

Frequently asked questions

Daily routine

Q. What should my child bring to preschool each day?

- A broad brimmed hat (can be purchased at preschool).
- A spare set of clothes (including socks and underwear) suitable to the season.
- A healthy morning tea in a small lunch box with food the children can eat with minimal assistance. We are a **nut free** preschool and encourage **healthy eating**.
- Lunch in a separate container to morning tea, as above.
- A drink bottle of water. We supply filtered water if extra water is needed throughout the day.
- A set of Cot sheets – fitted bottom sheet (60cmX120cm with elastic) and top sheet (can be purchased at preschool).
- A small hand towel with a loop sewn on for hand drying.
- **IMPORTANT: PLEASE CLEARLY LABEL ALL ITEMS**

Q. What time should we arrive at preschool?

- Arrive at preschool between 8:30 and 9:00am. Children arriving late miss out on lots of activities and can become unsettled coming into a setting where all their peers are already settled into their day.

Q. What should our preschool morning routine be?

- Parent/carer uses hand sanitizer provided at the entry gate.
- Place bag, towel, hat, morning tea and sheets in locker.
- Get child to thoroughly wash hands with soap.
- Sign child in.
- Greet educators.
- Place lunch in fridge.
- Stay a few minutes until your child is settled then say goodbye and leave. If your child is unsettled and getting upset, take them to or call one of the teachers over and be guided as to when to leave by them.

Q. What should our preschool afternoon routine be?

- Collect your child between 3:00 and 3:45pm. The latest pickup time is 4pm. If possible, please pick up by 3.45pm to allow the teachers some extra cleaning time to keep everybody as safe as possible during COVID-19.
- Ensure your child washes their hands thoroughly with soap.
- Sign your child out.
- Greet educators and have your child say goodbye.
- Collect your child's bag etc. and artwork from locker.
- Check wall pocket for any notes.
- Parent/carer uses hand sanitizer provided at the gate when exiting.

Q. My child was crying when I left, will they be OK?

Yes. Our staff are used to dealing with separation anxiety in children. You can help by staying for a short while to settle, saying a quick goodbye and leaving when you say you are going. If your child is distressed take them to a staff member and take cues from them as to when and how to leave. We have a pamphlet on this subject which you should receive before your child starts, which is

recommended reading. If you would like reassurance, please feel free to call and ask how they are going later in the day.

Q. Does my child have to sleep?

We cannot and will not make a child sleep. However, as part of their preschool day children are asked to rest. They will bring sheets to put on their mat and they will be asked to lie quietly and listen to the music or story. It is beneficial to teach children the value of just “being”.

Q. Does my child have to be toilet trained?

The quick answer is **YES**. (Please speak to the preschool if toileting is going to be an issue with your child, or there is a reason your child is not toilet trained. We will not discriminate against children not toilet trained, but it is our expectation that by 3, children are toilet trained).

We appreciate that children are all different and that toilet training can be time consuming and frustrating. However, each time we have to change wet pants, clothes etc it takes a staff member away from the group of children and compromises supervision and interactions with the children. We understand that accidents do happen from time to time and we deal with these in a sensitive manner.

If you have any questions about toileting or your child is not toilet trained before coming to preschool please do not hesitate to contact the Preschool so we can support you during this time.

Q. What if I'm going to be late to pick up my child?

Please allow ample time to collect your child allowing for traffic if you are some distance away. If you are unable to pick up on time please arrange for someone else to pick them up and notify the preschool of this change of routine. If this is not possible and you are going to be late, please ring the preschool and let them know your ETA. A late fee of \$50 per hour (\$12.50 charged at 15 minute intervals) will be charged for late pick up. Children remaining on the premises after 4pm puts our preschool in breach of its license conditions. For this reason, 3 late fees being accumulated may put your child's enrolment in jeopardy.

You must inform us if someone else will be collecting your child and we will ask for identification from that person if we have not met them before.

Q. Do you teach the children to read?

We believe children learn through play. In a play-based environment we will give your children the fundamentals they will need to tackle skills like reading once they go to kindergarten. They may learn some words incidentally along the way but teaching them to read is not our focus.

Q. Does my child have to wear a hat outside?

Yes. We have a “no hat no play” policy. If your child has forgotten their hat they will be asked to play in the shaded areas only. Due to hygiene reasons we cannot supply spare hats.

Q. Can my child bring toys to school?

Toys are best left at home. If your child has a special comfort toy to sleep with, we recommend it be kept in with sleeping sheets and should only come out at rest time. Please be aware we can hold no responsibility for lost “special friends”!

The car park and safety at the preschool

Q. My other children are at Hornsby South Public, can I leave my car here while I pick them up?

No, we have a small car park and many families with babies and toddlers. Please park on the street and leave the car park places for those parents.

Q. I want to have a chat to another preschool parent, can my children play in the playground while we talk?

Usually we are not a drop and run centre and encourage relationships between families. Unfortunately, during COVID-19, we request that you drop off and pick up your child promptly and do not remain chatting in the preschool grounds.

Remember that once you sign your child out they are in your care and not the responsibility of the educators, so please supervise them. Please bear in mind our limited parking and for the consideration of others limit your drop off and pick up time to 10 minutes maximum to ensure others have a turn. Our preschool closes at 4.00pm, so we ask that families leave by this time.

Q. I noticed you have 2 gates, why is that?

This is for the safety of all children.

- Do not let your children swing on the gate as it breaks the mechanism.
- As polite as it is, please do not leave the gate open for other families.
- Hold your child's hand as you enter the car park.
- Most importantly, NEVER let a child that is not yours out of the preschool. If there are a few parents leaving together just check that the children leaving are with a carer.

Q. I'm not going to be long, can I leave my other children in the car?

No, this is not safe.

Food

Q. My child does not eat/drink enough will you make them eat/drink for me?

We ask children to drink water at morning tea and lunchtime and water is available throughout the day. We encourage children to sit and eat with their peers and we expect them to eat independently.

We will not force feed any child. Please speak to your teacher if you have any concerns.

Q. Can you heat up my child's lunch?

No. We cannot test the temperature and therefore the safety of microwave heated food.

Q. What if I don't want my child's lunch to be put in the fridge?

Please ask your teacher or at the Office for a refrigeration exemption form. Once this is filled out your child's lunch may be left in their locker.

Leave

Q. What if I want to take my child out of the preschool permanently?

Two weeks written notice must be given otherwise your Enrolment Deposit is forfeited. In Term 4 full fees must be paid at the discretion of the Nominated Supervisor as it is difficult to replace children late in the year.

Q. What if we are going on an extended holiday?

Full fees must be paid during this time.

Medical and Illness

Q. What if my child is sick?

If your child is not well please do not send them to preschool. It affects your child, other children and staff. If your child will not be attending for the day please call or email the preschool that morning to let us know.

Q. My child is not immunised, can they still come to preschool?

No, all children must be immunised. You must provide an up-to-date copy of your child's Immunisation History Statement (IHS) from the Australian Immunisation Register with your enrolment documents in order to complete enrolment. You must also provide a new up-to-date IHS showing your child's 4 year old immunisations within 2 weeks of his / her birthday. During outbreaks (e.g. COVID-19) children will not be able to attend if we have not received an up-to-date IHS by one month after their 4th birthday.

Q. My child has allergies, asthma or special dietary requirements, what information and medication do I need to give to the preschool?

An Asthma and Allergy Alert form must accompany your enrolment forms. All medications should be taken to Karen in the kitchen. DO NOT LEAVE IN YOUR CHILD'S BAG. All medication must be in date, in their original containers with a Pharmacist's label with your child's name, date of birth and clear instructions for use. You will also need to fill out a permission form to allow staff to administer medication.

Q. How do I know if my child is too sick to come to preschool?

You should not send your child to preschool if they:

- Have a temperature
- Need pain relief medication (e.g. Panadol or Nurofen)
- Have a green runny discharge from their nose
- Are vomiting or have diarrhea
- Have a barking constant cough
- Have an unusual unexplained rash
- Are generally unwell and out of sorts

If you would not like your child to be around a child as unwell as yours, it is generally feasible that they should stay at home.

Q. My child had a temperature/vomited/diarrhea yesterday; can I send them to preschool today?

Children must be free of symptoms for *at least* 24 hours before they can attend preschool.

Please see additional requirements during COVID-19 below.

COVID-19 safety precautions at preschool

Current as at 21 October 2020. Updates will be communicated to all enrolled families before children commence in 2021.

Q. My child only has a slight cough / slight runny nose. Can they still come to school?

Not during COVID-19. If your child is even slightly unwell, please keep them at home to rest until they are completely symptom-free before returning to preschool.

Q. My child has had slight cold / flu / COVID-like symptoms. Do I have to get them tested for COVID-19?

If your child has had any respiratory; cold-like/ flu-like or other COVID-19 symptoms, you have two options. You will either need:

- 1) a negative COVID-19 test result for your child to return to preschool OR
- 2) to keep your child home from preschool for a 10 day period. Additionally, they must be symptom-free for at least 3 days prior to returning to preschool.

Q. My child has seasonal allergies / rhinitis / other conditions that present with symptoms like cold / flu-like symptoms. Do I have to get them tested for COVID-19?

Yes. Children who have seasonal allergic rhinitis or another condition that presents similarly to flu-like symptoms are still required to get tested for COVID-19 and return a negative test result. Where their symptoms continue beyond 10 days, parents should provide documentation from their GP confirming their child's symptoms are typical for their condition. If the child develops new or changed symptoms, they should get tested for COVID-19.

Q. What about if my child has been sick but there were no cold / flu / COVID-like symptoms?

If your child has had symptoms of any other potentially infectious illness you will need to bring a Doctor's Clearance Certificate stating that they are fit to return to preschool. Please also see "Medical and Illness" questions above.

Q. Are there any other safety steps that parents/carers are required to take during COVID-19:

Yes:

- Drop-offs and pick-ups to be by one parent / carer only and as brief as possible;
- Parent / carer to please use hand sanitiser on entry and exit;
- To please ensure older siblings sit on the logs near the gate and younger siblings stay with you and do not play in the playground;
- To please keep to a maximum of 2 adults in the locker-room at a time;
- Parents / carers not entering the classrooms;
- To pick children up by 3.45pm if possible, please, to allow extra cleaning time for the teachers;
- To please be especially vigilant with ensuring your child's handwashing is thorough and effective (both on arriving at and leaving preschool and at home); and
- From the beginning of the preschool year, to please keep up-to-date with Educa notices as policies and procedures will change in accordance with updated advice as we receive it from the Department of Education.

Thank you.

Financial

Q. When do I have to pay my fees?

You will receive a fee invoice each term by week 1 or 2 of term and payment is due two weeks after that. If you are having difficulties paying, please speak to Carly in the Office and a payment plan can be arranged.

Q. Can I get any money back from the Government to help with my fees?

No, you have already received the Start Strong Funding rebate on your invoice and your fees have been reduced accordingly.

Q. Can I get any fee assistance?

Each year the preschool sets aside money to help low income families. If you have a health care card you should be eligible. Please see Carly in the Office for further information.

Q. Do I have to pay my fees for the days my child is sick or on holidays?

Yes.