

MOUNT GIBRALTAR PRE-SCHOOL

Parent Orientation Handbook



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Mission Statement

The Mount Gibraltar Pre-school environment:provides a secure learning environment for children, with positive interactions; open ended play and acceptable challenges-socially, physically and intellectually. It is a happy, caring and child friendly environment for children to explore and develop.

Opening hours: 8:00-6:00pm, Monday - Friday

Closed Public Holiday

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General Information

Welcome to Mount Gibraltar pre-school. We hope that you and family will feel amongst friends here. Mount Gibraltar pre-school was established in 1995 with the vision of providing a high quality Early childhood education programme for the children living in the southern highlands.

The service is privately owned and operated by Elizabeth Crowley, an early childhood teacher with over 30 years of teaching experience with children.

The pre-school is licensed to operate by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, service approval number SE-00008472, to cater for children aged from two to six years of age, operating from 8:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday. The pre-school operation is closed for 4 weeks during the Christmas/New Year school holiday and Public holiday.

Due to the educational developmental program that the pre- school provides there are limited places for children under three years of age.

The staff will work closely with you and your child to ensure that your child's development is guided in a consistent way both at home and the pre-school. The staff will endeavour to ensure that your child's first experience of the life away from home is a happy and enjoyable one.

Your child will need understanding and interest in their experiences, so please let the staff know your child's special abilities, likes and dislikes to give the staff a better understanding of his/her needs.

At Mount Gibraltar pre-school we embrace the child, and the period of childhood as a unique and important stage of life. We are committed to seeing each child within the context of their family, and extending child-care to include the carers and teachers at this centre. This commitment includes quality care and learning (meaning overall development) for every child.

Philosophy

The Mount Gibraltar Pre-school environment provides a secure learning environment for children, with positive interactions; open ended play and acceptable challenges-socially, physically and intellectually. It is a happy, caring and child friendly environment.

The Pre-school provides a pleasant ambience whilst the provision of natural materials offers children the opportunity to explore and be involved in creative and open-ended experiences. The environment needs to be a reflection of the children and adults using the space and offering positive evidence of their presence, their individually and personalities.

The family, being the most significant part of a child's life is also an essential component of pre-school life. Parents need to feel welcome, be supported and respected partners in the early childhood setting. Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their child's care and education.

The children need their play to be supported by the provision of an interesting range of equipment, an environment that offers challenges and the time to explore and extend their understanding of people, the world and things around them.

They also need caring and committed staff who encourage them to meet their potential.

Children need to be encouraged to help staff in the creation of their programme. Children need to be actively involved in their own learning and therefore the resources offered should be relevant and meaningful so that they can be successful learners and curious explorers. They are social beings and should be encouraged seek positive interactions with those around them.

Staff are committed to encouraging children to express their needs and interests by using effective communication both verbal and non-verbal.

The staff also have to be able to express a loving caring nature and interact positively with children, families and other staff.

Here at Mt Gibraltar Preschool, we strive to provide a secure learning environment for the children by providing opportunities for positive interactions; open-ended play and appropriate challenges to support social, emotional, physical and intellectual development. It is a happy, caring and child-friendly environment.

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The family, being the most significant part of a child's life, is also an essential component of preschool life. Parents need to feel welcome, be supported and respected partners in the early childhood setting. Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their child's care and education.

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The staff also have to be able to express a loving and caring nature and interact positively with children, families and other staff.

Aim

- ◆ To provide a happy, caring and friendly environment
- ◆ To encourage the pursuit and love of learning through the provision of a positive and challenging environment.
- ◆ To encourage children to be positive about differences and to develop empathy/caring for others and the environment.

Starting and Settling into Pre-school

Please remember to talk to your child about starting to attend pre-school. I wish I could say that all children settle in quickly and without fuss, and most do, but some require a little more attention and effort.

Developing a routine will assist your child, try to follow the same step each day, as most children love a familiar routine. Assist your child to pack their bag, give them a notice that you are leaving for pre-school shortly, always walk your child into the service, and make sure the staff know they are at the service, never leave without saying goodbye, and be positive, re-assuring and honest with your child about the pre-school.

If you are concerned or worried, please feel free to ring the pre-school at anytime during the day, or if necessary drop in, but be aware that if you drop in you may need to take your child with you as many cannot accept that you are turning up and not taking them home.

Features of the Centre

- ◆ Large car park with ease of access and exit
- ◆ Secure entrance
- ◆ Central heating, fans and air conditioning
- ◆ Lovely natural outdoor shaded playground with grass, large sandpit, and varied outdoor equipment
- ◆ Large classroom divided into activity/learning area
- ◆ Chickens
- ◆ Vegetable garden
- ◆ Cooking experiences
- ◆ Cultural diversity
- ◆ Local bush walk outings
- ◆ Stephanie Alexander Garden Kitchen Program for Early Years and School Aged Children for After School Care and Vacation Care

Fees

The fees are required to be kept two weeks in advance. An invoice will be issued at the beginning of the month.

All days for which your child is enrolled must be paid for. If your child is sick, absent or you take holidays during the pre-school operating weeks you are required to pay for the day. No make up days are available.

We are an approved centre, which allows for families to receive a reduced fee. Please contact Family Assistance Office prior to enrolling. Family Assistance will provide you with a CRN number.

Fees can be paid by Direct debit, credit card, EFT or cash. A direct debit form is enclosed. Currently, surcharge on Credit Card is 1.9% and \$1 per transaction for Direct debit. Our direct facility is operated through All Quality Child Care Pty Ltd and the charges above are set by them.

A minimum of 2 weeks notice in writing must be given on withdrawing a child or two weeks in lieu of notice is required. Final accounts will be sent to you after all attendances have been lodged by the centre.

If you have difficulty in paying your fees, please discuss with centre manager. Any unresolved accounts will be forward to our Debt Collection accounts to recover funds.

* Please note: We do try to keep our fees affordable for families. However, small fee increases may be applicable in July subject to rises in cost of living, wages etc.

Illness

The pre-school does not allow children who are sick to attend the service. This is for the protection and safety of all children and staff. If your child has a condition which spreads rapidly (cold sores, conjunctivitis, diarrhoea, head lice, ringworm, cold, flu etc) you are requested to keep him/her at home until fully recovered. In some cases we may require you to bring a Doctors Certificate indicating that your child is well enough to return to the pre-school.

Attendance Records and Collection of Children

You are required to sign your child in and out each day, on the attendance sheets that are provided on the front desk in the locker room.

It is essential that we have an up to date record of your child's attendance. If you cannot collect your child, the person (an adult) who collects your child must be approved by you, in writing. This can be done on

- ◆ The enrolment form
- ◆ via updated collection authority
- ◆ or in an emergency situations by email, letter, or phone call

If the person collecting the child has not attended the service before, or has not been to the service for a while, they may be required to produce some form of photographic identification before we release your child. In some situations we may need to contact you or your spouse for confirmation. **These procedure are a safe guard for your child.**

Only people over 18 are allowed to collect children and the attendance sheet must be signed by person over 18 and not older siblings.

Summer dress code:

- ◆ No tops/dresses with spaghetti straps or if you do include a t-shirt for the child to put on when the children are going outside.
- ◆ Sunscreen must be applied upon arrival
- ◆ Sun hats need to be
 - ◆ broad brimmed hat
 - ◆ legionnaire hat
 - ◆ or a hat recommended by NSW Cancer Council

So **No Caps** - to ensure children are getting full protection from the sun. Our sun policy is available for viewing upon request.

Winter dress code:

- ◆ Children needs layers so that we can remove and add layers as needed.
- ◆ Gumboots for outdoor play
- ◆ Beanie
- ◆ Slippers for indoors if they wish

Shoes

- ◆ No Crocs - they are unsafe because they slip on the equipment

- ◆ No thongs - unsafe as they provide no protection for their feet

What to bring

Children need to bring a bag with the following items:

Required items:

- ◆ A lunch box, with morning tea, lunch and a drink bottle of water. No juice or diluted juice in drink bottle.
 - Morning tea - fruit or snack (crackers, cheese etc)
 - Lunch - sandwiches, left over (we have a microwave to reheat if required), yoghurt. Please remember we are a NUT-FREE Preschool so nuts, peanut butter, Nuttella cannot be used in food coming into the pre-school.
 - Afternoon tea - light snack (fruit, cheese etc)
 - Please remember to include a freezer block to keep dairy and meat items cool.
- ◆ A change of clothes appropriate for the weather. Children should always have a light jumper in their bag. In winter a coat, gumboots and a beanie are recommended
- ◆ A sun hat(broad brimmed) - required all year
- ◆ Nappies and undies required for children who are toilet training, but a full change of clothes is a good idea, for all children.
- ◆ Slippers or shoes for indoor play:- if your child wears gumboots to preschool.
- ◆ If special sunscreen is required please label and give to staff
- ◆ If required especially in the first few weeks a special toy/comfort item.

Please ensure that you place the lunchbox into the large lunch basket and put the drinks on the tray provided in the locker room.

Clothing issues

- ◆ Children need to wear comfortable, easy to dress clothes, that they can learn to put on and take off by themselves. This is particularly important whilst toilet training and to help with self-help skills,
- ◆ Overalls and fiddly clothes are not appropriate
- ◆ Girls need to wear outfits that allow them to climb and use all the play equipment. Dresses can be difficult on climbing equipments especially if longer style.

Accidents and Emergencies

The preschool tries to ensure that children do not have accidents whilst attending the service, however, accidents and emergencies will occur. If this happens you will be advised as soon as possible.

In most cases this will be on arrival at the service, when you will be shown an accident/incident report about the situation.

Occasionally you might be telephoned if the situation requires a faster response, and in a real emergency staff will arrange for appropriate medical aid to occur immediately as they are contacting you.

As part of the enrolment procedure, the law requires that you sign an authority for the staff to act in the case of an emergency. This must be completed prior to starting.

Immunisation Status and Birth certificate

The Department of Health requires that the service maintain and keep up to date the immunisation records, or the lack thereof for all children attending the service.

Please provide immunisation Certificate from your doctor or Immunisation History statement from Australian Childhood Immunisation Register 1800 653 809, or if your child is not immunised you need to complete exemption form e.g Medical Contradiction or Conscientious Objection (if applicable)

If your child is not immunised, she/he will, in the event of a vaccine preventable disease in the preschool, be required to remain at home for the duration of the outbreak.

These procedure will be carried out for the protection of all children and staff who attend the centre.

Changes and getting answers to questions

Please make sure that you inform the staff of any changes that are occurring in your family situation. This includes possible allergies, or medical conditions, sick or dying relatives, exceptional business stresses, family separations, moving house or room They may seem like an adult or minor issue from your viewpoint, but they can have a significant effect on your child.

The service develops and maintain observations about each child at the service to ensure that the children are progressing in all developmental areas. Should you have any concerns or questions about your child please ask the staff, or make an appointment to see the teacher.

You may wish to make a time to see the teacher outside of pre-school hours. This allows the staff to devote their full attention to the children in care at the centre.

Any and all information - written or verbal is treated in the strictest confidence.

Useful links

<http://www.cancer.org.au>

<http://acecqa.gov.au>

Your input

Despite all of the above, the preschool is made up of the community of people who are involved; that is the children; the staff and you the parents.

We will always value your comments and suggestions on ways to improve the service, as our goal is to continue to provide the best early childhood education experience in the Southern Highlands and your feedback will assist us in that endeavour.

Your Sincerely

Elizabeth Crowley
Director

Date Reviewed 19/12/2016 by Caroline Marsden and Liz Crowley, Ashleigh Brodbeck, Kylie Wilshaw
Liz Endersby

Date next reviewed 19/12/2017

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 Unit 3/84 Old Pittwater Road,
 Brookvale N.S.W. 2100
 (02) 9939 0998 ABN 74 106 036 355
 www.futureblocks.com.au

Direct Debit Request

Request and Authority to debit the account named below to pay
 All Quality Child Care Pty. Ltd

Your Surname (or Company Name) _____

Given names(or ABN) _____ "you"

I request and authorise All Quality Child Care Pty. Ltd. (Debit User **377231**) to arrange, through its own financial institution, a debit to your nominated account any amount All Quality Child Care Pty. Ltd. has deemed payable by you. This debit or charge will be made through the Bulk Electronic Clearing System from your account held at the financial institution you have nominated below and will be subject to the terms and conditions of the Direct Debit Request Service Agreement (and any further instructions provided below).

How would you like to pay for your childcare? Please complete section A or B

Section A Bank Account

Financial institution
 name _____

Name on
 account _____

BSB number
 (Must be 6 Digits) | _ | _ | _ | - | _ | _ | _ |

Account number
 | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ |

Section B Credit Card

Card Type
 MasterCard or Visa

Name on card

Card Number
 | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ | _ |

Expiry Date | _ | _ | / | _ | _ |

Signature
 of card holder _____

Acknowledgment

By **signing** and/or providing us with a **valid instruction** in respect to your Direct Debit Request, you have understood and agreed to the terms and conditions governing the debit arrangements between you and All Quality Child Care Pty. Ltd. as set out in this Request and in your Direct Debit Request Service Agreement.

Payment Options

Your Account will be debited as required.
 The frequency and amount will be indicated on your Fees Payments Form.

Insert your signature and address

Signature _____

Address _____

Date ___ / ___ / ___ Phone
 (W) _____ (M) _____

Pay-

ing Your Childcare Fees

PLEASE NOTE: All Fees are Due and Payable 14 days in advance.

PAYMENT METHOD

There are two ways you can chose to pay your fees, please tick one method.

Preferred ☺ **DIRECT DEBIT.** With direct debit you have more payment options. *See below.
Your fees are deducted from your bank account

CREDIT CARD Your fees are deducted from your Credit Card on the **first of each month**.
Transaction fees may apply

EFT You can transfer funds directly into our bank account. A monthly statement will be sent to you via email.
Account Name: Mt Gibraltar Preschool, BSB: 032-716, Account Number: 238504

DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENT FREQUENCY

To help you with your budget, you can choose when the money is to be deducted from your account such as the day after Pay Day. This saves you time and your fees are always up to date.
Please ensure there are enough funds in your account to cover your fees. If there are insufficient funds the bank may charge a fee that will be added to your account.

Preferred ☺ **MONTHLY** - Your fees are directly debited from your bank account every month.

Which day of the month is suitable for you _____?

FORTNIGHTLY - Your fees are deducted from your bank account every fortnight, however you will still be required to have your fees up to date 17 days in advance.
What is the first date to deduct fees? _____?

DEPOSIT

When you commence at **Mt Gibraltar Preschool** we require two weeks payment as a deposit; this will be returned to you on leaving our centre with all outstanding fees paid. Please tick the box below to allow us to take this deposit from your preferred method listed above.

DEPOSIT AUTHORISATION - We will withdraw your deposit on enrolment.

INVOICES

Invoices and Statements are automatically e-mailed to one email address.

What is your **e-mail** address? _____