



Ashley St Stuart Park NT 0820

Telephone: Preschool - 89977322

Primary School - 89977333

Email: stuartpark.school@ntschoools.net

STAFF

TEACHER IN CHARGE	-	SARA LEWIS
CLASS TEACHER	-	MARY SEARLE
CLASS TEACHER	-	LEANNE HARDING
EDUCATOR	-	LAUREN HALL
EDUCATOR	-	MARIA COTIS
EDUCATOR	-	CATHY HENRY

Term Dates 2019

Semester One

Term 1 Tuesday 29 January - Friday 12 April

Term break Monday 15 April - Friday 19 April

Term 2 Tuesday 23 April - Friday 28 June

Semester break Monday 1 July to Friday 19 July

Semester Two

Term 3 Tuesday 23 July - Friday 27 September

Term break Monday 30 September - Friday 11 October

Term 4 Monday 14 October - Thursday 12 December

...CONTENTS...

Welcome	3
Session Times	3
Preschool Staffing	3
Preschool Philosophy	4
Enrolment	5
Age of Entry	5
School Culture	5
Learning Program - National Quality Standards	6
Early Years Learning Framework	7
Daily and Weekly Routines	7
A-Z of General Information	8
Arrival and Departure	8
Celebrations/Birthdays	9
Changes to details	9
Clothing	9
Complaints/Grievances	10
Excursions/Incursions	10
Food	10
Getting Ready for Preschool	11
Health	11
Injuries, Illness, Accidents or Incidents	12
Library	12
Lockers	13
Newsletters	13
NT Government voucher	13
Parent Contributions	14
Parking	14
School Dental Service	14
School Involvement	15
Skin Protection	15
Transition to School	15
Treasures from home	16
What to bring to Preschool	16
Work Collection Folders	16
A Final Word	17

...WELCOME...

Welcome to Stuart Park Preschool.

Beginning Preschool is an important stepping stone in your child's life. Here at Stuart Park we believe every child is unique, with individual needs, interests and characteristics. Your child is important to you and important to us, and we can work together in partnership to help them grow, learn and develop.

We hope this handbook will answer many of the questions you may have concerning life at the Preschool. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact us.

...SESSION TIMES...

The Preschool runs a morning session and an afternoon session. These sessions run five days a week, from Monday to Friday.

Morning session 8:00am to 11:00am.

Afternoon session 11:45am to 2:45pm.

Both sessions are 3 hours long and follow the same teaching program and routines.

...PRESCHOOL STAFFING...

There are 2 classrooms with a morning and afternoon session running in each. We currently have 4 full time and 2 part time staff members.

The Preschool adheres to regulated ratios of 1 educator to 11 children with all staff having nationally approved qualifications.

Preschool teachers are involved in whole school staff meetings, professional development opportunities and collaborative planning days.



...PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY...

Children

We believe children are capable learners, unique and curious by nature. Children need to feel valued and cared for as they grow and develop. We know that children come to our Preschool with a wide range of skills, abilities and experiences. At Stuart Park Preschool we nurture the whole child, their social and emotional learning and development.

We have high expectations for every child. This means communicating this to every child, every day and enabling every child to experience success. We use developmentally appropriate practice, taking account of and building on a child's strengths, interests and abilities. Developing literacy, numeracy and science understandings through play and intentional, explicit teaching is a core component in our program and practice.

Families

At Stuart Park Preschool we recognise the central role families have in their children's lives. They are children's first teachers and have intimate knowledge of their children's strengths, challenges, interests and abilities.

We understand the need to engage families by establishing respectful relationships and environments. We will seek and value your family's input into our planning and programming and communicate openly with families about their child's learning.

Preschool Staff

The Stuart Park Preschool Team will always act in the best interest of children.

We respect, support, encourage and value each other. We celebrate and share our achievements and respond with empathy to the needs of others.

Critical reflection and ongoing professional learning is an integral part of our educational practice. We seek out current research, theories, content knowledge, practice evidence and understandings of the children and families to enhance our practice.

Learning Spaces and Environments

As teachers and educators, we recognise the importance of our Preschool environment as the "Third Teacher", as a place of belonging where play, investigation, learning, surprise, wonder, comfort and joy is experienced. We strive to provide a safe environment that reflects the interests of children, families and staff. Space at our Preschool invites open-ended interactions, spontaneity, risk-taking, exploration, discovery and a connection with nature.

Use of natural, recycled and upcycled materials in our Preschool highlight our commitment to a sustainable future. We develop children's understanding about their responsibility to care for the environment and we foster hope, wonder and knowledge about the natural world.

... ENROLMENT AT STUART PARK PRESCHOOL...

The Preschool is, at present, only accepting enrolments from children who live within the Stuart Park Priority Enrolment Area. If you have a child who is already enrolled in the primary school, then enrolment of a further sibling will be accepted even if you have moved outside of the area. Entry into the preschool is based on positions being vacant and there is the possibility that children will need to be put on a waiting list if positions are not available.

All enrolments are completed through the School's Front Office on Nudl Street.

...AGE OF ENTRY...

Stuart Park Primary and Preschool follow the Department of Education 'Age of Entry' Policy. This Policy says that any child who turns 4 years of age before 30th June is eligible to enter preschool at the beginning of that school year.

The 'Age of Entry' Policy also affects entry into Transition at the primary school. Children who turn 5 years of age before 30th June are eligible to start Transition at the beginning of that school year.

...SCHOOL CULTURE...

Both the Primary School and Preschool have adopted the 'Tribes' philosophy that promotes:

- Appreciations, No Put Downs
- Right to Pass
- Mutual Respect
- Personal Best
- Attentive Listening

An important role of Preschool is to provide children with strong models of how to negotiate well with others. We aim to help children learn social skills by providing them with appropriate language to express themselves and strategies for conflict resolution. We believe that children who respect and care for themselves, others and the environment, develop self-confidence and social responsibility.



...LEARNING PROGRAM...

Stuart Park Preschool is regulated under the **National Quality Standards** as with all government preschools. We undergo a rigorous assessment and rating process to ensure quality in the following areas.

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice - Your child is supported to participate in play and learning

Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety - Your child is protected from illness and hazards

Quality Area 3: Physical environment - Your child plays in a safe and well maintained environment

Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements - There are enough qualified staff to give your child the attention they need

Quality Area 5: Relationships with children - Your child is made to feel supported and welcomed

Quality Area 6: Partnerships with families and communities - Local community involvement and respect and inclusion of all beliefs and values

Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management - Your child is cared for in a positive environment.

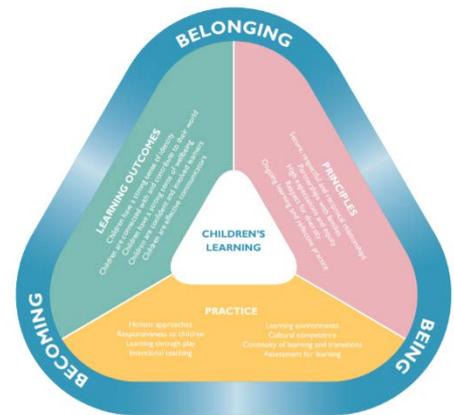
We seek input and feedback from our community to continue to improve the quality of our service.



"The Early Years Learning Framework" (EYLF), which focuses on belonging, being and becoming, informs our ongoing program. Preschool staff follow the Principles and Practices of the EYLF and the following Learning Outcomes to ensure quality educational programs are offered to all individuals:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

The learning environment follows and stimulates the interests children bring with them to preschool. Using the Early Years Learning Framework, educators will observe your child's learning so they can build on it and plan the next steps.



Preschool is important preparation for the development of self-identity, interest in learning and preparation for formal learning.

...OUR DAILY AND WEEKLY ROUTINES ...

For young children, repetition of routine is very important. Our daily and weekly routines allow the children to predict where the day or week will lead, helping create a sense of being and belonging that is essential in creating a safe and nurturing environment. We encourage children to be personally responsible for simple tasks/routines at preschool and we appreciate your support in allowing children to become confident and independent learners.

A typical day looks like this.

- Children put their bags in their lockers
- Then place their lunchbox in the fridge.
- They then settle into the preschool environment, sometimes with their parents, doing puzzles, reading stories and playing games.
- We then gather on the mat where we welcome each other and prepare for the day to come. We also use this time to involve the children in Intentional Teaching, planned by the teacher based on observations of the children's interests and needs. This could include group discussions, stories, songs, games, dances and rhymes.
- The children are then free to involve themselves in the outdoor learning

environment. This time of the day is for fun and messy play in paint, water, sand and mud, for big, fast games, riding bikes and scooters, running, kicking balls, climbing, jumping and balancing. This is also a time for pottering in the garden, weeding, planting and watering seedlings, digging for worms or finding nooks and crannies in which to hide or build cubbies. At the end of the outdoor session we all work together to pack away what we have used.

- There is a conscious pause in the session's activities when we come together for the sharing of morning or afternoon tea. Here, daily classroom helpers are encouraged to set out the children's lunchboxes before seeing what healthy snacks we have to enjoy from home. This is a valuable social time where children are given quality time to talk with friends and their teachers. We use this time to discuss foods and how they help us. We often talk about 'Everyday Foods' and 'Sometimes Foods'. 'Everyday foods' are foods that are good for us such as fruits, grain breads, cereals, yoghurt, vegetables and pasta. The 'sometimes foods' such as sweet biscuits, cakes, chocolate, lollies and juices, are best saved for home and special occasions.
- After our eating time we then immerse ourselves in the inside activities that are organised based on what the children are interested in and want to explore.
- At the end of the session, everyone helps to pack away equipment before singing our goodbye song. The children are then collected for home or child care.

...A - Z GENERAL INFORMATION...

...ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE...

If your child is ill or will not be attending for any reason, please contact the school on 8997 7333 at your earliest convenience (preferably prior to the session starting). We are required to note the reason children are away and follow up any unexplained absences.

The doors will be opened at 8:00am for the morning session and 11:45am for the afternoon session. Once the teachers have opened the doors you are welcome to come in and support your child to start their daily routines.

It is important that children arrive at preschool on time each day. It can be disruptive to the class and also unsettling for your child if they miss the beginning routines and greetings. This allows you time to settle them in to the session with a puzzle or a book. It's also a great time to chat with your child's teachers and educators about anything we should know for the day that may influence your child's behaviour. It really helps us to know this information as we can better support your child with a clearer understanding of their needs for the day.

It is also a great time to make connections with your child's preschool friends and families so please feel free to set aside 10-15 minutes each day to join in at the start

of the session.

Punctuality when collecting your child is also very important. Please be aware that teaching staff require time for their lunch break or lesson preparation and staff meeting time. If you are running late, which at times can be unavoidable, please phone the preschool office to let us know. Often children can become very distressed if they are waiting to be picked up. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

...CELEBRATIONS/BIRTHDAYS...

We welcome celebrations that are significant to your child and family and believe this is a great way to reflect the diversity of cultures that we have at our school. If there is anything in particular that you and your family celebrate in the year, or if there are celebrations that you prefer your child not to be involved in, please let us know so that we can try to meet the needs of your child and your family.

We also love to celebrate birthdays as it is your child's special day. If you are planning to send a special treat along to preschool on your child's birthday, we ask that you first contact your child's preschool teacher in advance. The school has an 'Allergy Awareness Policy' so we do ask that you let us know what may be coming to school as, unfortunately, some children may not be able to participate in cake eating due to allergies and intolerances. We can then ensure an alternative option for children with special dietary needs so they don't feel they are missing out.

NB Cupcakes are a preferred option as they are easier for us to distribute to the children.



...CHANGES TO DETAILS...

Please remember to keep all contact details up to date, this includes phone numbers, addresses, medical information and any person who is authorised to collect your child from preschool. This is important so that we can contact you should an emergency arise and to ensure that information being emailed home is reaching you.

...CLOTHING...

Uniforms are not compulsory at preschool, however, we do sell a Preschool Shirt at a cost of \$25. These are available at the Primary School Office.

All children must wear a **hat** to play outside as Stuart Park School has a *No Hat, No Play* policy. The hat must have a wide brim all around (no caps please) and be of sufficient width to adequately shade the nose, ears and back of the neck.

Appropriate footwear must also be worn. The best types of shoes are runners. Footwear such as thongs, slip-ons and high heels are **not** suitable for preschool and are dangerous so please do not send your child to school in this type of footwear. Children will sometimes need to take their shoes on and off during the day. Velcro is a good option as shoe laces are challenging for children at this age and Velcro offers them the opportunity to develop their own independence.

To comply with the school's **Sun Safe Policy**, we request children wear shirts and dresses with sleeves, and on swimming days, a sun shirt should be worn with swimmers. Your child's health and well-being are of importance to us.

...COMPLAINTS/GRIEVANCES...

If you have a concern about your child or the preschool program please have a conversation with the preschool teacher. You are also welcome to make contact with the Teacher in Charge or Principal of the primary school.

...EXCURSIONS/INCURSIONS...

As part of our program we will, from time to time, invite visitors to come in to entertain the children. When this occurs parents will be given plenty of notice when the event will occur. As part of our movement program we have had visitors who have taught the children gymnastics, Zumba and yoga.

We will also take children on walks to explore the primary school environment. These incursions include attending special assemblies, exploring the early childhood environment, participation in the transition to school program and regular visits to the library. Parents are asked to complete the relevant form so their child will be able to participate.

...FOOD...

During each session we have a break for morning or afternoon tea. It is intended that children will spend no more than 15-20mins eating before returning to activities so please only provide a small snack that they can eat in this time.

We encourage healthy eating at preschool so please avoid sending sweet biscuits, chocolates and lollies. Please provide a healthy snack from the following food groups:

- Bread/cereal - eg. small sandwich/ or wrap, savoury biscuits, crispbread, fruit/raisin bread, homemade muffins.
- Dairy options - eg. cheese, yogurt
- Meat, chicken, eggs.
- Fruit & vegetables - eg. fresh fruit or dried fruit, fruit tub in natural juice, carrot/celery/cucumber sticks.



The children's lunch boxes are stored in a fridge so insulated bags are not necessary.

Children are encouraged to rehydrate with water so please avoid sending in juices, cordial or flavoured milk. Water will be offered during snack time and is freely available throughout the day from the bubblers.

IMPORTANT - At Stuart Park Primary School we have a *Nut Aware Policy* and request that your child does not bring any nuts or foods that contain nuts. E.g. peanut butter or Nutella spread.

...GETTING READY FOR PRESCHOOL...

Children of preschool age are becoming capable and confident learners. It would be helpful if parents could help support this new found independence as it can help them gain confidence in their new preschool setting.

You can help by encouraging children to get dressed by themselves, showing them how to get their shoes on and off and by providing a bag and lunch box that can be easily opened and closed.

If your child has already shown an interest in writing, it would be helpful if you could model writing their name in lower case rather than capitals. We use the Casey Caterpillar handwriting process at Stuart Park Preschool, ask our team if you'd like further information about this.

For other hints and tips see the Raising Children's Network website
<https://goo.gl/yjB2Wo>

...HEALTH...

In cases of minor illnesses, please use your discretion in deciding whether or not to send your child to preschool. A child who is heavy with a cold or flu will not benefit from preschool - even if he or she insists otherwise - and usually infects other children and staff. Responsible decisions by parents do help to protect the health and well-being of other members of the preschool and we would be grateful for your consideration.

Children with infectious diseases must be excluded from preschool for a specified time. We follow the Department of Education *Timeout Policy* for infectious diseases. If you are unsure of these we have a quick reference poster that you can refer to at the preschool.

There are strict Department of Education guidelines governing the administration of

medicines/drugs by school staff. Where possible, medication should be administered by parents before coming to Preschool. If medication is to be administered by school staff, the appropriate medication forms must be filled out and signed by the parent. Unlabelled medications will not be administered so please keep medication in its original container.

Individual Health Care Plans for any medical conditions such as asthma, food allergies and anaphylaxis should be completed and signed off by your doctor prior to starting preschool.

A child who becomes ill during a session will be given a quiet area to rest in, away from the group, and a parent or other contact listed on the records will be notified and will be asked to collect their child in a timely manner.

Head lice are a fact of life in Darwin and we will keep you informed if there is a problem detected in your child's class. A notification will be posted up in the classroom and an email will be sent home to inform you if head lice has been reported. It is essential that you check your child's hair on a regular basis and treat their hair if lice are detected.

Please cover any open sores or wounds prior to the child's arrival at preschool.

...INJURIES, ILLNESS, ACCIDENTS OR INCIDENTS...

A record is kept of all incidents and injuries concerning the children in our care. In the case of an accident, staff will take every action to administer First Aid immediately. Parents will be contacted to inform them about the incident as soon as possible after the event. All accidents are recorded in the Incident Book and parents are asked to sign the book after they have been informed. The school reserves the right to call an ambulance in the event of an emergency.

...LIBRARY...

Once the children settle in to the preschool routine, we will begin visiting the library on a weekly basis. The date and time will be determined by the Librarian and families will be notified when their child's library day is. This day will remain the same for the whole term.

In order for children to borrow they will need a library bag. These are available for purchase from the primary school or you may prefer to send your own. Please don't forget to write your child's name clearly on the bag.

Library books can be borrowed for 2 weeks and will need to be returned before another book is borrowed. An email will be sent to families reminding them if a book is overdue. The primary school may send an invoice to families if they fail to return the library book in a timely manner.

...LOCKERS...

Children will be allocated a locker to store their belongings. Please be mindful that these lockers are shared with children in another session. We ask that you please take all your child's belongings at the end of your child's preschool day.

...NEWSLETTERS...

The Stuart Park Primary School Newsletter is sent out electronically once a week on Wednesdays and contains important information about what is happening at both the primary and preschool. If you require, or prefer, a paper copy please notify your child's teacher or the school office. If you are not receiving your electronic newsletter, or you are unable to open any attachments, please let us know ASAP.

A Preschool Newsletter is also sent out electronically regularly. There will be some hard copies available in the classrooms if you wish to take one of these. If you are not receiving the newsletter please let us know.

It is important that you update your contact details with the school's front office if there are any changes to your address, phone number or email addresses.

You may receive other information, either electronically or in hardcopy, from time to time.

...N. T. GOVERNMENT VOUCHER...

The NT Government provides a 'Back to School' voucher to the value of \$150 for each preschool and primary school student. This can be used to purchase the preschool shirt or hat or you may use it to purchase the preschool pack that contains two preschool shirts, a hat, a library bag and fitness sessions such as yoga, zumba or gymnastics. The voucher is redeemable at the primary school office at the beginning of the year and expires at the end of the term the student commenced.

...PARENT CONTRIBUTIONS...

These contributions are requested by the Stuart Park School Council. The contributions enable us to provide:

- a higher level of resources for our preschool
- excursions/incursions/special events
- specialists from the community to work with the students
- ingredients and cooking materials

- gardening resources

Parent Contributions are **\$60 per term**. Please be assured that no resource or facility will ever be withdrawn from a child should you choose not to make this contribution. These contributions can be paid in full at a total of \$240 for the year or term by term. You can pay at the primary school office on Nudl Street or by phone.

...PARKING...

Parking is limited so we ask that you take care and park in the designated car parking spaces which are within the preschool carpark or along Ashley Street. Please respect those who may need to utilise the disabled car parking spaces.

...POLICIES...

The preschool has a range of policies that have been regulated by the Department of Education and Quality Education & Care NT. These policies are available for parents to view so please feel free to ask a staff member if you'd like to access these.

...SCHOOL DENTAL SERVICE...

The School Dental Service is available to all preschool and primary school children through clinics located in most primary schools. Stuart Park's Dental Clinic is located in the library building to the right of the school administration block.

Please contact the Darwin Oral Health Services on 89226466 if you wish to make an appointment for your child. You will be asked to attend these appointments with your child.

...SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT...

We look forward to getting to know you and your family as your child starts their school experience. Please remember, strong connections between the school and our families makes for a successful experience for your child and builds strong schools and strong communities.

We love to have parents at our preschool as parents play an important role in the preschool program. Each parent has a unique set of talents and interests so don't be shy

about offering your assistance.

Preschool enrolment means you become a valued member of the Stuart Park Primary whole school community. Throughout the year there will be special events such as Assemblies, Sports Days, Mother's/Father's Day celebrations and Concerts. We encourage you and your family to become involved in these community events. From time to time there will be fundraising activities to help provide much needed resources for the students.

We see these events as excellent opportunities to build stronger partnerships and understandings surrounding your child and the importance of education.

...SKIN PROTECTION...

We ask that you apply sunscreen to your child at home, prior to attending preschool and don't forget to send your child in clothes that provide good protection from the sun.

From time to time midges are present at preschool, usually during a full moon. During these times we advise applying an insect repellent to protect your child's skin.

...TRANSITION TO SCHOOL...

To ensure a smooth transition to the primary school we provide a transition to school program which occurs in Term 4. The preschool children visit the early childhood classrooms where they will be introduced to the Transition teachers and form buddies with the children in that class. They will also explore the early childhood playground and become more familiar with the primary school setting.



...TREASURES FROM HOME...

Children are encouraged to bring to Preschool any type of interesting specimen, e.g. rocks, shells, flowers, insects or animals, as these can be a rich opportunity for investigation and group discussion. Special photos are also great to share and grandparents and visiting family are always welcome as children love to show them off. Tame and friendly pets are also great for your child to share on prearranged days. All of these things help us to develop a better understanding of your child and makes the connection between home and school stronger.

Please discourage your child from bringing toys into preschool as these often get lost or broken. Precious belongings can also cause disruptions and upsets when the other children want to touch and play with these toys. While we do not wish to dampen your child's enthusiasm, we would appreciate it if these toys remain at home.

...WHAT TO BRING TO PRESCHOOL...

Children will need to bring the following items with their **name clearly marked on each item**:

- a backpack or bag to hold all their items
- a complete change of clothes
- a plastic bag to store wet or soiled clothes in
- a broad-brimmed hat (no caps please)
- a lunchbox that is easy to open and close
- library bag on library days

...WORK COLLECTION FOLDERS...

Children will be involved in a number of different activities at preschool. Often work is displayed in the classroom before it is sent home for you to enjoy, however, children may choose to take art and craft items home as they complete them. When something is ready to go home, it will be placed in the Work Collection Folders located in the classrooms. Please check these regularly so you can share your child's achievements with them.

If notes have been sent home and your child was absent, these may also be placed in the collection folders so you don't miss out.

...A FINAL WORD...

There are a number of ways you can assist us in providing your child with the best possible experience and success at preschool:

1. Help foster your child's self-esteem by encouraging them to try new things, celebrate their success and acknowledge their achievements
2. Discuss any problems or concerns directly with the teachers
3. Visit the preschool and join in the day's program
4. Read the newsletters and notice boards
5. Collect junk materials for collage and carpentry
6. Offer to share any hobbies, interests or expertise you may have with the children (e.g. playing an instrument, gardening, fabric painting/printing, sewing, pottery, cooking, carpentry etc.)
7. Participate in social events
8. Assist with garden working bees
9. Help with preschool fundraisers
10. Value what your child does at preschool by asking them what they did that day. Display their art works
11. Get to know the other children and families within the preschool. Strong connections during this time can last the whole of your child's primary school years and may even be a life-long friendship.
12. Regularly look at your child's observations recorded in their *Learning Portfolio* and comment on any special learning and progress your child has made.
13. Get to know your child's friends and build on these friendships by organising play dates and get-togethers with other preschool families.
14. Get to know your child's educators, take time to say hello and have a chat.
15. Complete any parent feedback questionnaires, suggest ways we can improve or strengthen things we are doing well, email us or speak with us about your ideas and concerns. We really do appreciate your input.

