

# Mermaid Waters Community Kindergarten 2021 Family Handbook



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**WELCOME****Come and join us on our Learning journey at Mermaid Waters Community Kindergarten.****Lady Gowrie (Qld)**

Our Kindergarten is affiliated with Lady Gowrie (Qld) Inc, a community based not for profit organisation. We receive funding from the government via Lady Gowrie - our Central Governing Body (CGB) - through the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme. (QKFS).

Lady Zara Gowrie established Lady Gowrie Qld in 1940 and the focus has always centred on supporting Queensland families and ensuring that children realise their full potential, thereby bringing both social and economic benefits to the Queensland community. Lady Gowrie is committed to holistic, responsive, high quality services for children and families. Lady Gowrie is an umbrella organisation that encompasses a wide range of services that support, guide and advise services to ensure maintenance of high standards of care, staff, equipment, curriculum, facilities and grounds. Lady Gowrie's strong heritage in early childhood education drives excellence and innovation in early education.

**Our Kindergarten is operated by an elected Management Committee.**

Our committee comprises parents and community members. All members support in a voluntary capacity, continued support is of paramount importance to maintain our community Kindergarten and therefore to meet the needs of young children in our local community. The environment we enjoy today is a testament to the commitment and dedication of the hundreds of families who have passed through its doors over the years. Ours is a community effort and we continue to work together to promote the importance of quality early childhood Education and to ensure that the Mermaid Waters Kindergarten will always be a fine example of this.

*We would like to welcome you and your family and encourage you to be as involved as possible. We hope your family's involvement at Mermaid Waters Community Kindergarten will ensure a most rewarding year for your family.*

**NQF - National Quality Framework**

In 2009 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) signed an agreement to unify all states and territories with one early childhood regulatory and quality assurance process. The National Quality Framework (NQF) for early childhood education and care has put in place a National Quality Standard (NQS) which ensures a high quality and consistent standard of early childhood education and care across Australia. The aim of the NQF is to ensure services focus on the continual improvement approach.

*Mermaid Waters Community Kindergarten completed the Assessment and Rating process in 2014 and was awarded the Rating of Exceeding the National Quality Standard.*

**QIP – Quality Improvement Plan**

Our Kindergarten has its own QIP which is continually updated throughout the year. The latest edition of this plan can be found on entry into our classroom. Parents are encouraged to become familiar with this document. Contributions and input are made by the children, families, the Management Committee and Educators.

## OUR KINDERGARTEN

### OUR PHILOSOPHY

**Our kindergarten has a long established, outstanding reputation for providing the highest quality early childhood education. Our core values and beliefs guide our professional practice, along with our commitment to developing strong community ties and a kindergarten environment that warms, welcomes and creates a sense of wonder for all within.**

Our values and beliefs within our philosophy encompass the following:

#### Children

Play based experiences are the underlying pedagogy that best support children's ongoing learning and development.

Social and cultural contexts contribute to children's growing identity and positive relationships with others.

Children's positive self-identity develops and success in learning occurs, when they have a sense of belonging along with secure, responsive relationships.

Active engagement and child centred learning through meaningful inquiries, shape experiences within the curriculum.

Experiences that facilitate creative thinking, problem solving and challenge deepen children's learning.

#### Partnerships

Families and the broader community have an active role in the curriculum and these partnerships are valued and supported.

Ongoing collaboration between educators, families and the community strengthen relationships, creating opportunities for active participation within our kindergarten.

Equity and diversity and inclusivity for all, as our kindergarten recognises and celebrates similarities and difference.

Our early childhood environment supports equal participation and positive recognition for all.

#### Sustainability

Our kindergarten is a sustainable living and learning community.

We actively protect the natural environment through consistent sustainable practices that are taught within our curriculum.

Sustainable practices include: litter free lunch boxes, worm farming, composting, recycling and energy conservation.

#### Reflective Practice

Early childhood educators continually engage in reflective practice, seeking to develop professional knowledge and skills.

Ongoing reflection and learning enriches the educators and the early childhood community's practices.

Children are involved in reflective practices that support their learning, communication and relationships with others.

Questioning, examining and looking at differing perspectives will reinforce practice that promotes best outcomes for children and families.

**Mermaid Waters Community Kindergarten is committed to inspiring curiosity, a love for learning and a strong sense of self in every child. Through the involvement of educators, families and the community, our early childhood education provides the foundation for every child to develop a lifelong understanding of the magic of education, relationships and community.**

### **THE PRE-PREP YEAR (Also known as the Kindergarten Year)**

- The curriculum is based on the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline by the Queensland Studies Authority
- The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) is a national early learning framework for children from birth to five years. EYLF describes childhood as a time of belonging, being and becoming. This framework guides our program and goes hand in hand with the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines. Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) basic beliefs:
  - **Belonging** is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they *belong* because of the relationships they have with their family, community, culture and place.
  - **Being** is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just 'be' – time to play, try new things and have fun.
  - **Becoming** is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.

The Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline and the Early Years Learning Framework combined with our Kindergarten's philosophy and children's interests form the vital components behind our teaching and learning – it shapes our curriculum and influences our decision making and teaching practices. Through daily observation, reflection and evaluations; educators base curriculum decisions on children's, interests and abilities. Hence, the curriculum is a dynamic, ever changing, evolving process, a reflection of both individual and group interests and strengths, and one that ensures the delivery of high quality early childhood education in our local community.

#### **PLAY**

Children learn best through play-based learning. We honour every child's right to play, build on their existing learning from home, and provide foundations to be successful and contribute to a community of learners. Your child will experience many opportunities to explore, enquire, problem solve, develop friendships, imagine, use their creativity and extend their capabilities in all curriculum areas including language, literacy and numeracy. We are open to your child's ideas and will foster their social and emotional growth and provoke their curiosity. We build on children's strengths and interests through their play, to grow their learning and support their development.



Your child's portfolio gathers examples of the experiences they are engaging in, their learning and growth, and their interests and achievements. Please contribute to this portfolio with your child and us – share life at home; share family photos,

write about a special event or holiday, include art work done at home... coloured A4 paper and plastic pockets are available in the classroom for you to access.

## **STAFF**

Our team is committed to our Kindergarten and to the delivery of quality early childhood education. Our highest priority is to ensure our Kindergarten is a place where you and your child feel happy, healthy and safe. The Pre-Prep group's learning is met by qualified university-trained educators and trained assistant educators.

### **STAFF BACKGROUND**

Michele Hoskins has been at our Kindergarten since 2004 and has a Bachelor of Education (E.C.E). Michele is Co-Director and Educator of the Yellow Group. Michele is also the Nominated Supervisor and Educational Leader.

Jodie Clark has been at our Kindergarten since 1995 and has a Bachelor of Education (E.C.E.). Jodie is Co-Director and Educator of the Blue Group.

Alanna Swanson has been at our Kindergarten since 1984 and has completed a Child Care Practices course. Alanna is the Assistant Educator with the Yellow Group.

Clare Georgopoulos has worked at the Kindergarten since 1998. Clare is the Assistant Educator with Blue Group and a third Educator for Yellow Group. She has a Certificate III in Children's Services.

Kaye Fox joined our team in 2020. Kaye has an Associate Diploma in Child Care Services and works as a third Educator for Blue Group.

Julie Schumacher has worked at the Kindergarten since 2004 and is our Administrator. Julie is also Justice of Peace – Qualified and owner of Kindy Kippers.

### **FIRST AID**

All Educators in contact with the children are trained in First Aid, CPR, asthma and anaphylaxis management, as required by the Child Care (Child Care Centres) Regulations 1991.



**We now join you in the continuing education of your child and look forward to sharing a deeply satisfying and enjoyable year.**

### **STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Our Kindergarten actively supports ongoing professional development through attendance at courses, seminars, workshops and conferences. Each staff member is encouraged to develop, in the annual self appraisal process an ongoing approach to planning their professional development.

### **THE MANAGEMENT OF THE TEACHING/LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

#### **Positive behaviour guidance**

Just like most skills, behaviour is learned and developed in social situations. The Educators guide and promote children's social and emotional well being. We aim to build a relationship with your child and family in order to create a safe, supportive environment for teaching and learning.

Children are encouraged to be independent learners and thinkers and, as such, the development of a positive self-concept and an awareness of others is of paramount importance in our teaching/learning environment. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own problem solving within the development of clear, simple and consistent boundaries and mutual respect, care and empathy for themselves as individuals and as members of a group. Confidence in handling conflicts which may arise in social interaction is encouraged through a variety of strategies. These include the use of protective behaviour, logical consequences, positive redirection and modelling discussion techniques. If educators feel any child requires further support in building their social and emotional skills they work with them and include the family through this process.

At all times, the right and dignity of all the children in our care is acknowledged and respected.

## **KINDERGARTEN POLICIES**

### **EMBRACING DIVERSITY**

We embrace and celebrate the diversity that exists within and between our communities. By respecting diversity, children are supported to create positive relationships and a strong sense of identity. Inclusive early childhood programs acknowledge that all children have different life experiences, and support children to value and celebrate similarities and differences. We invite and welcome you to share your culture, background and life experiences with us.

### **TOWARDS RECONCILIATION**

*"Reconciliation involves building mutually respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians that will allow us to work together to solve problems and generate success that is in everyone's interest. Achieving reconciliation involves raising awareness and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their history and culture, changing attitudes that are often based on myths and misunderstandings, and encouraging action where everyone plays their part in building a better relationship between us fellow Australians"* (Reconciliation Australia).

Our Kindergarten understands and acknowledges the responsibility it has to promote and use education to support individuals, families and communities to build and develop their knowledge of Australia's past, their rights and responsibilities in the present, and how they can form meaningful partnerships that will assist the nation to move forward in the true spirit of reconciliation. We:

- Ensure children engage in culturally – inclusive and safe early childhood education and care experiences.
- Recognise the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.
- Consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and contacts.
- WE ensure educators have access to training in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander understandings.
- Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and career prospects.
- Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural perspectives in the teaching curriculum.

### **BLUE CARD POLICY - COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE ACT - 2000**

It is a requirement of the Queensland Government that people working with young children must undergo a criminal check annually. All staff and members of the Management Committee hold a Suitability Card.

All employers and education providers must warn all potential staff (paid employees, volunteers or students) that it is an offence for a disqualified person to sign a blue card application.

### **HYGIENE POLICY**

When there are many children playing and learning together there is increased chance of children becoming unwell. For this reason we follow thorough, best practice procedures to ensure that a clean, hygienic environment is maintained for you and your child. Please support us with this by washing your and your child's hands on arrival and departure.

### **PRIVACY POLICY**

The privacy of your family is important. This Kindergarten abides by the privacy policy of our CGB. The policy is available for parents to read.

### **SAFETY POLICY**

Community Kindergartens follow the guidelines of the Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995. This Kindergarten has developed its own workplace health and safety manual to ensure a safe place for the children and adults at all times. A copy is available for you to read in the QIP (Quality Improvement Plan) folder. Located on entry into the classroom. Regular safety checks are conducted by staff and the management committee's Workplace Health and Safety Officer to ensure health and safety practices and procedures are maintained to the highest level. This includes annual checks by fully qualified electricians for electrical items.



### **SUSTAINABILITY**

We believe that one of our most significant responsibilities is to help all children appreciate and protect nature, to see the beauty in the world, to learn to be problem solvers and creative thinkers. We will develop your child's respect and love for the natural world so that they will grow up with the desire, knowledge and skills necessary to promote action for sustainability.

Your child will learn and play in natural spaces, filled with natural materials. Your child will recycle, garden, learn about their community and be involved in caring for animals. We hope you will join us on this fantastic and important journey and encourage you to share with us what your family does to connect with and respect our natural environment.

- The use of fresh food is encouraged for lunch and morning tea to reduce the over use of packaging. This is a conservation issue as well as a nutritional one.
- The children are shown how to sort their food scraps for composting and to feed the worms in our kindergarten's worm farms.

### **SUN CARE POLICY**

Sun safety is important to us and we ask that your child has a legionnaire style, or broad brimmed hat (without a chin strap). We have sunscreen available on the sign in table and ask that you initial each day on the daily sign in sheet your awareness of applying sunscreen.

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world and current evidence suggests that childhood sun exposure makes a significant contribution to the lifetime

risk of skin cancer. Research suggests that sun exposure in childhood can be the stimulus for the development of cancer later in life.

The Suncare and Protection Policy is emailed to families at the start of attendance.

### **PHOTOGRAPHS**

Permission to take photographs and video footage is sought in the Enrolment Booklet. We have a Social Media Policy which is sighted and signed on attendance.

### **INJURIES AND INCIDENTS**

In the event of any child-related incidents:

We will contact you for all significant incidents, and you may be asked to collect your child. Educators will continue to monitor and care for your child until he/she is collected.

A detailed incident report will be completed in preparation for you to review and a copy provided on request.

Where your child requires medical treatment beyond immediate first aid, and we are unable to contact you, we will ensure your child is cared for and comforted and we will contact your emergency contact/s and call an ambulance. It is very important to make sure your list of emergency contacts/s is up to date at all times.

### **MEDICAL EXPENSES**

The parent will be required to pay ALL medical expenses if your child has an incident.

### **COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Where a parent/guardian has any concern relating to the program, the waiting list etc, this Kindergarten advocates that the parent/guardian make direct contact with the educator responsible for the children. The parent/guardian can also contact any member of the Management Committee, our Advisor or an Officer of the Office of Early Childhood Education and Care. Refer to telephone numbers on Contacts page. Where a parent has any query relating to the payment of fees or any matter relating to committee management or administration, you are advised to discuss the matter with the President of the Management Committee and our Administrator.

### **STAFF GRIEVANCES**

Where a staff member has any concern or grievance, depending on the nature of the issue in question, they are advised to contact any member of the Management Committee or the relevant Gowrie Advisor.

### **MEDICATION**

If your child has a medical condition, such as anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes or epilepsy, we ask that you provide details on enrolment. Please also provide a comprehensive medical management plan from your child's medical practitioner.

- A child-resistant cupboard is provided for the storage of medication.
- Medication requiring refrigeration will be kept in a lockable box in the refrigerator.
- Parents are required to complete the medication details in the medication log book.
- A policy on the "Giving of Medication" is available for parents perusal.



### **SICK CHILDREN (in brief)**

- Children with a contagious illness will not be admitted.
- Parents are requested to contact the Kindergarten to report a contagious illness.



- In the event of a child becoming ill, the parent will be contacted; therefore it is imperative that current phone numbers are on file.
- In the event of a parent or contact not being available, steps considered to be necessary to ensure the child's well-being will be taken.
- The Illness/disease policy (from QLD Health is on display).

### **IMMUNISATION**

We ask that you provide your child's immunisation status on enrolment. In the event that an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease occurs, and your child is unimmunised, or their immunisations are not up to date, they will be required to remain at home (with full fees still applicable) if this is the advice by the Public Health. We email the recommended immunisation schedule on attendance and it can be found at [www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au) or by calling 1800 671 811.

**Please ensure you update your child's immunisation history statement with the Kindergarten.**

### **CHILD PROTECTION**

Your child's safety and protection are our highest priority. All educators engage in annual child protection training. Due to the Mason's Law Legislation passed in the Queensland Parliament in July 2017, it is mandatory that Educators and staff report suspected child abuse to the relevant authorities.

## **PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS**

### **COMMUNICATION**

We believe that a strong partnership between families and educators is vital, and achieving this requires open, honest and respectful communication. We will communicate to you about the experiences your child is engaging in, their growth and development, projects being undertaken, and opportunities for you to become involved. We also encourage you to share your ideas, provide feedback and connect with others at our Kindergarten.

We will regularly talk with you about your child's progress. You can arrange a meeting at any time to talk about how your child is progressing or to share concerns you may have.

Various methods of communication are fostered through your child's Portfolio, the Planning Book, newsletters, emails, the noticeboard, photo displays and discussions at arrival and departure times.

### **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the Kindergarten regarding change of information recorded about a child (i.e. moving, change of telephone, updated immunisation records etc).

It is the parent's responsibility to read all the information relating to policy information.

It is the parent's responsibility to comply with relevant health and hygiene policies (displayed throughout the Kindergarten) and to participate where possible in the Kindergarten's activities.

### **PARENT ROSTER**

Parents on roster assist in ensuring that our program operates smoothly. It also gives parents the opportunity to observe their child's interactions with friends and adults and is a positive sharing for the children, educators and parents. We will guide you

as to the assistance you can provide. You may have a special skill or an interesting item or activity that you'd like to share with the children. Please discuss any ideas you have with us. Parental involvement is always encouraged. When a parent completes a roster day it is their responsibility to sign the Daily Attendance sheet at the Sign In Table at the entrance and read the information provided re: drills, first aid etc. This information is found in the Visitor and Volunteer booklet located in the kitchen and requires a signature also.

Your attendance contributes to the requirements for the participation levy. The times are approximately 8:45am - 1pm.

### **MEETINGS**

Parents are asked to attend the Annual General Meeting held in February each year. Parents are encouraged to attend at least one monthly Management Committee Meeting each term. Meetings are held at the Kindergarten with a time and week night decided at the AGM. Attendance contributes to the requirements for the participation levy.

### **PARENT LIBRARY**

A small parents' library is available for you to browse through; located on top of the lockers in the locker room. You may borrow any of the publications for two weeks at a time. Please write your name, the title and the borrowing date in the book provided. The library also has pamphlets on many subjects. If you happen to find any books that you feel may be beneficial to other parents, please let us know and we will purchase a copy for the library.



## **READY TO START**

In the lead up to your child's first day, talk with your child about what their first day will be like; discuss the things they will bring with them and help them to recognise their own belongings e.g. lunch box, hat etc. Talk about their teachers, using our names and chat about the children they will play with and the experiences they will engage in. Remind them of what they saw during their visit to us, the bathroom, lockers and play areas.

### **FIRST DAY**

You and your child may be a little nervous and this is completely normal. Here are a few tips to help make the first day as smooth as possible:

- All children are different, some bounding off, others more reserved, so give yourselves plenty of time to settle on the first day.
- Your child may become upset, reassure them calmly and confidently that you will return. We will be making sure your child feels safe, secure and comfortable. You are welcome to phone to check how they settled.
- Make sure your child knows their belongings and let them unpack in the morning.

### **WHAT TO BRING**

- (a) Small back pack (to fit inside our lockers)
- (b) Drawstring bag (approx. 60cm x 46cm) and 2 sheets. Our sheet supplier is Kindy Kippers. You can order direct with Julie or on the website [www.kindykippers.com.au](http://www.kindykippers.com.au)
- (c) "Litter free" named Lunch box – cooler bags are discouraged as lunches are immediately refrigerated.
- (d) Fruit or equal (carrot, boiled egg, sultanas etc.) for Morning Tea –named/in a named container. Water is supplied for each child at this time.

- (e) Nutritious lunch – sandwiches, wraps etc. and extra piece of fruit are a basis for a healthy lunch. Milk and water is provided for the children at this time. We discourage chips, sweet biscuits, muesli bars, fruitsticks, roll-ups and all pre-packaged foods.
- (f) One set of spare clothes, named and kept in child's bag
- (g) Shady hat – we recommend the bucket style hats.



**\* Where appropriate please mark the items with your child's name.**

**Drinks** - Milk and water are provided for the children. Therefore **your child does not need their own drink bottle.**

**N.B. Water is always available for the children throughout the day at the bubbler and filtered chilled water is always provided in jugs.**

### **FOOD AND NUTRITION**

Your child needs healthy, nutritious food to give them the right energy to fuel their body and mind for learning during the day. Please discuss your child's food requirements, including any culture or religious needs.

- **Parents are advised against sending any food containing sugar. Muesli bars, roll ups, biscuits, cakes and sweets are discouraged.**
- **Parents are discouraged in sending food in cooler bags as policy dictates that lunch boxes are refrigerated on arrival.**
- **To assist the educators in their efforts to educate the children in the sustainability of our environment, parents are also encouraged to minimise the amount of wrapping and packaging in their child's morning tea/lunch. A "Litter free" lunch box policy was introduced in 2010.**

### **WHAT TO WEAR**

#### **Clothing and Shoes**

It will be the general policy to remove the child's shoes and socks for the day. If it is necessary for your child to keep these on, the parent/guardian should discuss this with the Co-Director of your Group. Our program and equipment are designed to strengthen the feet and legs, and this purpose may be thwarted when the child wears shoes constantly.

Clothing suitable for play and activities should be worn at all times. Long dresses and tight clothes can be dangerous when climbing. Clothes that are hard to remove (eg jeans with tight clips) and good clothes should not be worn.

Please be aware that most paints we use do wash out in cold water after soaking, but ... sometimes a pigment may be difficult to shift, so again old clothes are more appropriate.

## **SHOES VERSUS BARE FEET**

This Kindergarten recognises the benefits of barefoot play for children's safety, growth, and the development of sensory awareness. Shoes are a hazard in outdoor play areas. Nerve endings in the feet can sense a variety of textures. Bare feet can grip climbing equipment and promote more effective balance and control, e.g. during music sessions or when climbing.

As an additional benefit, noise levels may be reduced indoors when shoes are removed. Children can be encouraged to remove and replace shoes themselves; an independence skill to be fostered. Our classroom is heated in the cooler months, allowing the removal of shoes in comfort during the winter months.

## **REST, RELAXATION AND SLEEP**

We know and understand that rest and relaxation is an important part of your child's day but that 'resting' and 'relaxing' occurs differently for each child. We will offer your child opportunities to rest and relax throughout the day, in ways that suit individual needs. A Quiet Time follows lunch. This allows children time to recoup from a busy morning. A child who has learned to relax will become an adult who is able to deal more adequately with the stress and strain of normal living. Music and stories are played for the children to listen to; books available for reading and browsing and; 'Quiet Time Toy Bags' may also be available. As the year progresses the structure and time of Quiet Time is reviewed and adjusted.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **STUDENT PLACEMENT**

This Kindergarten recognises the importance of student placements as being consistent with the long term training of staff in the provision of quality education and care for children. Students are supervised both by Educators and University/TAFE staff.

However, acceptance of placement of students will be determined after consideration by the Co-Directors and approval by the Management Committee.

### **WORK EXPERIENCE AND OTHER STUDENTS/TRAINEESHIPS**

This Kindergarten supports the inclusion of work experience school students in the educational program. This can be implemented on a limited basis upon request from the school liaison officer and in consultation with the Co-Directors and approval by the Management Committee.

### **VOLUNTEERS**

This Kindergarten may accept placement of volunteers but only after the commitment of students has been met and after a full investigation of the person concerned. Volunteers will work under the guidance of the Co-Directors and with the approval of the Management Committee.

### **ENROLMENTS and HOURS**

Each Pre-Prep (Kindergarten) group consists of 22 children.

The Kindergarten complies with the Education Queensland's structure of 4 terms per year. Parents will be informed of term dates and hours including pupil free days and

public holidays at the beginning of the year. A laminated calendar is emailed and given to each family.

The Kindergarten will be closed for Queensland state school holidays.

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

We are committed to ensuring your child's safety at all times. We ask that you provide us with up to date details of any adults who will collect your child. If you need an adult not listed as a nominated pick up person to collect your child, we require you to provide us with their personal details and photo identification.

It is required that children are brought to Kindergarten and are collected by a responsible adult of at least eighteen years of age.

On arrival (our doors are opened at 8.40am), the parent should sign the daily attendance sheet at the sign in table; assist the child in unpacking and then take their child to the main Mat area where an Educator will be present and initiate the official start of our day at 9am.

When departing at the end of the day, parents will be able to collect their child from 2.30pm, with 3pm being the latest time children can be collected. **A signature and time of departure is required on the daily attendance sheet on departure.**

*We appreciate a phone call or email if your child will be absent.*

### **CHILD FREE PREPARATION TIME**

During this time the Educators prepare the environment, maintain their written program and administration records, conduct staff meetings and attend regional meetings. These additional duties serve to enhance the quality of the program offered to parents and children.

### **EXCURSIONS/INCURSIONS**

Parents will be notified if the children are to go on an excursion or outing. Children will leave the Kindergarten only if the ratio of adults to children is appropriate to the excursion. Permission slips for each excursion must be signed by the parent prior to departure.

We will have Incursions (special visitors/performers) during the year. These performances are an extension of the curriculum. Prior notice will be given and a permission signature requested on the Daily Sign In sheet. Costs are kept to a minimum and appear on your Term Account (these are not refundable - due to absence on the day etc.).

### **BIRTHDAYS**

Children are encouraged to celebrate their birthday by bringing along approximately 25 party cakes/iceblocks/freddo frogs to share with their friends and educators.



## **PROPERTY**

Lost Property is kept in a basket in the Locker Room. Any lost property not claimed by the end of each Term will be disposed of as the Kindergarten sees fit.

**N.B. Children are requested not to bring toys from home to kindergarten – we can not be responsible for loss and breakages.**

## **TRANSITIONING TO SCHOOL**

There are many ways to make the transition to school a positive and calm experience.

- Talk regularly and positively about the experience and your own experiences of school.
- Encourage your child to be responsible for their belongings – unpack independently at Kindergarten each morning. Name items together, so your child can identify their own belongings.
- Encourage independent eating and drinking, supporting your child to open their lunch box and unwrap their food etc.
- Walk past their school and attend orientation meetings. We will display the local schools' orientation meeting dates and open days. Participate in the school's Under 8's Week celebrations if they are open to the community.
- Discuss safety at school – there may not be child proof gates.
- Show your child where you will pick them up at the end of the day and what to do if you're late.
- Reassure your child that if they unsure of anything, to ask an adult.

Your child will be provided with a Transition Statement for Prep eligible children which provides a snapshot of your child's learning across the Kindergarten year.

## **FROM YOUR COMMITTEE**

### **CONGRATULATIONS!**

Your child has been accepted and you are now a part owner of the Mermaid Waters Community Kindergarten. As with owning anything, you must accept responsibility for running and maintaining your Kindergarten.

## **HOW OUR KINDERGARTEN WORKS**

### **FUNDING**

**Acceptance of enrolment is based upon families electing Mermaid Waters Kindergarten as the provider of their child's Kindergarten program. Government Funding is available for each child to access (1) one Kindergarten program only.**

We receive this QKFS (Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme) from the Government which works on a base amount of money for each enrolled child.

By meeting a rigorous rating and assessment process we achieve and maintain service approval. This legislation, the National Quality Framework and National Quality Standards are freely available at our Kindergarten for you to access. In 2014

we were awarded "Exceeding" in each of the 7 National Quality Areas after the Assessment and Rating process. Our Report is available on entry into our classroom.

To meet running costs we must charge each child an attendance fee. If you have a current Health Care Card you will receive reduced fees. The salaries for the staff are approximately half the budget. Purchase, maintenance and repair of the equipment, cleaning and gardening, maintenance and repair of the building and council rates are some of the other expenses that fees must cover. To keep fees at an affordable level for most families, we raise money through fund-raising activities each year.



Fees and fund-raising goals are reviewed annually. Fees are set at a level to cover basic running costs only. Cost of new equipment and extra program material (paint, paper etc) must be subsidised by our fund-raising.

Re: Emergencies/Extreme weather conditions: The parent Management Committee reserves the right to close Mermaid Waters Community Kindergarten in the event of an Emergency situation or due to Extreme Weather Conditions. The safety of our children, families and staff is our highest priority and should the Kindergarten be closed due to an Emergency situation, all fees will be non-refundable.

## **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Each year a Management Committee is elected at the Annual General Meeting to run the Kindergarten. The Management Committee consists of a President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary/News Letter Editor. Only Management Committee members are entitled to vote at Management Meetings.

Other positions include – Garden Maintenance Co-ordinators, Workplace Health and Safety Officer, Photo Co-ordinators, Book/Poster and Resources Co-ordinators, Child Protection Officer, Washing Monitors and Grants Officer.

A Fund-Raising/Social sub-committee is also formed and reports to the Management Committee. The Fund-raising/Social Committee is responsible for organising fund-raising events and ALL PARENTS are asked to help at these functions.

The Management Committee is responsible for the general running - wages, fees, maintenance, repairs, grounds etc. Although only Management Committee members are entitled to vote at the monthly Management Committee meetings, all parents are invited to attend and encouraged to be involved and ensure the opinions of all parents are heard.

One parent from each family is requested to attend the Annual General Meeting held at the beginning of the year. If you would like to be on the Management Committee, or sub-committees, please submit your nominations prior or volunteer at the AGM. Becoming involved in the running of the Kindergarten is an enjoyable and rewarding experience. You will have the opportunity to meet people and help your community and child at the same time.

## FEES

Fees for daily attendance are paid in advance within the first 2 weeks of the fee invoice being received at the beginning of each term. Fees are payable regardless of time lost through illness, public holidays, vacations or other reasons apart from normal holidays.



Fees can only be paid directly into the Kindergarten's Account. Please be sure to use your family surname in the *reference section* when transferring, so that your fees can be correctly allocated to your account: Account details:

**Westpac, Broadbeach BSB: 034654**

**Account No: 620490**

**Account Name: The Committee of Mermaid Waters Community Kindergarten**

In cases of genuine financial hardship, arrangements can be made with the Administrator for regular part payment of fees. These fees are to be paid monthly in advance.

Continued non-payment of fees will result in your child's position being forfeited. Two weeks notice must be given of intention to remove a child from an enrolled list.

### FAMILY MEMBERSHIP FEES

With your Enrolment Deposit there will be an included fee of \$20.00 per family which is your annual Family Membership Fee. This makes your family a financial member and entitles your family to one vote at our Annual General Meeting and any General Meetings, but not at Management Committee Meetings. However your input at Management Committee meetings is encouraged and valued.

### DAILY FEES AND LEVIES

The daily rate is \$38.50 in 2021. An annual voluntary donation of \$50 per family is for the continuous upgrades and improvements to our Kindergarten learning environment. Levies hire a gardener; pay for incursions and access for families to the Kindy Portal. Planning, learning stories and newsletters are accessed through this Portal.

A participation levy of \$25.00 per term per family will be added to each term's fees. This levy can be "rolled over" to the next term providing the requirements for participation are satisfactorily met each term. At the end of the year the 4<sup>th</sup> term levy will be refunded if participation in that term has been satisfactory. Participation is evaluated using a point system. A total of ten points per term per family are the minimum participation requirements.

### PARTICIPATION POINTS - Scores for different activities are as follows:

Attendance at AGM in February	5 points
Attendance at monthly meeting	5 points



Rostered day	5 points
Active member on committee executive	10 points
Working bee attendance/fundraising activity	10 points

Consideration will be given to parents who provide other ancillary aid to the Kindergarten or its Committee (e.g. provision of trade services).

I.E. at the end of each term, parents who have accrued their 10 participation points will be refunded their participation levy of \$25.00 in the form of a full discount off their next term's levy.

**Community Kindergartens achieve their economical fee structure and supportive family atmosphere only through parent participation. Families are advised that funding received from the Government is for their child's attendance at Mermaid Waters. Parents must advise us if they are accessing a pre-prep program at another service.**

#### **ENROLMENT DEPOSIT**

This is a \$175.00 deposit. This amount comprises a non-refundable Administration Fee of \$115; a \$20.00 Membership fee and; \$40 credited to your first term fees.

#### **WAITING LIST FEE**

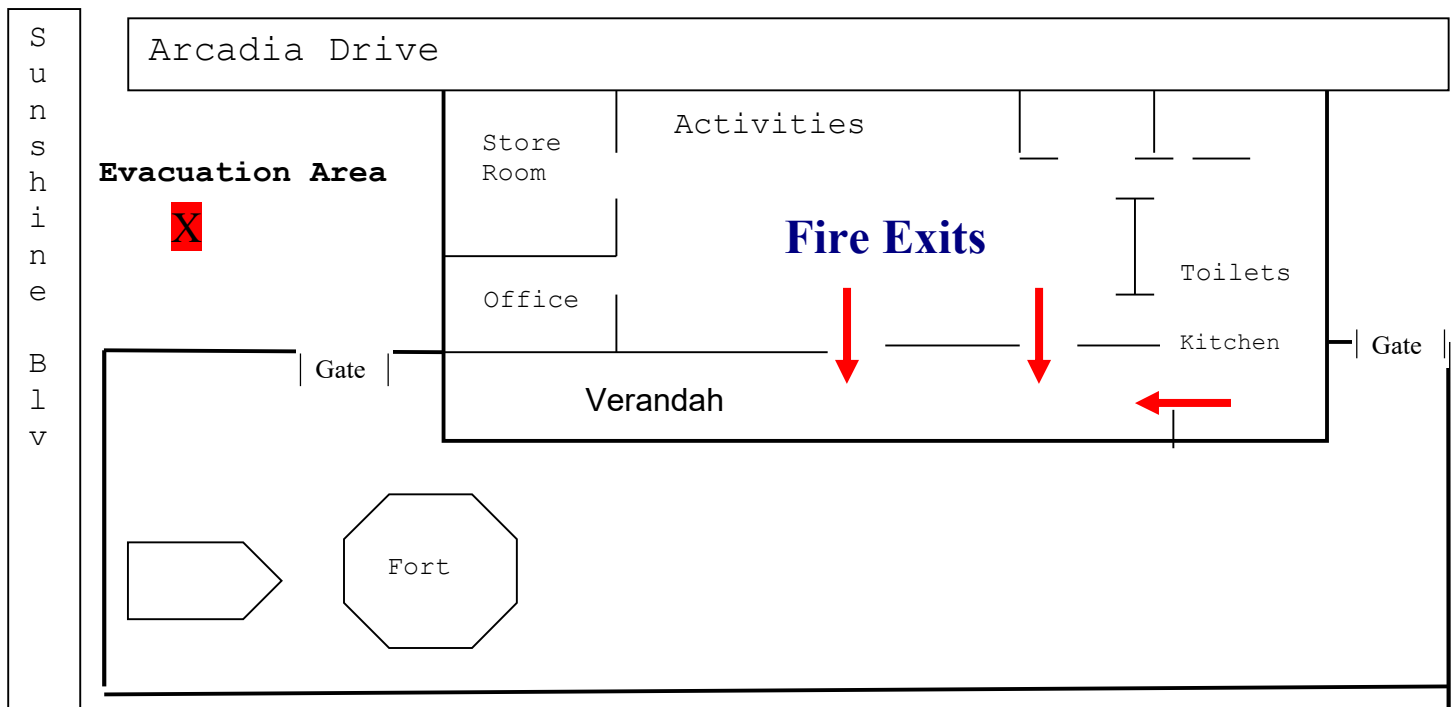
A waiting list fee of \$25.00 is taken the day your child's name is placed on the waiting list. Parents receive a receipt as proof of their child's name being placed on the Waiting List. Applications are processed in the order they are received. We have no policy for transfer between our Kindergarten and others. Nor do we have a policy for siblings. Eligible age children are at least 4 years old by June 30 in the year they participate in our approved Kindergarten program. It is possible to access a Delayed Entry or Exit for your child.

### **EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

#### **FIRE DRILLS/LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES**

Fire Drills/ Lockdown Procedures are practised regularly. Children, parents and staff will be required to participate. Fire evacuation plans are located in the classroom and kitchen. Refer to evacuation plan at the end of this booklet.

***What to do.*** Please do not enter the building if you hear the fire alarm sound. Children and adults are required to evacuate to the grassed area outside the gate on the corner of Sunshine Blvd and Arcadia Drive where Educators use the Daily Sign In Sheet to ensure all children, visitors and volunteers are present and accounted for. Therefore it is extremely important that this sheet is filled out each day.



## CONTACTS

### **Mermaid Waters Community Kindergarten**

203 Sunshine Blv  
Mermaid Waters Q 4226  
Telephone: (07) 5572 1666  
Mobile: 0491 205 380  
[mermaidwatersck@bigpond.com](mailto:mermaidwatersck@bigpond.com)

### **The Gold Coast Office for Early Childhood Education & Care**

Email address:  
[southeastregion.ecec@det.qld.gov.au](mailto:southeastregion.ecec@det.qld.gov.au)  
Telephone: 5656 6688

### **Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority**

[www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)

### **Kidsafe Australia**

[www.kidsafe.com.au](http://www.kidsafe.com.au)

### **Nutrition Australia**

[www.nutritionaustralia.org](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org)

### **Queensland Health**

[www.health.qld.gov.au](http://www.health.qld.gov.au)

### **Immunisation Australia**

[www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au)

### **Lady Gowrie**

[www.gowrieqld.com.au](http://www.gowrieqld.com.au)



### **Anaphylaxis Australia**

[www.allergyfacts.org.au](http://www.allergyfacts.org.au)

### **Asthma Australia**

[www.asthmafoundation.org.au](http://www.asthmafoundation.org.au)

### **Autism Australia**

[www.autismspectrum.org.au](http://www.autismspectrum.org.au)

### **Diabetes Australia**

[www.diabetesaustralia.com.au](http://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au)

### **NAPCAN (Preventing child abuse)**

[www.napcan.org.au](http://www.napcan.org.au)

### **Raising Children Network**

[www.raisingchildren.net](http://www.raisingchildren.net)

