

NSW Department of Education

Getting ready for preschool



pre-
school



What you'll find inside this booklet

This booklet is designed to help make the start of your child's early learning journey a positive and happy one. You'll find handy hints from early childhood teachers to make it easier for you and your family to get your child ready for preschool. It will also reassure you that you've made the right decision in sending your child to preschool.

Going to preschool

The idea of preschool can be a bit daunting for many parents. You may feel like your little one is growing up too fast. Don't worry! Preschool is a time when your child will have lots of fun with children their own age. Preschool helps to develop and broaden the way children experience education, encouraging them to become confident, eager and enthusiastic learners who are looking forward to starting big school.



Want more practical starting school tips?

Access this guide online and explore our resources to help your child get the most out of their preschool journey. Scan the QR code or visit

Getting prepared

Have you met the preschool teacher?

The preschool teacher is an important person to get to know. The teacher will be able to tell you about what happens at preschool and answer any questions that may help your child settle in. You will also be able to meet the other members of the preschool team.

The preschool has a range of policies and procedures to promote the health, safety and wellbeing of all children. These include arrival and departure, food and nutrition, education and sun protection.

For families of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, department preschools will have Aboriginal education officers or Aboriginal school learning support officers employed to provide support. Some preschools that are attached to primary schools may have Aboriginal educational officers, who support Aboriginal families in connecting to school. Additionally, there may be Aboriginal community liaison officers based in nearby NSW Department of Education network offices.

If you would like more information on policies and local procedures, talk to the preschool teacher.

What your child needs

- bag
- lunch box
- lunch
- snacks for morning or afternoon tea
- filled water bottle
- change of clothes, including socks and underwear
- hat

Comfortable clothes

Dress your child in comfortable, practical clothes that are safe and easy for them to manage on their own, including sensible shoes for playing and climbing.

While teachers try to avoid children staining their clothes, paint and dirt are all part of having fun and learning.

Children will be expected to wear a hat to play outdoors. Encourage your child to get used to wearing a hat when they are outside.

Label everything

Clearly label all of your child's items such as their clothes, bag and lunch box. There will be a lost property box at the preschool.

However, make sure your child's name is not visible on the outside of anything they'll be wearing to and from preschool.

Immunisations

Make sure your child's immunisation schedule is up to date. Preschools cannot enrol a child unless they either:

- are fully vaccinated for their age
- have a medical reason not to be vaccinated
- are on a recognised vaccination catch-up schedule.

Allergies, health conditions and additional needs

Before your child starts preschool, it's important to let the preschool know if your child has any allergies, health conditions, disability or any additional learning and support needs. This will give the preschool time to make any necessary arrangements for your child.

Anaphylaxis is a severe and sudden allergic reaction to certain allergens, such as nuts, shellfish, or insect bites. You must let the preschool teacher know if your child is allergic to foods or is at risk of anaphylaxis.

allergyfacts.org.au

Support for children with disability or additional learning or support needs is tailored to their requirements. It may include early intervention classes, resource support and support teachers.





Learning at preschool

Your child's learning at preschool will build on what they have been learning at home. Children learn through play. Your child's interests will direct the learning experiences the preschool team plans for your child through play.

Through these learning experiences, your child will explore and experiment. They will develop their skills in solving problems, communicating and socialising. They will also develop a strong sense of identity, confidence and the foundations for their future learning.

The learning program in preschool is guided by the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.

startingblocks.gov.au

Supporting your child's learning

Children learn best when families and the preschool work together. You know your child better than anyone else, so you can help the teacher understand your child by sharing information about their interests and any additional needs.

Ways to support your child at preschool

- Find out as much as you can about the preschool, such as the routines and what your child needs to bring to preschool.
- Get involved in your child's preschool, such as volunteering.
- Talk with the preschool team about activities you can do with your child at home, such as reading with your child.
- Talk with the preschool team about your child's learning and raise any concerns or issues early, so you can work together to resolve them.
- Talk with your child each day about what they did at preschool.
- Connect with other parents and carers.



Learning every day in every way through play

- Playing games with others.
- Learning about culture, community and family.
- Appreciation and care for the environment including sustainability practices.
- Moving the body and being active.
- Expressing self through painting, craft and collage.
- Listening to, making and moving to music.
- Learning about numbers, counting, measurement, patterns and shape.
- Listening to, making sense of and creating stories, songs and rhymes.
- Using senses to explore the environment including sand, clay, water and natural materials.
- Using tools and resources to be curious, investigate, construct and take apart.
- Imaginative play including role play, puppets, engaging with the natural world and making up games and stories.



Healthy preschool routines

A good start

A nutritious breakfast will help set your child up to have the best day possible at preschool. It will help them to concentrate and give them energy to play. It will also help them develop good eating patterns for the rest of their life.

Getting to school and from school safely

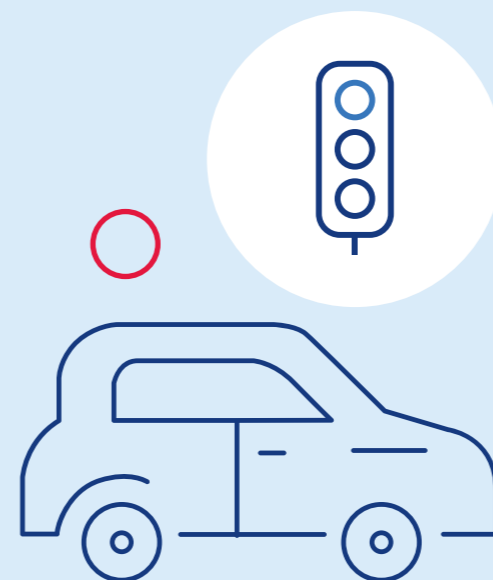
Familiarise yourself with the travel route and preschool entry and exits.

As your child's first teacher, always role model safe and responsible road user behaviour because they copy what you do.

Teach them how to be safe by talking with and showing your child when travelling to or from school, and when out and about.

Walking safely to and from preschool

- Always hold your child's hand.
- If your hands aren't available, insist your child holds the pram, your bag or your clothes.
- Always cross the road at the safest place. Use pedestrian crossings, refuges and traffic lights, even if you have to walk further.
- Use footpaths and be alert to vehicles entering or exiting driveways.
- Only let go of your child's hand when you're safely inside the preschool grounds.



Driving safely to and from preschool

- Always get in and out of the 'safety door' (the rear left door closest to the footpath).
- Always buckle your child up correctly in an approved child restraint or booster seat that is right for their age and size, even if you're in a hurry.
- Drive and park legally, even if it means parking further away and walking the rest of the way to preschool.
- Keep hold of your child's hand in the carpark, and when entering and exiting the car, abiding by school signs.

Share this information with your child's carers such as grandparents, nannies and friends who may take your child to and from preschool.



A good night's sleep

Children need a good sleep each night to be able to cope with the adventures and fun of preschool. NSW Health recommends preschoolers (aged 3-5 years) get 10 to 13 hours of good quality sleep, which may include naps. They should also have consistent sleep and wake-up times.

A good sleep will help your child to:

- pay attention and concentrate
- problem solve and think of new ideas
- engage in play and enjoy their day.

Did you know?

The preschool will ask you to sign your child in on arrival and out on departure every day. Make sure you sign this register, which you can usually find at the preschool entrance.

Food at preschool

Eating at preschool is an important part of the daily program and we promote healthy eating habits. Our preschool team will also help your child during meal times by reminding them to wash their hands and promoting a positive attitude to food.

You will be asked to provide healthy food for morning tea, lunch and perhaps afternoon tea. Talk to your preschool teacher to get an idea of what to pack for your child each day.

healthykids.nsw.gov.au

Lunchbox tip

Pack food that you know your child likes and will eat. Help your child learn how to unwrap their food and eat it on their own.





Getting ready for school

Your child's preschool will support you and your child in getting ready for school. Preschools and schools often run a transition to school program, which will give you handy information and tips about their first big day at Kindergarten and help you to become familiar with the exciting things school life offers.

Preschools may also complete a 'Transition to School' statement summarising your child's strengths, interests and preferred ways of learning. This information can further assist Kindergarten teachers to get to know the children entering their classrooms, and plan appropriate learning and teaching programs

In some communities, there are additional transition programs working to enhance educational outcomes for Aboriginal students. To find out more about these programs, speak to your preschool teachers.

Being involved in your child's schooling will help them have a successful start to the rest of their learning journey.

Schools offer additional support for students who speak English as an additional language or dialect, including if your family speaks Aboriginal English.

What to do if your child is sick

If your child has the following symptoms then it's best to consult your doctor and keep your child at home:

- a fever of 38°C or above
- vomiting or diarrhoea
- cough or respiratory symptoms
- cold or flu symptoms
- rashes of an unknown origin.

For more information about infectious diseases that may affect your child, contact NSW Health on 02 9391 9000.

health.nsw.gov.au



Some common infections

Chicken pox

A slight fever, runny nose and a rash that begins as raised pink spots that blister and scab.

Measles

Fever, tiredness, runny nose, cough and sore red eyes for a few days, followed by a red blotchy rash that starts on the face and spreads down the body and lasts 4 to 7 days.

Conjunctivitis

The eye feels scratchy, is red and may water. Eyelids may stick together during sleep.

Impetigo (school sores)

Small red spots that change into blisters that fill with pus and become crusted. Usually on the face, hands or scalp.

Ringworm

Small scaly patch on the skin surrounded by a pink ring.

Hand, foot and mouth

Starts with blisters that begin as small red dots on hands and feet, as well as in or around the mouth.

Gastro

Vomiting or diarrhoea.

Head lice

Head lice are tiny insects that live among human hairs. Don't be alarmed if an outbreak occurs. Head lice are not dangerous and are easy to manage. Having head lice is not a reflection on your child's level of personal hygiene.

Preventing head lice

- Regularly check your child's hair.
- Keep long hair tied back or braided.
- Keep a fine-toothed comb in the bathroom and encourage your family to use it when they wash their hair.

Treating head lice

Daily combing with a white hair conditioner (to help see) using a fine-toothed comb will help get rid of head lice and their eggs (nits).

If your child has head lice, let the preschool know so they can ask other families to check their children's hair. Your child does not have to be identified.

health.nsw.gov.au/environment/headlice



Kids helpline

If your child is having a tough time and needs someone to talk to, let them know they can call or chat to someone at Kids Helpline.

Kids Helpline gives young people aged 5 to 25 free phone and online counselling support.

- Phone 1800 55 1800 (24 hours a day.)
- Chat online at kidshelpline.com.au (24 hours a day.)

How to find the right person if you have a question or issue

We understand that you may have questions or concerns about your child while they are going to preschool or when they are getting ready for school. If you would like to discuss your child's progress or readiness for school, your child's preschool teacher is often the best place to start. If you have concerns about the service, you can ask to speak to the preschool teacher, director or school principal. If the issue cannot be resolved by the service, you can contact the department's Early Childhood Education Directorate to make a complaint about a service, or the Department of Fair Trading if the complaint is about service fees or business practices.

education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-feedback

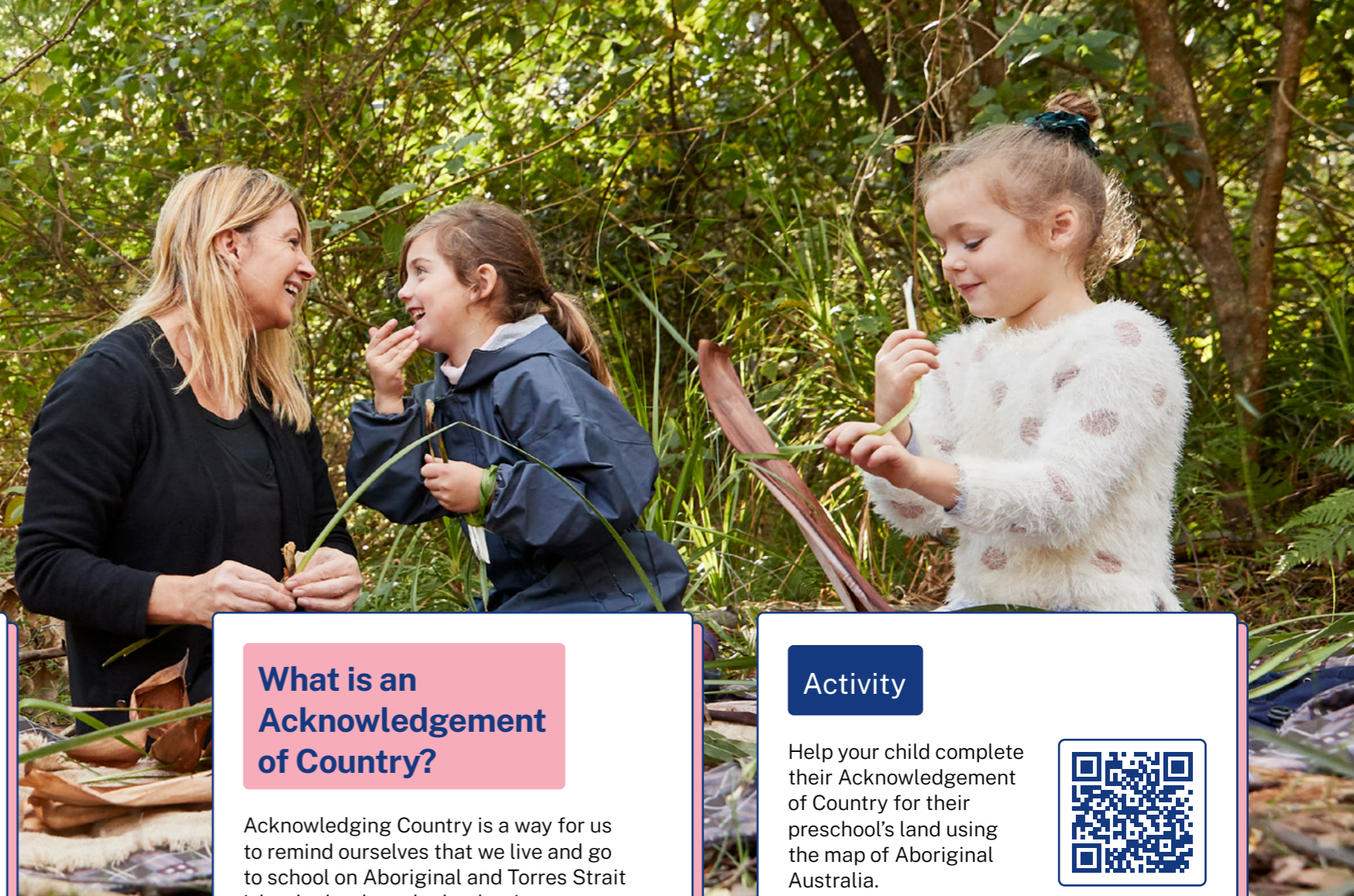
Telephone Interpreter Service

- Phone 131 450 to call the Telephone Interpreter Service.
- Ask for an interpreter in your language.
- Tell the operator the phone number of the school you would like to call. They will get an interpreter on the phone to assist you.

You will not be charged for this service.



Connection to Country in schools



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were the first people to live on this Country. They have been here for tens of thousands of years. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are made up of many different and unique groups and each group has its own culture, language and lores.

During their time at preschool, your child will learn about the history, culture, and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as well as how they can work towards reconciliation.

Learning about the history and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can help students understand cultural differences and show respect for diversity.

What is Country?

Country is the relationship formed with a person's physical environment that is deeply spiritual and connects Aboriginal peoples to their land and their ancestors. Connection to Country is important to Aboriginal people and creates a sense of belonging and identity.

Your child can learn about Aboriginal histories and cultures and how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the traditional custodians of our land by:

- finding out who's country their home is on
- finding out who's country their preschool is on
- writing down an Acknowledgement of Country
- learning some words of the local Aboriginal language by consulting with the local Aboriginal community.

What is an Acknowledgement of Country?

Acknowledging Country is a way for us to remind ourselves that we live and go to school on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands and take the time to pay our respects to Aboriginal people of generations past and present for continuing to take care of our land, earth, skies and seas.

Activity

Help your child complete their Acknowledgement of Country for their preschool's land using the map of Aboriginal Australia.



Today we play and learn on

Country and pay our respects to Elders past and present.



Useful websites

education.nsw.gov.au/useful-websites

Early Learning - resources for families

education.nsw.gov.au/early-learning-resources

Translated school information

education.nsw.gov.au/translated-documents

Aboriginal Education & Communities

education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/aec

Aboriginal Education Consultative Group

aecg.nsw.edu.au

Allergies

allergyfacts.org.au

Immunisation

health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation

Early childhood education and school aged care providers

service.nsw.gov.au/find-ecec-providers

Parents and carers resources

education.nsw.gov.au/early-education

raisingchildren.net.au

Complaints, compliments and suggestions

education.nsw.gov.au/your-feedback

NSW Health

health.nsw.gov.au

Road safety

education.nsw.gov.au/safe-travel

We acknowledge the homelands of all Aboriginal people and pay our respect to Country.

Say hello

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GPO Box 33, Sydney NSW 2001
Australia
Phone: 1300 679 332

