



Your child's day at Preschool...

We realise that at the end of a busy day at Preschool, some children don't remember straight away what they did during the day, when parents are keen to know (bed time or bath time seem to be the times that many children will remember!). A tip once given at a seminar, which applies to all age groups, is to ask "What was enjoyable for you today?"

To help you gain a picture of 'A Preschool day', we have outlined our planned daily timetable. Please note that during times marked as 'free play', your child could be busy building a highway, river way or special building in the sandpit, going on an intergalactic mission involving the log and garden area, climbing through a jungle full of wild animals with the climbing equipment, attending a birthday party in the gazebo, feeding babies or running a restaurant or hospital in our 'home corner' area, role playing their future career as a teacher with a group of friends at 'group time', painting a treasured masterpiece for Grandma at the easels, writing an important letter or card to someone special, developing their fine motor skills, imagination and eye hand coordination with play dough and construction sets, developing logic, estimation, problem solving skills and diplomatic skills when sharing puzzles and block construction... Independence, resilience, confidence, persistence, imagination, wellbeing, and social skills are all strengthened during these times of 'free play'. Part of our role as educators is to guide children with their choices at times, and offer scaffolding, encouragement and support as they go about their day. During group times we focus on literacy and numeracy skills with intentional teaching. We select games supporting conceptual knowledge, turn taking, sharing and developing confidence, we sing songs, share stories and learn dances, supporting communication, creativity and ensuring learning is fun. We also discuss routines and expectations and brainstorm topics to learn about, developing our thinking skills. Children will also at times share items for 'show and tell' from their holidays, culture or from nature.



Our usual timetable at Preschool:

8.30 am: Preschool begins. Free play time inside and outside. Snack can be eaten during this time.

9.15 am: Group time – Morning gathering and small groups.

9.45 am: Free play time inside and outside again, for children to explore more experiences, and to play. Play is the business of childhood. Snack can be eaten at this time.

11.15 am: pack up of inside tables for lunch time begins, with children assisting by choice. Educators are rostered for lunch breaks.

11.30 am – 1pm: Children have their lunch. Hand washing occurs prior to lunch, and educators assist children with sun block application after lunch. Relaxation music is played and children are encouraged to partake of restful activities.

1pm -2.15pm: Free play time, during which small group times may occur, or short walks exploring the school environment. Snack can again be eaten.

2.10pm – 2.30pm: All staff and children assist with cleaning up and tidying resources, developing life skills and responsibility and a 'sense of community'.

2.30pm – 3pm: Group time, which may include relaxation, reading books, group time games. Some children go home during this time to collect older children from other schools.

3pm: Group time concludes, and children are farewelled as parents arrive (saying good bye to a staff member to ensure safety and practice good manners). Children and staff share books until the end of the Preschool day at **3.15pm**.

During this time of uncertainty some families are working and learning from home. Whilst maintaining a routine is important for a number of reasons, please take our preschool timetable as a guide to what we do, and not an instruction for what you should do at home as you provide continuity of learning. Making a routine for yourselves as a family, fitting in with everyone's needs in the family, is important and individual for you all. We know information is available everywhere, with the key points being emphasised that families take time for play, relaxation, fun, creativity, quiet times and hobbies, meals, exercise and nature, and normal everyday important family rituals as well as learning time, which promotes a sense of security for children and yourself.

"What kids need right now is to feel comforted and loved. To feel like it's all going to be OK. And that might mean that you tear up your perfect schedule and love on your kids a bit more. "Play outside and go on walks. Bake cookies and paint pictures. Play board games and watch movies. Do a science experiment together or find virtual field trips of the zoo. Start a book and read together as a family. Snuggle under warm blankets and do nothing." And remember opportunities to learn are everywhere in everyday life. Be kind and remember everyone is in this together." (Article on ABC News website, referencing Carrington Public School Newsletter and Dr Roy, University of Newcastle Education Lecturer)

But developing your own family ritual will give your child consistency and security in the home, as well as setting them up with good habits for life. 'Building routine with your children helps them to feel safe... They know what to expect... and it provides them with clear boundaries, expectations, and consistency.' In what some researchers have described as an 'epidemic of anxiety', the predictability and familiarity that comes with routine offers the perfect 'safe space' that kids need. So keep ritual and routine in place wherever and whenever you can, to make the constantly changing nature of growing up as safe, predictable and easy for your child as possible (and making your life a little easier while they're at it). (Adapted from an article by Danielle Kaufman, Child Psychologist, Melbourne Child Psychology & School Psychology Services)

If you have a minute or ten... Some websites with more information on the importance of routines...

<https://www.petitjourney.com.au/10-reasons-a-daily-routine-is-important-for-your-child-and-how-to-set-one/>

<https://www.melbournechildpsychology.com.au/blog/the-importance-of-routine-in-childhood/>

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/grown-ups/family-life/routines-rituals-relationships/family-routines>