



| NSW Department of Education

# Getting ready for preschool





# 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.





# Getting prepared

## What your child needs

- A bag
- A lunch box
- Lunch
- Snacks for morning or afternoon tea and a drink
- A change of clothes, including socks and underwear
- A hat
- A sheet and/or blanket for rest time

## 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.

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, departmental 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 our preschool policies, talk to the preschool teacher.





## 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.

## 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.

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

## 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.

## Care with allergies

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





# Learning and activities

Your child's learning at preschool will build on what you have taught them at home. Children learn through play. Your child's interests will direct the learning experiences the teacher 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 self-esteem, confidence and the foundations for their formal learning.

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

[startingblocks.gov.au](http://startingblocks.gov.au)



## Preschool activities for learning

- Puzzles and playing with blocks
- Painting, drawing, cutting and pasting
- Reading books and listening to stories
- Talking and listening
- Dressing up and playing in the 'home corner' or cubby house
- Listening to and playing music
- Dancing and drama
- Climbing on equipment, balancing, running and jumping
- Using computers
- Playing with clay, play dough, sand and water

## Supporting your child's learning

Children learn best when parents and teachers 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 as a helper.
- Talk with preschool staff about activities you can do with your child at home, such as reading with your child.
- Talk with staff 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 on social media.



# 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.

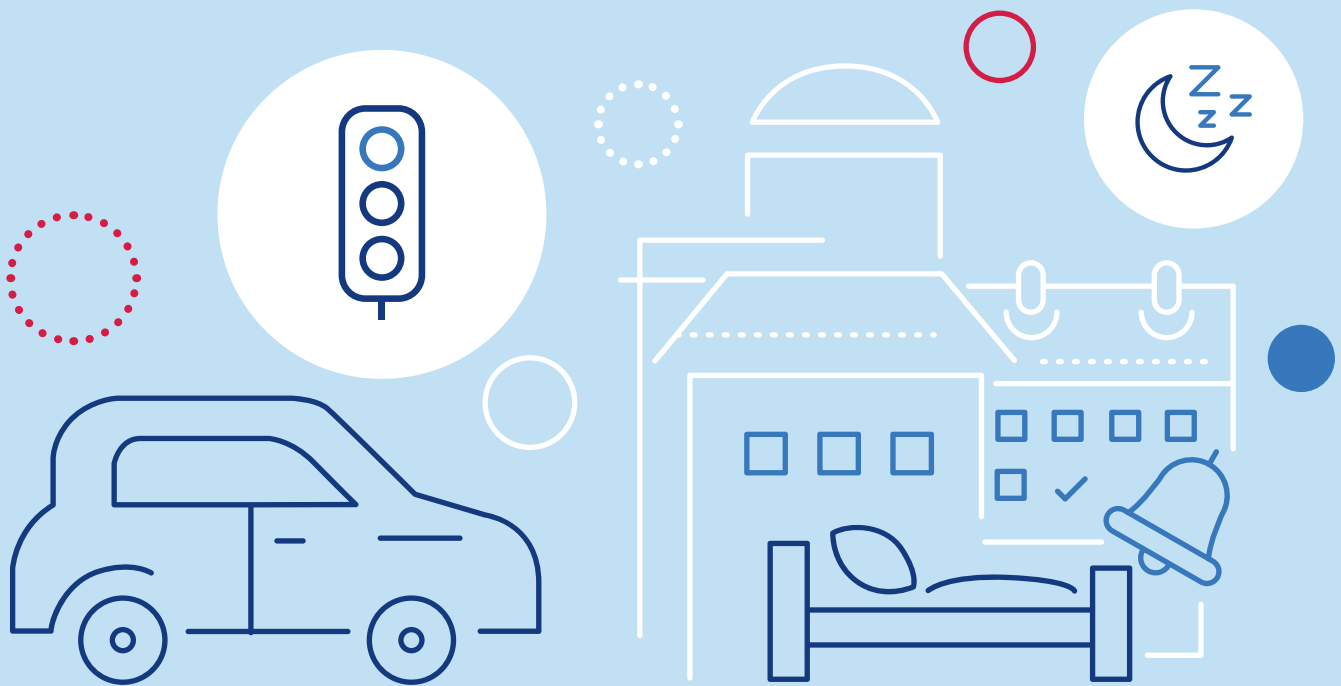
### Did you know?

**The preschool will ask you to sign a register at the beginning and end of each day or session. Make sure you sign this register, which you can usually find at the preschool entrance.**

## 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.
- Only let go of your child's hand when you're safely inside the preschool grounds.
- Always cross roads and through car parks at the safest place and where possible, walk further to use pedestrian facilities such as footpaths, pedestrian crossings or traffic lights.





## Driving safely to and from preschool

- Always fasten your child's seatbelt securely and buckle your child up safely in an approved child restraint or booster seat that is right for their age and size, even if you're in a hurry.
- Always get in and out of the 'safety door' (the rear left door closest to the footpath).
- As your child's first teacher, always role model safe and responsible road user behaviour because they copy what you do. Help them practice the road safety messages by talking about them when you are out and about.

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

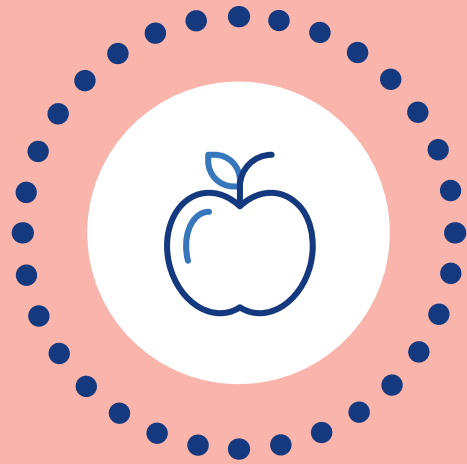
Children need a good sleep each night to be able to cope with the adventures and fun of preschool. NSW Health recommends preschoolers (aged 3-5 years) get 10 to 13 hours of good quality sleep, which may include a nap, with consistent sleep and wake-up times.

A good sleep will help your child to:

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



# Food at preschool



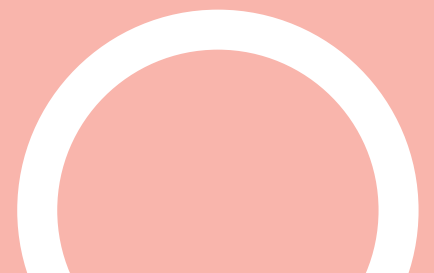
Eating at preschool is an important part of the daily program and we promote healthy eating habits. Our preschool staff will also help your child during meal times by reminding them to wash their hands. Staff will encourage them to finish their food and not to share their food with friends.

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](http://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 big 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.

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 to 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.



TAKE RESPONSIBILITY  
Gaarla gayi

SHOW RESPECT  
Garla ngarraanga





# When your child is sick

## 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](http://health.nsw.gov.au)

[mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au](http://mhcs.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 four to seven days.

### Conjunctivitis

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

### Impetigo (school sores)

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

### Ringworm

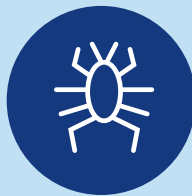
Small scaly patch on the skin surrounded by a pink ring.

### Hand, food and mouth

Starts with blisters that begin as small red dots which later become ulcers.

### Gastro

Vomiting or diarrhoea.



## Head lice

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 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](https://health.nsw.gov.au/environment/headlice)

# 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 centre director or service manager. 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](https://www.education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-feedback)

## Telephone Interpreter Service

If you would like more information and you need an interpreter, please call the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450 and ask for an interpreter in your language. Tell the operator the phone number you want to call and the operator will get an interpreter on the line to assist you with the conversation. You will not be charged for this service.

# Calendar 2021



## Key dates



### Term start and end dates\*

Term 1 (Eastern) – 27 Jan to 1 Apr 2021



Term 1 (Western) – 3 Feb to 1 Apr 2021

Term 2 – 19 Apr to 25 June 2021

Term 3 – 12 July to 17 Sept 2021

Term 4 – 5 Oct to 17 Dec 2021



### School vacation dates 2021

Summer (Eastern) – 21 Dec 2020 to 26 Jan 2021



Summer (Western) – 21 Dec 2020 to 2 Feb 2021

Autumn – 5 Apr to 16 Apr 2021

Winter – 28 June to 9 July 2021

Spring – 20 Sept to 1 Oct 2021



### Education Week

26 to 30 July 2021



### Public holidays

Summer (Eastern) – 20 Dec 2021 to 27 Jan 2022

Summer (Western) – 20 Dec 2021 to 3 Feb 2022

School zone speed limits apply on all school days, including school development days.



\* Check with your school as starting and finishing dates may change.

[education.nsw.gov.au/calendars](https://education.nsw.gov.au/calendars)





# Useful websites

[education.nsw.gov.au/useful-websites](https://education.nsw.gov.au/useful-websites)

## Translated school information

[education.nsw.gov.au/translated-documents](https://education.nsw.gov.au/translated-documents)

## Aboriginal Education & Communities

[education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/aec](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/aec)

## Aboriginal Education Consultative Group

[aecg.nsw.edu.au](https://aecg.nsw.edu.au)

## Allergies

[allergyfacts.org.au](https://allergyfacts.org.au)

## Immunisation

[health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation](https://health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation)

## Early childhood

[childcarefinder.gov.au](https://childcarefinder.gov.au)

## Parents and carers resources

[education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/information-for-parents-and-carers](https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/information-for-parents-and-carers)

## Complaints, compliments and suggestions

[education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-feedback](https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-feedback)

## NSW Health

[health.nsw.gov.au](https://health.nsw.gov.au)


[mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au](https://mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au)

## Road safety

[education.nsw.gov.au/safe-travel](https://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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[education.nsw.gov.au](https://education.nsw.gov.au)

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