



Operating Handbook & Policies

Updated May 2021

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SECTION 1

ORGANISATION, MANAGEMENT & LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

This section provides a detailed description of the Possums Playschool organisation, its management structure and legal responsibilities to its governing bodies. Whilst all parents/carers should be aware of the information in this section, it will be of particular interest to those undertaking roles on the Committee while their child is enrolled at Possums Playschool.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Possums Playschool was founded in 2000 by Donna Catherall. In its first four years, the Playschool was successfully operated by Playschool parents as a sub-committee of the Miles Franklin Preschool Parents Association. In 2004 the Canberra Preschool Society Inc., directed a restructuring of the management of Playschools. As a result, the Possums Playschool Parent Association Inc. was established in November 2004.

Possums Playschool provides a play-based learning facility with structured activities for 3-5 year olds. Suitable premises were located initially within the Miles Franklin Preschool premises and from 2016 at 30 Scattergood Place, Spence allows the Playschool to be a viable community based, non-government funded service for our children.

1.2 LICENSING RESPONSIBILITIES

(a) Licence

Possums Playschool Parent Association is operating with an Approval in Principle under the Children and Young People Act 1999. A full licence has been issued and is valid until 31 July 2022.

Throughout the licence period, advisors from Children's Education and Care Assurance visit on a scheduled and random basis to monitor compliance with the legislation.

The legislation covering the Playschool licence is administered by Children's Education and Care Assurance, a sub-branch of the ACT Education Directorate.

Children's Education and Care Assurance can be contacted on 6207 1114 or at:
Children's Education and Care Assurance
ACT Education Directorate, GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601

(b) Controlling Person

The Possums Playschool Parents Association (the Proprietor) holds the Possums Playschool licence.

A Controlling Person is nominated as having the principle responsibility for managing and controlling the day-to-day running of the Playschool. The Possums Playschool Administrator will undertake the role of Controlling Person.

Change of the nominated Controlling Person must be notified to the Manager of Children's Education and Care Assurance within 30 days of the change.

The Controlling Person needs to provide Children's Education and Care Assurance with a Consent to Obtain Personal Information Form and payment to enable a police check to be carried out.

(c) Possums Playschool Parents Association & Committee

The parents/carer of every child enrolled at Possums Playschool become members of the Possums Playschool Parents Association for the period during which their child attends Playschool. Each year, the new members appoint a Committee to organise and run Possums Playschool for that year.

The following positions make up the Possums Playschool Parents Association Committee. A full description of duties may be found in Appendix 1:

Playschool Coordinator
Secretary
Treasurer
Purchasing/Occupational Health and Safety Officer
Fundraising Officer
General Committee Members – Two to four roles
Media/Grants Officer

Every position on the Playschool Committee must be filled prior to Term 1 beginning or Playschool cannot operate.

Committee information and nomination forms will be sent out with enrolment. Recruitment of new Committee members will take place at the Information Night. The formal election of Committee members and changeover will be held early in the calendar year (before the new school year begins) at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Possums Playschool Parents Association. People other than parents may apply to become members of the Possums Playschool Parents Association if they wish to be actively involved in the management of Playschool. Contact the Coordinator for more information.

(d) Obligations of the Association

Possums Playschool Parents Association Inc. has certain obligations under the Associations Incorporation Act 1991. These include:

- Notifying the Registrar-General of appointments to the Committee within one month of changes.
- Appointment of a Public Officer whose name and address will be supplied to the Registrar-General. The Playschool Coordinator will undertake the role of Public Officer.
- Maintaining an up-to-date register of members.
- Lodging a statement of the audited accounts of the Association with the Registrar General within six months of the end of the Association's financial year.

(e) Operating Guidelines

Possums Playschool is fully-funded by session fees and organised by a volunteer Parent Committee. Playschool currently operates from 30 Scattergood Place, Spence. The Playschool operations are governed by the following items:

Possums Playschool Parents Association Inc. Objects and Rules of the Association (i.e. the Constitution).
ACT Playschools Conditions for Approvals in Principle and Licences.

The operations and policies described in this handbook are based on the rules and requirements of these items. Interested parents, especially those on the Committee, are encouraged to be familiar with these documents. The Playschool Coordinator can provide copies.

Playschool records are kept as per licensing requirements for a minimum of seven years.

Should the situation arise whereby Playschool is no longer in a position to continue, whether due to finances, enrolment numbers, lack of a Teacher or Committee members, Possums Playschool's funds and resources are to be donated to an appropriate children's charity, children's hospital or another Playschool.

This decision would be that of the Possums Playschool Parent Committee at the time.

SECTION 2

OPERATIONS & POLICIES FOR DAILY RUNNING

This section contains the operations and policies for the day-to-day running of Possums Playschool. Topics have been grouped together in this section to provide parents with a useful reference for daily operations.

2.1 Criteria for Attendance

Playschool offers children a stepping-stone to independence from a parent or carer in a supportive environment. Playschool's main aim is to provide opportunities for each child to enjoy belonging to his or her own social group, to interact cooperatively with peers, taking responsibility for belongings and equipment, and overall providing a play-based early learning experience.

The Playschool is aimed at children who are 3 years of age. Where a child is under the age of 3, a parent/carer must accompany the child for all sessions until that age is reached. This requirement cannot be waived. As preparation for Preschool, it is important that the Playschool follows the same policy with respect to age as ACT Preschools.

Children attending the Playschool are expected to be fully toilet-trained at the discretion of the teacher.

Every child can contribute something unique to the group, and we encourage all children to attend. If a child does not meet the above requirements, or has special needs, parents are encouraged to contact the teacher and discuss them. Parents are required to discuss any special needs their child may have prior to Term 1 beginning.

2.2 Period of Operation

Playschool term dates will be supplied to each enrolled family on the Parent Information Night and/or in the enrolment package.

The Playschool year will commence in the week following Preschool in Term 1, and finish the week prior to Preschool in Term 4. This ensures no disruption to the start and end, settling in and cleaning up of Preschool.

The Playschool will not operate on Public Holidays and session fees will be adjusted accordingly.

Drop-in orientation sessions are usually held in February prior to Term 1 commencing. This gives children a chance to attend with their parent or carer and meet the Teacher and familiarise themselves with the Playschool room and where their belongings will be kept. It is also an opportunity for parents to meet the Parent Committee.

2.3 Session Information

Sessions are currently held on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday are 5 hour sessions operating from 9.20 am to 2.20pm.

To each session children need to bring their own snack-box containing a healthy snack (a list of suggestions will be provided to parents) and drink bottle of water, and a hat. All belongings should be clearly labelled with the child's name. As snack boxes are not refrigerated, an insulated container and ice pack would be advisable to keep food fresh.

Children are asked not to bring toys or special things from home unless specifically requested.

Children are encouraged to take responsibility for placing their snack box and drink bottle of water in the baskets and hanging their bag on their hook on arrival.

2.4 Contacting Playschool

The contact number for Playschool DURING SESSION TIMES is 0415 571972

This number only operates between 9.00am and 3.00pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesday and at other times the phone is diverted.

At other times, parents should contact the Coordinator or the Possums Administrator on the phone numbers provided.

Possum's playschool has an open door policy. As explained in 2.1 every child can contribute something unique to the group, and we encourage all children to attend. If a child does not meet the above requirements, or has special needs, parents are encouraged to contact the teacher and discuss them. Parents are required to discuss any special needs their child may have prior to Term 1 beginning.

The postal address is Possums Playschool, PO Box 433, Kippax ACT 2615

Possums Playschool Parents Association Inc. - Handbook May 2021

2.5 Delivery & Collection of Children

No children are to be left at the Playschool outside session times.

For safety and insurance reasons and to ensure arranged play equipment is not disturbed, Playschool children or siblings are permitted to play on the outdoor play equipment before and after the sessions with supervision from the families. Please ensure your child(ren) remain with you at all times.

Parents, Playschool children and siblings need to remain in the covered area outside the classroom, until invited to enter by the Teacher or Session Convenor. At the beginning of a session this ensures the classroom can be properly set up; and at the end of a session it is very important that children are seated on the mat in an orderly manner, ensuring the Teacher can see who is collecting them. Rostered parents (and their children) may enter the classroom at other times in line with their duties. (See Appendix 3, Roster Parent Guidelines).

Upon entering the Playschool room, parents are advised to settle their child and share an activity and then leave. Parents of new or unsettled children may need to stay a little longer. Please speak with the Teacher if you are concerned about the best way of leaving your child. Once they feel secure, children may be happy for their parents to leave as soon as they arrive at Playschool. Children must be picked up promptly at the end of each session. The Playschool will require an emergency contact person to ring if a child has not been picked up. This is to be provided on the enrolment form and attendance register

2.6 Daily Attendance Register

Each child must be signed in by a parent/carer on arrival and signed out on departure in the Attendance Register. Written authority **must** be given if someone other than the usual carer is to collect the child, and relevant phone numbers left if necessary. This authority can be given in any of the following ways:

On the Enrolment Form, nominate family members, friends, employees authorised to collect the child on a regular or occasional basis; Nominate additional authorised persons throughout the year on the form provided in the Attendance Register; if you wish to add someone to this list;

Write a letter to the Teacher, as an alternative to using the forms provided.

Parents/carers who change collection arrangements infrequently can use the comments section of the Attendance Register to advise the Teacher which authorised person is collecting their child that day.

If circumstances arise where a parent/carer cannot provide written authority in advance of a person collecting their child, they must phone the Playschool Teacher so both she and the child are aware of the arrangements.

It is very important for the child to be aware of any change in pick-up arrangements. The comments section in the Attendance Register is also used by the teacher for any messages she may need to relay to parents.

2.7 Playschool Program

The Playschool Teacher will plan and provide a written program for each Playschool session incorporating the Playschool philosophy, long term goals for the group and individual aims for each child. The Playschool program is based on recognised principals of early childhood development and the provision of learning experiences that foster the development of individual children within a group setting. The program is designed to develop each child's social, physical, emotional, intellectual, language and creative potential. To provide feedback to the families the teachers complete a developmental check list at the end of term 2 and 4. The program is evaluated on a regular basis and parent input and feedback are encouraged at all times.

Subject to specific needs and relevance to the Playschool program, the Playschool will endeavour to integrate into the program activities that relate to other cultures. Parents are encouraged to discuss any such issues with the Teacher and/or Committee.

If a child does not meet the Playschool's criteria for attendance or has special or individual development needs, parents are requested to contact the Committee to discuss the placement of their child. All discussions will remain confidential.

The Playschool program is designed for a group as a whole, but may need to be adjusted accordingly to cater for children with special needs or disabilities. Due to our staff:child ratio requirements and our limitations as a parent-funded Playschool, children with special needs or disabilities requiring one-on-one care will require their parent/carer to accompany them for the whole session.

The Playschool aims to provide a warm, positive and supportive environment, which will encourage children to begin to be responsible for their actions and nurture their confidence and self-esteem. The children will start to

learn to be responsible for caring for their belongings and putting these items in the right place. This is aimed to offer the child a stepping-stone to independence in a supportive environment and to enjoy belonging to his or her own social group.

2.8 Health & Hygiene Practices

(a) Health Management

If a child has a specific health issue e.g. asthma, allergy, this will be noted on their Enrolment Records. At the start of the school year, the Teacher will request additional, detailed information to allow individual children's health issues to be managed at Playschool. Parents will also be requested to provide any special medication needed.

(b) Illness

Children must not attend Playschool if they have any communicable diseases. All excludable diseases as per ACT Health guidelines will be displayed on the noticeboard in the Playschool classroom.

If a child or sibling who regularly visits the Playschool contracts a communicable disease e.g. measles, chickenpox, parents are asked to advise the Teacher or a Committee member so that a notice can be posted on the Playschool door informing other families.

Medication other than paracetamol or an alternative as authorised in the Enrolment Record will not be administered unless under instruction from a medical practitioner. Parents must give written consent and also sign the medication register. The Playschool also has an allergy register.

The Playschool retains the right to exclude any child not well enough to cope with the group situation.

(c) Hygiene Practices

Parents are responsible for applying sunscreen to their child before they attend Playschool sessions. Sunscreen is provided at Playschool for parents to apply prior to a session beginning. It will be reapplied during the day, if your child has any allergies please let the teachers know.

Each child brings a snack and drink bottle of water from home. The children are encouraged not to share food due to cross infection control and risks associated with food allergies.

To maintain optimal health standards in the kitchen/craft sink areas, parents will be encouraged to use the correct coloured sponges as per the chart on the wall for cleaning surfaces.

Disposable gloves are to be worn when helping a child with a blood injury or assisting a child in the toilet. Hygienic hand washing practices should be followed, with teachers, rostered parents and children encouraged to wash hands before and after handling food, eating, after toileting and nose wiping, and when otherwise necessary.

Toilets, bathroom basins, benches and floors are thoroughly cleaned before vacating the premises at the end of each session.

(d) Hats

Each child will be provided with a hat at the beginning of the term. They must bring their own hat to every session and it should be clearly labelled with their name. A sunhat/beanie is worn all year round in line with school policies. Hats must not be shared or placed in a common basket, so as to minimise the risk of transferring head lice. In the event of an outbreak of head lice, affected children will be excluded until appropriate treatment has been carried out and the head lice have disappeared. If a case is discovered at Playschool, the parent will be notified. As with illnesses, an awareness notice will be put up notifying Playschool parents.

(e) Allergies

Possums Playschool is a NUT FREE ZONE Possums Playschool has a specific Allergy Policy which is detailed in Appendix 2.

2.9 Employment Practices, Relief Staff & Parent Roster Duty

(a) Early Childhood Educator (Teacher)

Playschool sessions are run by an Early Childhood Educator with appropriate qualifications in Early Childhood studies (3-4 year diploma or degree). A current Level 2 First Aid certificate and a working with the vulnerable people card are required. A copy of the selection criteria/duty statement can be obtained from the Committee.

There is an annual contract for the Playschool Teacher issued by the Possums Playschool Parent Committee. The Teacher will be employed for a period covering the 4 terms with Term 1 being a probationary period. An option of

further employment is subject to the approval of the following year's Playschool Committee. Further requirements are outlined in a letter of employment conditions.

(b) Assistant

Playschool sessions have an assistant who works together with the Teacher. A current Level 2 First Aid certificate and a working with the vulnerable people card are required. A copy of the selection criteria/duty statement can be obtained from the committee.

(c) Relief staff

A relief teacher may need to be used during the year. Relief teachers will be appropriately trained and provide copies of qualifications, current Level 2 First Aid certificate and a working with the vulnerable people card. The Committee will advise parents (in advance if possible) via a notice on the outside Playschool noticeboard when a relief teacher is to run any session.

(d) Roster Parents

The Playschool likes to have one or two parent/carer helpers, in addition to the Teacher and assistant on the premises for each session. The helpers assist and supervise activities. Parents may place their name on the Roster to volunteer to help out at a session. Siblings are welcome to stay when parents are on roster; As of November 2013 parents are required to have (a) working with the vulnerable people card to fulfil the requirements of roster duty. The roster consists of either a morning or afternoon session..

After every Playschool session, hand-towels, tea-towels, smocks, etc are to be washed. Parents are required to volunteer a laundry wash once a term for each session their child attends. The wash roster is located on the board with the Parent Roster lists. The laundry then needs to be returned to Playschool prior to the commencement of that laundry's session of the next week.

A full Playschool Roster Parent guideline is included in Appendix 3 of this document.

THE PLAYSCHOOL PARENTS COMMITTEE ASK PARENTS TO READ THIS THOROUGHLY PRIOR TO THEIR ROSTER DUTIES.

SECTION 3

ADDITIONAL OPERATING PROCEDURES & POLICIES

In this section, all additional operating procedures and policies are described.

3.1 Enrolment

A registration list and waiting list will be kept by the Enrolment Secretary, of families wishing to enrol for the following year only.

The Enrolment process will include a first round offer being made to the first 40 families on the registration/waiting list. An allowance of 2 weeks will be allocated for return of those enrolment forms. Once those 2 weeks have lapsed a second round of enrolment offers will be made to the next 40 families on the registration/waiting list, and again a period of 2 weeks will be allocated for the return of those enrolment forms.

The **Enrolment Package** will include:

A letter of offer of placement with session(s) offered.

Parent information including starting school information as well as a description of what Playschool is.

Enrolment records including immunisation and child collection permission forms.

Information on enrolment fee; \$ 50 per child to be returned with each enrolment form.
(Parent's enrolling twins etc. are required to pay a \$ 50 fee *per child* to be enrolled.)

Date of Information Night

(Original immunisation records and two photocopies for Playschool's files are to be brought along to information night. Original birth certificate is to be brought along to information night to be sighted.)

Parent Committee positions and roles and nomination forms.

(All positions on the Parent Committee will need to be filled on this night for the Playschool to operate the following year).

Parents who do not secure a position for their child in the round(s) of offers, their child will be placed on the waiting list for that enrolment year, and that they will be contacted if and as soon as a placement is available.

Playschools are entrusted with considerable personal information about children, their families and the staff. This information will be treated confidentially and with respect. Playschool members who will have access to such information are the Teacher, Coordinator and Enrolment Secretary.

3.2 Payment of Fees and Accounts

Fees cover ALL expenses at Possums Playschool i.e. there is no other funding.

Fees cover the Teacher's salary, superannuation, tax, room hire, insurance, resources and consumables, preschool levy etc. Prompt payment of full fees per term in advance is required for the smooth running of the Playschool. The Playschool has a strict policy of payment in advance or the child's place will not be held.

Term 1 fees will be required to be paid as per an invoice sent to Parents before the commencement of Term 1. This will hold the child's placement for Term 1. This procedure will be followed for the next three terms.

The Administration Officer will collect fees and issue statements. If full payment is not made, the child's place will not be held. Fees are currently set at \$59.00 per session from 2021. Payment can be made by electronic transfer or cheque, made out to Possums Playschool, and arrangements for cash payments can be made in person to the Administration Officer. Fee payments are made directly to the Assistant Treasurer or placed in the locked letter box in the Playschool room. The Playschool Teacher cannot accept fee payments.

The Possums Playschool Parents Committee reserves the right to raise fees during the school year. Substantial notice and reasons would be given to parents.

If a paid staff member (ie teacher or assistant teacher) enrolls their child in the Playschool, session fees are waived for each session that that child attends the Playschool, for the length of the enrolment of that child. Please note that a Committee Member is not defined as being a staff member and grandchildren, nieces and nephews are not defined as being a staff member's child.

Once enrolled, the Playschool Parents Committee assumes that a child will continue for the full year unless notified in writing. Two weeks written notice is to be provided to the Committee if a child is to be withdrawn from any or all sessions at the Playschool. To ensure the smooth running of the Playschool, **no reimbursement of fees can be**

given if a child is withdrawn or absent for any sessions for which they have paid. General Playschool accounts are paid by the Administration Officer once approved at a Committee meeting; and cheques require two signatures from the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Coordinator or Secretary.

3.3 Immunisation

The Playschool is required to sight each child's original immunisation records, and parents will also need to provide the Playschool with two photocopies of these records. These copies are for the Playschool and the Department of Health and Community Care. Copies of immunisation records are required to be sent to the Department by 3rd April and by 2nd October for all children newly enrolled in each of these 6 month periods.

Immunisation is not compulsory, but parents who do not have their child immunised must supply a letter to the Playschool advising of this. Each child's immunisation status needs to be known so that, in the case of an outbreak of a communicable disease, arrangements for exclusion can be made. Details of current ACT Government Policy on Immunisation and Communicable Diseases are available from the Playschool Parents Committee.

3.4 Excursions

Opportunities for excursions may arise during the school year. Permission slips must be sent to parents for any excursion(s). In the case of a bus trip, parents need to approve their child travelling without a seat belt.

The minimum adult/child ratio required by licensing for this type of excursion is 1 adult for every 4 children. This can be achieved by additional parents attending and helping with supervision.

Local walks may also be planned around the grounds of the Preschool where no roads will be crossed. Permission for this type of activity is incorporated in the Enrolment Forms.

3.5 Behaviour Management Policy

The children will be encouraged to accept basic rules designed to show them how to respect one another's safety and feelings and care for their physical environment. In the case of challenging behaviour, the Teacher will state the positive behaviour required and redirect the child to an appropriate activity.

Parents on roster duty are advised to refer to the Teacher in the case of challenging behaviour.

The Playschool aims to provide a warm, positive and supportive environment to encourage children to be responsible for their actions and be guided towards self-control and the appropriate social skills. Positive reinforcement will be given for responsible behaviour.

Physical/ humiliating punishment has negative consequences for children and will not be accepted. Guidance practices used in Playschool will:

Maintain the dignity and rights of the child at all times;

Preclude techniques which involve physical, verbal or emotional punishment;

Not allow children to be isolated for any reason other than illness/ accident or a pre-arranged appointment with parental consent.

The standard of care at Playschool must ensure maximum personal safety for all children. The Parent Committee retains the right to exclude any child who is deemed aggressive, violent or unduly disruptive by the Playschool Teacher.

3.6 Fire Drills and Evacuations

The Playschool is required to have an annual fire inspection and the Teacher will also conduct fire/evacuation drills with the children throughout the year.

In the event of a real evacuation, the children will be re-located to the grassed area next to the playschool premises. All possible attempts will be made by the Teacher and duty staff to contact the individual parent/carer or emergency contact for children attending that day. This is another reason why communication through the Attendance Register is so important (refer 2.4 Delivery & Collection of Children).

3.7 Procedures for Accidents and Emergencies

Any accident or illness will be recorded in an Accidents/Illness Form. The parent/carer will be notified and will need to sign the Accident Register.

The form includes the child's name, date of illness/accident or injury, symptoms (not diagnosis), brief details (if observed), any action taken, how the parent was notified and there is provision for parent and Teacher to sign.

On enrolment, parents will indicate a person to contact in an emergency, ambulance membership (if any) and family doctor contact details. They will also complete a Child Health Record Form detailing a medical history of the child. This form will also be consent to any emergency medical treatment that may be needed.

3.8 Communication

(a) Committee meetings

Possums Playschool Parent Committee meetings will be held at least twice a term to consider issues affecting the management of the Playschool. Parent input is encouraged so all parents will be notified as to the date of each meeting and invited to attend. Minutes from the meeting will be displayed on our information wall.

(b) Newsletters

A newsletter will be produced each term notifying parents know of management decisions, planned events and issues that arise.

(c) General meetings

General meetings are formal meetings of the Possums Playschool Parents Association. The Committee or a representation of members may call them if required as outlined in the Playschool Constitution. The Annual General Meeting of the Association is held before the end of February each year to officially hand over to the new Committee and present the following mandatory documents to members: an audited statement of accounts, the Auditor's report, and the Committee report.

(d) Other

When changes are made to Playschool Policies, parents will be notified in the newsletter and asked to contact the Secretary if they require an updated copy of the Operating Handbook. A copy of the amended section of the Operating Handbook will be placed on the inside noticeboard.

The comments section in the Attendance Register can also be used for two-way communication between parents and the Teacher for minor messages or information.

As part of an evaluation process, it may be necessary during the year to ask Playschool parents to participate in a questionnaire. This feedback will ensure that the Playschool is aware of families' needs and expectations and to ascertain if they are being met.

(e) Complaints Procedure for Parents

If a parent feels a difficult situation has arisen they are encouraged to be prompt in discussing the matter with the Teacher so that a strategy can be put in place to resolve it speedily.

If a parent has concerns about their child's time at Playschool they are encouraged to speak to the Teacher briefly before or after the session, or make a time to meet for a more lengthy discussion.

With all other concerns, Parents should contact the Playschool Coordinator

3.10 Equipment Purchases, Maintenance & Replacement

All expenditure required for equipment or resources must first be approved by the Committee. Resources may also be sourced from the Toy Library and the Children's Education and Care Assurance Resources Link.

In order to keep our expenses for consumables to a minimum it may be necessary to ask parents to donate items throughout the year e.g. rolls of toilet paper, boxes of tissues, paper towel, bottles of liquid soap. The Purchasing Officer will post notices for voluntary donations when required.

3.11 Playschool Policies

The Committee reserves the right to exclude from the centre any child whose parents persistently disregard the policies and regulations of the Playschool. Refer to the provisions of membership in the Constitution for details. Families of children attending Possums Playschool should be aware that as a licensed child care service we are mandated to report any disclosures of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Family Services. For further information on requirements relating to Mandatory Reporting please refer to the booklet on the Playschool Noticeboard.

APPENDIX 1

PARENT ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE POSITIONS & ROLES

Coordinator

- Undertake role of controlling person on Playschool license application and undergo a police check.
- Undertake role of Public Officer for incorporated Possums Playschool Parent Association.
- Manage the overall functioning of the Playschool.
- Chair meeting and provide Coordinator's report.
- Liaise with Committee Members and ensure smooth running of the committee and that roles are fulfilled
- Liaise with staff as appropriate
- Ensure all administrative duties are adhered to such as license application, insurance application, up-keep of student records and staff contracts.
- Oversee election of new Committee members for the next year and notify Office of Registrar- General of changes to Association.
- Take initiative when appropriate
- Maintain Relief Teacher list and arrange Teacher recruitment as necessary

Media/Grants Officer

- Liaise with Coordinator regularly
- Manage and update the Possums website, maintain Facebook and Media information
- Research and apply for any grant opportunities
- Prepare and coordinate advertising and media for Possums Playschool
- Report to Committee
- Attend all Committee Meetings

Secretary

- Coordinate and attends all Committee meetings
- Prepare agenda and minutes for each Committee meeting
- Distribute to Committee members, Teachers, Administrative officer and display a copy at the Playschool
- Liaise with other Committee members
- Prepare and distribute regular newsletter

Treasurer

- Prepare teacher and Staff contracts
- Manage the finances of the Playschool on the MYOB Accounting Program
- Prepare a budget for the year to be reconciled on a term-by-term basis
- Provide financial statements to the Coordinator to be presented at the Playschool Committee meetings
- Ensure financial records, both computerised and in account books are balanced
- Ensure MYOB and bank statements align with records
- Attend all committee meetings

Purchasing/OH&S Officer

- Purchase consumables and other requirements on behalf of the Playschool throughout the year
- Provide receipts of all major purchases to be reimbursed by the treasurer
- Keep a detailed inventory of all purchases and resources and label with name "Possums Playschool"
- Manage the library and resources
- Maintain and update the Possums Assets Register including stock take
- Notify the parents and withdraw the infected child in the case of an outbreak of an infectious illness, in accordance with Health Department exclusions periods
- Notify parents of a head lice outbreak.
- Ensure an inventory of the playschool first aid kit is maintained and that items are replaced
- Attend all Committee meetings

Fundraising Officer

- Coordinate and oversee all fundraising activities. e.g. book clubs, bbqs
- Investigate and organise other fundraising events throughout the year as required
- Liaise and coordinate with General Committee Members
- Report to the Parent Committee
- Receive mail from the Administrative Officer
- Attend all committee meetings

General Committee Members

These positions will cover a range of fundraising activities and other duties as required by the Committee each year, and could include:

- Bunnings BBQ Coordinator, organizing and managing fundraising activities for Possums
- Handyman/person duties, coordinate repairs of equipment
- Coordination of working bees, special projects, landscaping, gardening etc
- Liaison with Committee and other team members
- Attend all committee meetings

APPENDIX 2

POSSUMS PLAYSCHOOL ALLERGY POLICY

This policy is designed to provide clear, simple guidelines for the management of risk relating to the attendance of children at Possums Playschool with severe allergy

(a) What is Anaphylaxis?

An anaphylactic reaction (or anaphylaxis) is a severe allergic reaction. It is the body's reaction to a foreign substance - this can be some food such as nuts, shellfish and cow's milk, or medications and insect stings such as a bee or ant sting.

The reaction can be life threatening and causes shock or an inability to breathe. The air passages can become so severely swollen that suffocation can occur. The reaction begins and proceeds very rapidly. It must be treated with the medication "epinephrine" immediately. A child presenting with early symptoms of anaphylaxis may have (in no order):

- Itchy palms and soles
- Faintness
- A feeling of generalised warmth, flushed face
- Tingling in the mouth
- Throat or chest discomfort
- Unusual taste in the mouth
- Breathing difficulties
- Red watery eyes & runny nose
- A sense of foreboding, fear or apprehension

As the reaction progresses a child may exhibit (in no order):

- Swelling of the face
- Hives
- Gasping, choking, coughing, wheezing i.e. breathing difficulties & difficulty swallowing
- Vomiting
- Dizziness
- Loss of consciousness
- Diarrhoea
- Cramping
- Drop in blood pressure, pale complexion

(b) Prevention

1. All children who have had a previous anaphylactic reaction or a suspected reaction must be clearly identified at the time of enrolment at Possums Playschool. The child's allergy must be discussed with the Possums Playschool Parent Committee and the Teacher at the time of enrolment. Additionally, the teacher will hold confidential discussions with the parents.

2. Parents must provide clear documentation, including:

- Diagnosis and management plan from a doctor which details the likely cause of a reaction;
- The expected symptoms;
- Course of action to be followed if exposure to a trigger occurs whilst the child is at Possums Playschool;
- A photo of the child
- Emergency contact numbers.

This will be known as the ACTION PLAN

3. The teacher and roster parents must be aware of the children who are at risk of anaphylaxis. The child's Action Plan will be permanently displayed on the Playschool noticeboard.

4. Avoiding known triggers: Possums Playschool will require all parents and staff abide by the following food procedures:

i) Parents of all enrolled children will be informed verbally and in writing not to provide food for their children that contain nuts. Appropriate opportunities for providing this information are: on Enrolment Forms, at the Parent Information Evening (at which a handout entitled Healthy Snacks is given, referring parents to the Allergy Policy in the Handbook), and regularly in the Possums Playschool Newsletter.

ii) Avoidance of nuts in food should also extend to foods supplied voluntarily for group consumption at events such as Playschool Parties and when sending birthday cakes to Possums Playschool. The contents of food brought in for a special event should be clearly identified. Parents need to be aware that labelling food with casein, livetin or hydrolysed vegetable protein indicates the presence of milk, egg and peanuts respectively. Foods labelled "may contain traces of nuts" should also be avoided.

iii) Parents are asked to wash their children's hands and faces before coming to Possums Playschool (especially if peanut butter is on the breakfast menu at home).

iv) There should be no trading or sharing of food, food utensils and food containers.

v) All children with severe food allergies should only eat lunches and snacks that have been prepared at home.

vi) Surfaces such as tables, toys, etc should be washed clean of contaminating foods prior to contact by a food allergic child.

vii) The use of food in crafts and cooking classes may need to be restricted. Care should be taken when making play dough to use appropriate nut-free oil and avoid any known colouring agent triggers.

(c) Recognition of Anaphylaxis

All staff, (in this case the Teacher and rostered parents) should be able to recognise if a child is having an anaphylactic reaction. This is especially important in young children, who may be unable to communicate effectively that they are having a reaction.

The Action Plan provided by the parents, and displayed on the Possums Playschool noticeboard, will list the reaction likely to occur. The Teacher and roster parents should make themselves familiar with this at the beginning of the year and check the Acton Plan frequently in case it has been adjusted.

(d) What to do in the Event of an Anaphylactic Reaction

The Teacher is the nominated First-Aid attendant at all times at Possums Playschool.

1. The Teacher will administer adrenalin by Epipen as soon as possible after the onset of severe symptoms. Severe symptoms occur when the respiratory or cardiovascular systems are affected. This would be indicated by:

Difficulty breathing, talking or swallowing

Persistent cough

Inability to talk

Noisy breathing

Loss of consciousness

2. Roster parent 1 must immediately ring 000 and request an intensive care ambulance.

3. Roster parent 2 should gather the remaining children together separate from the patient/but still within sight of the Teacher. They should engage the children in an orderly group activity such as reading stories or singing songs.

4. The Teacher must remain with the patient at all times until the ambulance arrives.

5. The Teacher should contact the parents or emergency contact person as soon as possible after the patient is in the care of qualified attendants.

6. The Teachers assistant may be required to accompany the child in the ambulance to hospital in the absence of the child's parent or carer.

NB: If the reaction does not appear to be "severe" as defined above, the Teacher should remain with the child and Parent 1 should ring the parent or emergency carer and ask them to come to the Playschool immediately. The parent/carer should take the child to hospital for observation and treatment.

Parent 2 should supervise the children, as outlined above. Should the child's reaction progress to a "severe" level, then the procedures outlined above should be followed.

(e) Location of the Epipen TM

The parents of the children concerned shall ensure Possums Playschool is always supplied with an Epipen TM for each child and that it has not reached its expiry date.

Adrenalin (the contents of the Epipen TM) may be stored at room temperature, away from bright light. It does not need to be refrigerated. As long as it is clear (not brown and cloudy) it is safe to use.

The Epipen should be stored in a place that is accessible, not a locked cupboard or drawer. The location should be known by all staff and roster parents. The Epipen should not be left in a child's bag.

(f) Consent and Release Documentation

Children should have appropriate consent and release documentation completed regarding the administration of medications by the Possums Playschool Teacher.

(g) Review Of Action Plans

Action Plans for each allergic child should be reviewed annually or after each reaction.

(h) Protection Of Roster Parents

At no time will the roster parents be placed in the position of having to make an assessment about whether a reaction is occurring, an assessment of its severity, or have to administer medication. However, roster parents are asked to be observant and bring to the Teacher's attention any concerns. The Teacher is the person responsible for assessing the situation and administering medication.

The Teachers Assistant may be required to accompany the child to hospital by ambulance in the absence of their parent/carer.

Should the Teacher be unable to attend a Possums Playschool session, she is required to notify the Playschool Coordinator immediately so that the allergic children's parents can be contacted. The child will either:

Or be accompanied by their parent for the whole session

(i) Notification to the Ambulance Service

It is suggested that at the beginning of the year the ACT Ambulance Service be notified of the attendance of children with this kind of allergy at Possums Playschool and their condition. This helps them respond appropriately should Possums have to make an emergency call.

APPENDIX 3

ROSTER PARENT GUIDELINES & INFORMATION

Thank you for your participation in the Playschool Program. We hope you have an enjoyable time on roster duty. Without parent support our Playschool cannot operate. These guidelines are designed to help you to know where things are and how things run at Playschool.

(a) On Arrival

On arrival please sign your name at the bottom of the Attendance Sheet

Refer to the list of Roster Duties and the Playschool Timetable, which are displayed on the white cupboard near the sink. These outline what is required at particular times of the Playschool session.

Familiarise yourself with any children's health or allergy requirements. (Detailed list is displayed on the side of the fridge). Any medication required by children is kept on top of the fridge and administered by a person who has a first aid certificate and witness by another staff member. If any Medication is required, a Medication Form must be completed by the parent prior to it being administered Familiarise yourself with Emergency Evacuation requirements (displayed on Window near office).

Familiarise yourself with location of all Exits; Playschool First Aid Kit (in bathroom); Fire Extinguisher and Fire Hose (located outside adult toilet); Emergency Whistle (on hook near sign in sheets). The Playschool Teacher also has the Playschool mobile phone for all incoming calls. (Number is 0415 571972).

(b) Setting Up

Hang towels in the bathroom and ask the teacher if they need anything done.

(c) Supervision Requirements & Behaviour Management

For licensing and safety reasons all children must be supervised in all areas, at all times whilst they are at Playschool. In conjunction with the Playschool Teacher, assistant, roster parents are considered to be "staff" and as such are responsible for ensuring that the Playschool environment is safe for everyone.

On the whole, roster parents should refer any challenging behaviour or potentially dangerous situations to the Teacher and assistant, as they are more aware of the individual needs of the children. However roster parents should step in immediately if there is a chance of children being injured or upset or equipment being damaged.

Our behaviour management practices are as follows:

Any inappropriate behaviour should be dealt with in a positive way, redirecting the child into the appropriate or desired behaviour. Focus on the positive outcomes that occur when children behave appropriately rather than on the negative outcomes if they don't comply.

Encourage the children to use appropriate words and tone of voice to express their needs and feelings rather than using aggression, conflict or bad language.

Use a calm, friendly but firm tone of voice if dealing with challenging behaviour. Adults should role-model appropriate behaviour to the children by using respectful and positive language and actions. Give specific praise to children when they are behaving appropriately or have handled a situation in a positive way, e.g. "That was good sharing" etc.

Shouting, frightening, humiliating, physically harming or punishing children for inappropriate behaviour is not acceptable under any circumstances.

(d) Playschool Rules

The three main rules at Playschool are:

We take care of ourselves; we take care of other people, we take care of our Playschool environment & equipment. These rules cover the majority of required behaviours and situations.

For safety reasons when indoors there is no running or rough play, no climbing on the furniture and no throwing or damaging equipment. Children are to be supervised at all times in the bathroom and bag area, and are not allowed in the store rooms, kitchen, office area, Pre-school room or staff toilets. The front door and playground gate must be kept closed at all times. To avoid the risk of choking, children must remain seated while eating. To avoid the risk of allergic reactions and to minimise the chance of spreading communicable diseases, children are not to share foods at snack time. Hot drinks must be kept out of children's reach at all times and consumed away from where the children are playing.

For safety reasons when outdoors, children are not allowed to climb on the fences or trees or play with sticks. Sand must be kept in the sand pit and is not to be thrown. Outdoor equipment is not to be moved from where it has been set up. Children are not allowed in the storage shed (unless they are helping the Teacher put away equipment at the end of a play session), and they are not to go into the Playschool room without supervision. They also need to tell an adult before they go to the toilet.

(e) Health & Hygiene Procedures

Hand washing: to promote good health and hygiene practices and prevent spread of infectious diseases.

Staff and poster parents must wash their hands at the following times: On arrival at Playschool; before and after handling foods; after assisting children in the bathroom; after changing nappies; after handling rubbish; after handling art/craft materials; before and after eating; after wiping children's noses or your own; after assisting with first aid; after any contact with any body fluids, and on leaving Playschool. Hands should be dried thoroughly using disposable paper towel.

Children must also wash their hands at these times: before and after eating; after going to the toilet; after handling rubbish; after wiping their nose; after handling art/craft materials and after playing outside. Children should wipe and dry hands on the hand towels or use paper towel provided.

Gloves: disposable gloves are provided at Playschool and should be worn at all times when dealing with body fluids such as blood, saliva, urine and faeces and vomit; gloves should be worn when wiping children after toileting; cleaning up after toileting accidents; attending to injuries/nose bleeds and wiping noses. Gloves should also be worn when cleaning toilets and bathrooms, and handling chemicals.

Toilets: at the end of each Playschool session (and throughout the session if required) the Playschool bathroom must be cleaned thoroughly using the designated bathroom cleaning items and disinfectant. Refer to cleaning guidelines displayed in the bathroom.

Safe Chemical storage: all chemicals, medications, cleaning fluids and other hazardous or toxic materials must be kept out of children's reach at all times and the cupboards under the sink, which are fitted with child safety locks must be properly closed. The main store room near kitchen must shut at all times. Cleaning products are not to be stored in the same area as any food or eating utensils.

Cleaning: to prevent contamination, separate cleaning items are to be used for art and craft materials, food preparation areas and bathrooms. Please refer to the colour codes for sponges for cleaning different areas. Paper towel or mops, not sponges, should be used for cleaning up spills on the floor.

Food items and utensils should be prepared and washed up in the Pre-school kitchen sink. The Playschool kitchen sink should only be used for cleaning up art/craft materials. The bathroom sink should be used only for hand washing and first aid treatment.

A separate bucket and mop should be used for washing the Playroom floor (Green bucket and sponge mop)

Personal items: please ensure all personal items handbags etc are stored securely in the Playschool store room out of the reach of children.

Toy washing: toys and equipment are washed regularly as required. If a particular item has been in a child's mouth or requires cleaning please wash it in the Playschool sink immediately and dry in the sun or with paper towel.

Illness/Injury: Illness and Injury Forms are to be completed for any injury or illness which occurs at Playschool and are to be signed by the parent/guardian. First Aid should only be administered by the Teacher, or another adult with current First Aid qualifications. Parents must be advised of serious injuries or illnesses immediately. The Playschool Co-ordinator and Children's Education and Care Assurance Adviser must also be informed of any serious injury requiring hospital treatment, as per licensing requirements for ACT Playschools. Minor injuries/illnesses can be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the Playschool session. Completed accident forms are kept at the back of the enrolment folder, and must be held for a minimum of 7 years. Blank forms are located at the back of the red Attendance Folder.

(f) Packing Away

After outdoor play time, the playground must be tidied up and equipment returned to its correct location in the storage shed. Sand toys need to be put in their baskets, spilled sand needs to be swept back and the cover put over the sandpit. At packing away time children are encouraged to help. When packing away indoors all items have a specific storage boxes and spaces in the storeroom. All Playschool items must be brought in from outside at the end of each session.

(g) Other Information

Siblings: are welcome to accompany you on roster, but are not included in the Playschool adult: child ratio. Supervision of siblings remains the responsibility of their carers at all times. Please be aware that the Playschool environment is geared towards three and four-year-old children, and that the equipment and materials may pose a risk to younger children if they are not carefully supervised. As roster parent duty is quite involved and busy, you may find it easier if it is possible to arrange to have your younger child cared for by someone else, so you can concentrate on enjoying the morning with your Playschool child.

Please don't hesitate to ask any questions or raise any concerns, comments or suggestions to the Playschool Teacher or to the Parent Committee. We value your ideas and feedback.

We hope you have an enjoyable time on roster at Playschool.

