managed Enrolment

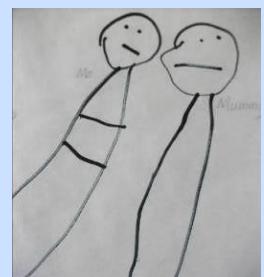
As our school has grown rapidly the Department of Education and Training have implemented the managed enrolment process. This means priority is given to students who live in our feeder zone.

THE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Girraween's preschool programs endeavor to build upon the experience, skills and understandings the child has already acquired by providing a warm, inviting, exciting and challenging environment which is part of the national initiative for quality Early Childhood education. Teachers and Early Year's Educators use the Early Year's Learning Framework and The NT Preschool Curriculum to inform their teaching.

The **Early Years Learning Framework** describes childhood as a time of *belonging, being and becoming*.

- **Belonging** is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they *belong* because of the relationships they have with their family, community, culture and place.
- **Being** is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just 'be'—time to play, try new things and have fun.
- **Becoming** is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.



LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Play is very important for children. Through play young children explore and learn to understand the world around them as they come to communicate, discover, imagine and create. When children play they are showing what they have learned and what they are trying to understand. This is why play is one of the foundations of the Early Years Learning Framework and underpins the Preschool Curriculum. Using this Framework and curriculum, educators will guide your child's play by carefully designing learning experiences and creating stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environments. Through the five learning goals, educators will assist your child to develop:

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

There are copies of the Preschool Curriculum available for parents.

COMMUNICATION

School newsletters are published every Wednesday and will be emailed or sent home as a hard copy. All communication/notes from Preschool are placed in the "pockets" at the front of the classroom for parents to collect. You can learn more about our school at:

Facebook: Girraween Primary School

Website: <http://www.girraweenprimary.nt.edu.au/>

School App: MGM School Star

ABSENCES

If your child is absent from school, it is important to notify the School as absences without explanation are recorded in the E-Roll. Unexplained absences of four weeks may result in the automatic removal of your child from the roll and his/her place may be given to another child on the waiting list.

ENROLMENTS FOR PRESCHOOL

Students can be enrolled into a Preschool program if they turn four on or before 30 June 2020

MGM SCHOOL STAR APP.

Our School now has our own MGM School Star Phone and Android App to help us communicate more effectively with our Parent/Student community. We are asking parents/students to install our School App. Install the app from either the Apple App Store or the Playstore and make sure you login to the app. If you do not set up and login (and remain logged in), you will not receive updates from the school. For installation help or help with the app please contact the front office and speak to the team.

PRESCHOOL SESSION TIMES

Each Preschool child will attend two full days a week and a full Wednesday on alternate weeks. This provides 30 hours of preschool each fortnight.

Option 1 –

Monday full day 8:30am - 2:30pm.	Tuesday full day 8:30am - 2:30pm.	Odd weeks Wednesday 8:30am - 2:30pm during term time.
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Option 2 –

Thursday full day 8:30am - 2:30pm.	Friday full day 8:30am - 2:30pm.	Even weeks Wednesday 8:30am - 2:30pm during term time.
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REST TIME

At Preschool, all the children have a rest each afternoon. Some may sleep, others "read" quietly. Children have individual mattresses and there are some 2nd hand sheets available. Please provide your own mattress cover or fitted sheets with your child's name on all items. (Cot sheets fit well - 72cm wide x 135cm long)

BACK TO SCHOOL VOUCHERS

The Commonwealth Government has instituted vouchers to assist parents with equipping their child for school. The voucher is \$200 and this money could be used for uniforms, excursions and stationary essentials.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

You are invited to support the Preschool program by making a voluntary contribution of \$90 per year. This money is used for resources that will enhance the preschool program.

CHANGE OF DETAILS

It is important that school staff can always contact a parent/ caregiver in case of an accident or emergency. Please notify Girraween school of changes to contact details, including home and work phone numbers and address.

GETTING READY FOR PRESCHOOL

Your child will need the following items clearly labelled with your child's name:

Uniforms: Preschoolers wear school uniform, bucket hats and joggers or sandals for school (No thongs or crocs)

School Bag – good size

Water bottle – 500ml

Lunch Box—including cutlery needed to access food i.e spoon for yoghurt

Spare set of plain clothes (not uniform) in a plastic bag



ALL ITEMS NEED TO BE CLEARLY NAMED

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Library: Children visit the library, listen to stories and have the opportunity to borrow a book, which can be taken home for the week.

Water Play: In the warmer months, we often have water play, both in the wading pool and at water troughs. Children do not have to play in the pool if they choose not to. Children need sun-safe bathers, towel and a plastic bag for the wet bathers. All items must be clearly labelled. If children have runny noses or open cuts or sores they will not be permitted to participate in water activities.



Technology: Children will be exposed to a range of electronic technology which supports our program.

Assemblies: Assemblies are held Friday at 8:30am in even weeks. Parents are welcome to attend assemblies. Preschoolers attend on special events.

Excursions: In support of our curriculum focus, we may take children on a trip outside the school environment. Each excursion requires parents to complete and sign a permission form, and there may be a cost involved to cover bus and driver costs. If you have a small rigid license please tell the Preschool staff.



TOYS

We know that toys are very precious to children. To prevent anything from happening to them and to minimize class distraction we ask that toys stay safely at home.

MONEY

Please put money in a labelled bag or envelope when your child is asked to bring money for performances, excursions or special events.

MEDICATION

If your child requires medication during the school day it will need to be given to our Preschool Assistants and you will need to complete a form with administering instructions. If your child is asthmatic or has an allergy, please complete an Asthma Action Plan or health care plan.

SNACKS, LUNCH & WATER BOTTLES

Please provide your child with a healthy snack for morning/afternoon tea and a sandwich or equivalent for lunch. As we have children attending the school with severe peanut allergies, we would appreciate **NO Peanut or Peanut Products** included in lunches.

Your child will need a refillable water bottle no bigger than 500ml as children are encouraged to drink throughout the day.

Lunch orders are not encouraged as we are not staffed to accommodate collection. We often eat at different times to the rest of the school.

Suitable Snacks	Unsuitable snacks
<p>Fruit -some may need to be cut up. Dried fruit Vegetable sticks Cheese and biscuits Boiled eggs Salads Sandwiches Fruit medleys Sausages</p>    	<p>NUT products – nutella, peanut butter, muesli bars Roll ups Lollies Chocolates Chips</p>   

HEALTH

Sunscreen & Insect Repellent	Is the responsibility of parents. Due to sensitive skins we are not able to apply sunscreen or insect repellent. We have Skin Cancer Council Sunblock that you can apply to your child in the morning.
Allergies	If your child has any known allergies please notify us immediately, especially food as often we cook at Preschool. Severe allergies requiring medication will need to have completed a health care plan.
Asthma	If your child suffers with Asthma please complete an Asthma Action Plan at the office. This needs to be signed by a doctor.
Head lice	Check your child's head regularly. If you find lice or eggs please notify us so we can send a note home to all parents to check their children. If your child has head lice, it is wise to treat the whole family (especially siblings).
Colds and Flu	Can be highly contagious. Keeping children at home to recuperate is the best medicine.
Conjunctivitis	Is highly contagious. Your child is to stay home until treatment is applied and discharges from the eye/s have stopped.
Impetigo School Sores.	Exclude until treatment has commenced. All sores on exposed surfaces are to be covered with watertight dressings.
Diarrhoea	Children need to stay home until diarrhea has stopped.

If your child requires medical attention at preschool an accident form is completed and requires parent acknowledgement through a signature.

PARENT/ TEACHER COMMUNICATIONS

NEWSLETTERS

The school has a weekly newsletter that incorporates information about what is happening within the school, important dates to remember, etc as well as a term preschool newsletter. From time to time, we will also send home separate notes/updates etc. Please check your child's Preschool bag or 'class pockets' daily.

You may also contact the teacher directly via Class Dojo or email.

PORTFOLIOS

As part of our reporting in Preschool, students develop individual portfolios containing work samples, reflections and learning stories. These portfolios are compiled throughout the year and go home to be returned in Term 2 and home for good in Term 4. The items in the portfolio are annotated by teachers and connected directly to the EYLF and preschool curriculum to assist in seeing the learning progress your child is making. A report accompanies this portfolio each semester.

FAMILY NIGHTS

Throughout the year, Preschool hosts twilight family nights which are opportunities to get to know your child's teacher and look at your child's progress through their portfolio, learning stories and work samples. On these evenings Girraween Preschool families come together with other families across our Girraween Community. It is an evening to connect and build our school community network.

CLASS DOJO

Class Dojo is a communication app that allows teachers to connect with parents and families via a user friendly smartphone app. Dojo is primarily used to share photos, post events, communicate directly with your child's teacher and to keep families up to date with what is happening in real time. Dojo is the main form of communication used at preschool and we encourage all parents to download the app before commencing preschool.

INTERVIEWS

If you wish to speak to the teacher about your child, it is best to make an appointment when they are not teaching, as during class time a teacher's attention needs to be on the children. It is also possible to send an email: admin.girrasch@ntschools.net or call the front office on 0889833300.

LEARNING BEGINS AT HOME

Parents can teach their child many of the skills that are necessary for the child to learn to be literate, that is, to read, write, spell and speak.

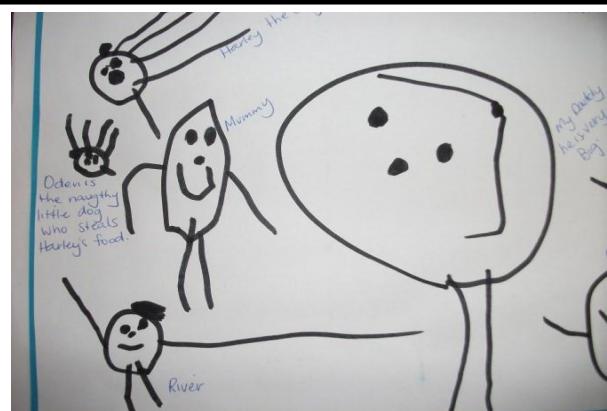
You are probably doing it already!

- Read to your child every day
- Talk about the books you have read
- Teach your child nursery rhymes and songs
- Help your child to recognise his/her name

Children learn to write by writing. Make sure your child has access to writing and drawing materials at home. Encourage their efforts, focus on what they can do rather than their mistakes. Let your child see you reading and writing.

Help your child to develop numeracy skills by playing counting games, shopping, cooking and talking about shape, colours and maths around the home.

Help your child to develop independence through allowing him/her time to think about and find solutions to problems.



ADDITIONAL HELPFUL TIPS

In order to develop the small muscles in their hands (fine motor skills), children need to have good control of their gross motor skills (large muscles movement). As this development progresses, they then will be ready for pre-reading and pre-writing. Your child needs to be able to move their hands, fingers and eyes smoothly and carefully. Here are some tips to help develop your child's fine motor skills.

- Encouraging your child when **dressing and undressing** themselves or when dressing dolls and toys. It takes time when your child is learning to put on a shirt, do up buttons or zippers, thread laces into shoe eyelets or tie shoelaces; patience is required.
- **Manipulating:** Show your child how to put toothpaste onto a toothbrush and encourage them to do this. Build finger strength by rolling clay between forefingers and thumb. Wonderful creations can be made and displayed.
- **Manipulation games:** such as 'Pick up Sticks' and 'Connect 4'.
- **Construction:** that requires pushing and pulling with fingers e.g. Lego or Duplo.
- **Threading and lacing:** with a variety of sized beads.
- **Encourage drawing:** Use different craft and drawing materials such as thick and thin crayons, triangular-shaped pencils or felt-tipped pens on a variety of media, e.g., paper, pads, newspaper, inside of cereal boxes, cardboard or old gift-wrapping paper.
- **Pouring activities:** invite your child to pour milk, water, flour/ sugar/rice/pasta into a cup during cooking activities.

Speaking and Listening

- Tell and read stories to your child every day. Children love listening to their favourite stories over and over.
- Teach your child to take care of books
- Join the local library and participate in their story times.
- Sing with your child
- Encourage your child to help you find places or things on maps, or read the words and numbers when out and about, e.g. at the supermarket.
- Make up some funny and nonsense rhymes
- Talk about your child's day by asking sentences starters, such as "What was the funniest/strangest/most exciting thing that happened at preschool today..."
- Provide opportunities for your child to talk to other children and adults independently of you.
- Have a dress up box so your child can role play and interact with siblings and/or friends.

Adapted from Australian Literacy Educator's Association (ALEA). Available at:

<https://www.alea.edu.au/publicresources/resources-for-parents-and-community/little-peoples-literacy-learning>

*Talk to your child's teacher about how you can help your child at home.
When home and school work together, children learn better and feel secure.*

Can your child:

Go to the toilet independently?

Manage his/her clothes independently?

Undo his/her water bottle and lunch box

Recognise his/her name on possessions

These are things to practice or consolidate prior to the start of Preschool.

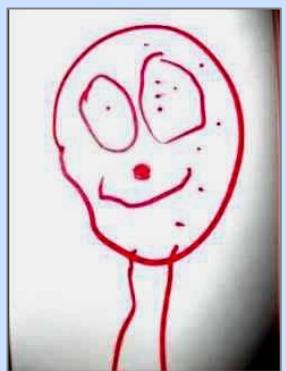
GETTING INVOLVED AT GIRRAWEEN

HELPING IN THE CLASSROOM

Teachers love having help in the classroom. Parents and extended family are encouraged to join in and assist with activities.

You can also:

- Take jobs to do at home , eg cut out shapes for collage
- Join one of the many committees e.g. Council, Fundraising, Library
- Parents are encouraged to obtain a volunteer Ochre Card. This is essential if you want to attend excursions. Please be advised that there is often a processing time of up to 6 weeks. Follow the link to apply: <https://nt.gov.au/emergency/community-safety/apply-for-a-working-with-children-clearance>



Girraween Primary Learning Powers

