

MOUNT GIBRALTAR PRE-SCHOOL



Parent Orientation Handbook 2017

62 Oxley Drive, Bowral NSW 2576

Phone: (02) 4862 3063

Email: mtgibraltarpreschool@gmail.com

www.mtgibraltarpreschool.com.au

Director: Caroline Marsden

Mission Statement

The Mount Gibraltar Pre-school environment provides a secure learning environment for all children. We provide positive interactions, open ended play and challenges. We cater for their social, physical and intellectual needs. It is a happy, caring and child friendly and family friendly environment for children to explore and develop.

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

Closed Public Holidays

General Information

Philosophy

Aim

Starting and Settling into Pre-school

Features of the Centre

Fees

Illness

Attendance Records and Collection of Children

Summer dress code:

Winter dress code:

Shoes

What to bring

Clothing issues

Accidents and Emergencies

Immunisation Status and Birth certificate

Changes and getting answers to your questions

Useful links

Your input

General Information

Welcome to Mount Gibraltar pre-school. We hope that you and your family will feel amongst friends at our centre. 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. Caroline Marsden is the Manager/director.

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 2 weeks during the Christmas/New Year school holidays and Public holidays. We also provide after-school care for children aged 6-12 years.

Due to the educational developmental program that the preschool 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 preschool. The staff will endeavour to ensure that your child's first experience of the life away from home is a happy and enjoyable one.

To help our staff program for your child's individual interests and abilities, we ask you to let us know your child's likes and dislikes and strengths throughout the year. This will 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 (overall development) for every child.

Philosophy

Aim

- ◆ To provide a happy, caring and friendly environment for all.
- ◆ 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 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 steps each day, as most children love a familiar routine. Assist your child to pack their bag, give them 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 centre, never leave without saying goodbye. It is important to be positive, re-assuring and honest with your child.

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 various outdoor equipment
- ◆ Large classroom divided into activities and learning areas
- ◆ Chickens and guinea pigs
- ◆ 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

Our fee structure is as follows:

- **2-3 year olds \$87 per day.**
- **3-5 year olds \$82 per day.**
- **After-School care - \$25 per session.**
- **Vacation Care - \$60 per day.**

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 and let you know if you are eligible to receive the CCR and CCB benefit.

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/October subject to rises in cost of living, wages, utilities 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. We provide daily attendance sheets on the front desk in the foyer.

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 procedures are a safe guard for your child.**

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

Summer dress code:

- ◆ No tops/dresses with spaghetti straps. Shoulders must be covered.
- ◆ Sunscreen must be applied upon arrival.
- ◆ Sun hats need to be:
 - ◆ broad brimmed hat.
 - ◆ legionnaire hat.
 - ◆ or a hat recommended by NSW Cancer Council.

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 need layers so that we can remove and add layers as needed due to change in weather.
- ◆ Gumboots for outdoor play.
- ◆ Beanies, warm jackets and raincoats.
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ Please wear closed-in shoes.

What to bring

Children need to bring a bag/back pack with the following items:

Required items:

- ◆ A lunch box, with a healthy morning tea, lunch and a drink bottle of water. No juice, diluted juice or fizzy drink in the drink bottle.
 - Morning tea - fruit or snack (crackers, cheese, cut up fruit/vegetables etc)
 - Lunch - sandwiches, left over dinner (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. Alternatively, mark your child's name on their lunch and we can place in the fridge.
- ◆ A change of clothes appropriate for all 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 as we encourage muddy and wet play.
- ◆ Slippers or shoes for indoor play. Bring gumboots for outdoor play only.
- ◆ If special sunscreen is required please label and give to staff. Otherwise we provide suncream.
- ◆ If required, especially in the first few weeks, a special soft toy/comfort item.

Please ensure that you place the lunchbox into the large lunch red, blue and yellow lunch trolley and put the drinks on the tray provided.

Clothing issues

- ◆ Children need to wear comfortable, easy access 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 a longer style.

Accidents and Emergencies

The preschool tries to ensure that children do not have accidents whilst attending the service, however, accidents and emergencies do 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 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 a current immunisation Certificate from your doctor or Immunisation History statement from Australian Childhood Immunisation Register 1800 653 809.

As per government legislation, we can no longer permitted to enrol children who are not immunised.

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

Changes and getting answers to your 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, illness or dying relatives, exceptional business stresses, family separations, moving house or rooms. These 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 maintains observations about each child at the preschool 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 and carers.

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

Caroline Marsden
Director

Date Reviewed 03/08/2017 by Caroline Marsden and Liz Crowley, Kylie Wilshaw, Liz Endersby and Ashleigh Brodbeck

Next review 03/08/2018