



Duntroon Community Centre

Welcomes you to

Playschool



Parent Handbook 2018

Gymkhana Road, Duntroon, ACT
PO BOX 7915, Canberra BC, ACT, 2610
Phone: 02 6265 9411 / playschool@duntrooncommunitycentre.org.au

About Us

Duntroon Playschool is an early childhood program for 3 and 4 year olds, licensed under Children's Education and Care Assurance (ACT Education and Training Department) for 3 hours per day.

Our Playschool program is a not for profit community service run by the Duntroon Community Centre Incorporated (DCC) and is partially funded by the Defence Community Organisation through a Family Support Funding Program grant.

Playschool Staff

Playschool Director/Teacher
Teacher's Assistant
Teacher's Assistant (Casual Relief)
Community Centre Coordinator
Administrative Assistant

Danielle Kibel
Alison Meade
Jacqui Wade and Justine Churchyard
Cara Stieg
Natasha Cotter

Our Administrative Assistant is available Wednesday, Thursday and Friday to provide administrative support to Playschool and the Community Centre Coordinator is available from Monday, Tuesday and Friday.

Our Philosophy

Duntroon Playschool strives to offer the children in our care a stepping-stone to independence and a transition from their parent or carer environment whilst supporting and preparing them at the beginning of their learning journey.

Our Playschool's main aim is to provide opportunities for the children in our care to develop their social, emotional, educational and motor skills whilst becoming part of their community. They will develop abilities to allow them to interact cooperatively with peers and educators, as well as take responsibility for their actions, belongings and equipment.

At Duntroon Playschool, interactive and free play is the manner in which children exercise their physical, creative and cognitive resources. We are also supported by a structured program that is adapted where required to meet the needs of each child. Play provides opportunities for physical activity, the development of skills for social interaction, flexible use of material, expression of feelings and ideas as well as the spontaneous use of language. Play is the major means by which children explore and come to understand their world during their formative years.



The Playschool Program

Our Playschool Program is designed to cater for your child's individual interest and foster the development of certain abilities, attitudes and skills which will assist them in their future educational endeavours.

The daily program at Duntroon Playschool includes a variety of learning experiences including story, music, games, dramatic play, construction and outdoor play activities. The process of "observing, exploring and experimenting" is far more valuable than what the final product may look like.

Some of our indoor activities include:

- Experimentation with paint and colour;
- Using manipulative and constructional toys, puzzles and blocks;
- Games to develop self-confidence and social interaction skills;
- Imaginative play in home corner;
- Early name, number, letter and shape recognition;
- Using materials and equipment that develop fine motor skills such as pencils, crayons, scissors, brushes, paper, paint, paste, play dough, scrap materials, fabric and fibres;
- Sorting and classifying objects; and
- Daily exposure to singing, listening to music, looking at pictures and books, and listening to stories.

Some of our outdoor activities include:

- Developing gross motor skills by using a variety of climbing equipment;
- Running, jumping, skipping, hopping activities and games;
- Following small obstacle courses;
- Catching and throwing activities and games;
- Digging and imaginative play using sandpit toys and equipment;
- Creative activities using sand and water;
- Activities to develop muscular control and coordination;
- Exploration of the outdoors in all weather; and
- Gardening activities.

Through all our learning experiences we help your child to:

- develop effective communication skills and use language suitable to their environment;
- develop social relationships, make friends and interact with peers and staff appropriately;
- form basic concepts which will help them understand their world;
- share and cooperate with others in a play based environment; and
- develop and enhance their gross and fine motor skills.

Playschool Hours

Playschool operates Monday to Friday during ACT school terms from 9.30am to 12:30pm (except for the first week of Term 1 where Playschool will start at 10:00am to help families to settle into routine).

Our term dates for 2018 are:

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
Monday 5 February to Friday 13 April	Monday 30 April to Friday 6 July	Monday 23 July to Friday 28 September	Monday 15 October to Friday 14 December

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Enrolment

Parents can submit an enrolment form from October of the year before they wish to enrol their child. Enrolment details and forms are provided on the DCC website (www.duntrooncommunitycentre.org.au) or can be obtained in person from the centre.

Children who turn 3 years of age within the first four weeks of a term may start at the beginning of the term providing a parent/carer attends with them until their birthday (a legislative requirement). Should your child's birthday fall after week 4 of Term 1, you must apply for placement to start the following term.

To be eligible to attend Duntroon Playschool, children are expected to be fully toilet-trained as staff ratios and resources are insufficient to handle children who are not toilet-trained (exceptions may be considered on application).

A \$100 non-refundable deposit is required for each individual child at the time of enrolment to secure a placement. This deposit will be deducted from your first term's fees. Children can be enrolled for up to a maximum of three days per week, although two days per week is the recommended attendance for this age group.

Placements in our program are prioritised in the following order:

- Category 1 – Serving members of permanent and Active Reserve components of the Australian and Overseas Defence Forces;
- Category 2 – Members of the Inactive Reserve component of the Australian and Overseas Defence Forces and public servants of the Department of Defence;
- Category 3 – Contractors to the Department of Defence and all other residents of the ACT/NSW region; then
- Category 4 – Children who attend other Playschools, Preschools or similar programs and children who can attend a whole year of Playschool the following year.

Parents of children successful in gaining a position for the following year will be invited to attend an information night in January, when the operation of the Playschool and the Centre will be discussed. Parents will be given a copy of the *Duntroon Playschool Parent Handbook* which will include an Enrolment Pack and information about the Centre.

As per the DCC placement policy if your child attends another Playschool, Preschool or similar please notify the Playschool Director in writing. All applications will be prioritised and confirmation letters or emails will be sent out by the end of the ACT school week 8 of Term 4.

The Centre will attempt to place all children for the days requested, however, preferred placement is not guaranteed and you will be notified as soon as possible if your chosen days are not available. Should you receive an offer and not accept, your application will go to the bottom of the relevant placement category waiting list.

No new children will be offered a placement at Playschool in Term 4.



Fees

Duntroon Playschool is \$25 per child per day (subject to change). Fees are payable each term and are due by week 3 of that term. There is no charge for public holidays. Unfortunately, if your child misses a session, we are unable to offer a make up session due to student and staff ratios.

To attend Playschool, you are required to become a DCC member. Membership is \$27.50 per family per calendar year (subject to change) and entitles you to use all other aspects and facilities of the Centre. Fees and the levy can be paid by cash, Eftpos, credit card or bank transfer.

Two weeks' written notice (or payment in lieu of) is required should a child leave Playschool in the first five weeks of any Term. After five weeks if a child is withdrawn from Playschool, the Centre is unable to refund the remainder of the term fees. Exceptional circumstances (such as short notice posting or health issues) may be considered upon application to the DCC Committee.

Prompt payment of fees is important to the operation of Playschool, as the Centre primarily functions using these funds. If fees are not paid on time your child's position may be cancelled and offered to a child on the waiting list.

Parent Levy

As we are a not for profit organisation a \$100 Parent Participation Levy is charged per family to encourage families to participate in supporting the Centre. We ask that you assist with fundraising, working bees and as a parent helper throughout the year. The children really enjoy having parents attend. The \$100 is refunded at the end of the year if obligations are met.

To receive your \$100 Parent Participation Levy refund, we ask that each family completes 7 Parent Rosters, and 3 Centre related activities, which include working bees and fundraising activities such as Trivia Nights and BBQ events. If your child joins the Centre after Term 1 and/or leaves earlier than the end of Term 4, the Centre will, on application by the member, assess a proportionate Parent Participation requirement.

Parent/Carer Participation

Parents/Carers play an important and valued role in the education of their children. You can join in the Playschool program and participate at the Centre by:

- undertaking a roster duty;
- craft preparation for Danielle;
- taking home Playschool washing (5 bags = 1 parent / carer help);
- assisting with working bees;
- maintaining the Playschool vegetable garden;
- participating in fundraising activities;
- offering to share any hobbies, interest or expertise you may have; and
- becoming a DCC Committee member.

A Typical Day at Playschool

<p style="text-align: center;">9:30am</p> <p>Welcome Children as they arrive at the Centre and encourage them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hang their bags up • Put their lunchbox on the trolley • Place their drink bottle in the water box and hat on the hat shelf • Go to the toilet and wash hands before starting activities 	
<p style="text-align: center;">9:35am</p> <p>Inside Play, craft activities, playdough, construction, puzzles, painting, home corner</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">10:30am</p> <p>Music, dancing, singing, group games, mat time, turn taking</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">11:00am</p> <p>Morning Tea, socialisation</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">11:20am</p> <p>Outside Play, obstacle courses, swings, bikes, scooters, sand pit, water play, gardening</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">12:20pm</p> <p>Story Time, interactive stories, role playing, puppets</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">12:30pm</p> <p>Home Time, farewell song and sticker time</p>	


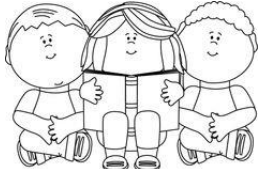

Playschool Guidelines

We endeavour to encourage a warm, welcoming, casual and relaxing atmosphere during you and your child's time at Playschool. It is important that Parents/Carers make best efforts to abide by the following guidelines in order to ensure the safest and most positive experience for everyone.

Always remember our staff are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of everyone. This includes the children, fellow staff, parents and visitors to the Centre. In case of emergency please support them and follow their directions promptly.

Playschool Rules

To keep everyone safe please help staff enforce the Playschool rules.

	We use our walking feet inside
	We use our listening body at mat time and story time
	Sharing is caring- If we share with others they will share with us.
	We wash our hands when we come to Playschool, after we go to the toilet, before and after we eat, when we come inside and after we blow our nose. We dry our hands with 1 piece of paper towel
	If someone hurts you say "Stop, I don't like it!" Please ask your teacher for help if you need it.

Arrival and Collection

It is important for children to arrive by 9.30am. This helps them to develop an understanding of our daily routine and allows them time to settle into the daily activities.

Children must be collected by 12:30pm. If you are running late or an emergency arises, please contact the Centre as soon as possible.

If a different person is collecting your child on a regular basis and they have not been listed on the enrolment form with authority to collect, please tell a staff member so they can be added and make a note in the diary located in the bag room. We will not release a child into the care of another person without written and/or verbal permission from their Parent or legal guardian.

Attendance Folder

The attendance folder must be signed on arrival and departure of every session. This is the parents/carers responsibility. The attendance folder acts as an emergency evacuation roll. Signing your child in and out ensures that we have accurate details of children when practicing or conducting fire and emergency evacuations.

If you are staying for Parent Duty, please sign your name in and out as well as the names of any other children you may have with you.

Parent/Carer Roster

In order to meet legislative requirements for staff to child ratios Playschool has a paid staff of one teacher and one assistant. To enhance the Playschool Program we ask for one to two parents to assist at each session. This is called Parent/Carer Duty. Each family is to place their name on the Parent/Carer Roster which is located in the bag room. Duties include helping in the Playschool room with craft activities, assisting with morning tea and light cleaning duties during the session. It can also include taking home washing or preparing craft activities. These duties can be performed by a number of family members, all of whom will be required to complete a Volunteer Form. You are welcome to bring your other children with you.

If you personally perform more than seven Parent/Carer Duties in a 12-month period year or four within 28 days, you are required by Legislation to hold a Working with Vulnerable Peoples (WWVP) Card. The WWVP application form is available from Access Canberra website www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au. When you are advised of the outcome of your application please notify the Centre and provide a copy of your card. There is no charge for the card when applying for Volunteering purposes.

Parent / Carer Communication Book

A Parent/Carer Communication Book is located in the bag room. Please use this book to notify us of future absences, if someone else is picking up your child and general communication. Please ensure you also tell a staff member.

What to Bring to Playschool

- Backpack;
- Water in a drink bottle;
- Healthy snack (eg. sandwich, fruit, vegetable sticks, yoghurt);
- Change of clothes and a plastic bag;
- Warm coat and beanie for winter; and
- Sun hat – we have a no hat, no sun play rule. In the event that you forget to pack a hat, we have spare clean hats for use. Please do not send your child with hats with draw strings as this is a safety hazard.

What to wear to Playschool

Please dress your child in comfortable clothes that can get dirty (we do messy activities). Also ensure they will be able to manage when going to the toilet.

For safety reasons, please do not send your child in clothes with long draw strings, gumboots, thongs or crocs, sunglasses and/or other accessories. In winter no gloves or scarves are to be left with the children.

Sun Protection Policy

It is the responsibility of all parents to apply sunscreen to themselves and to their children before commencing activities at the Centre. At no time will staff be responsible for applying sunscreen to a child. If you forget we have sunscreen located in the bag room near the diary.

All staff, parents and children are encouraged to wear a broad brimmed, bucket or legionnaires style sunhats with a deep crown that provides sun protection for the face, neck and ears, whilst outside.

Label All Possessions

Please label all clothing and possessions with your child's name. If you are missing items please check the Lost Property Box in the bag room regularly.

Should you need to obtain labels, the Centre has an ongoing fundraising relationship with 'Identikid'. Labels can be ordered easily online at www.identikid.com.au and posted to you personally free of charge – please quote fundraiser code 1090 in the relevant part to ensure the Centre receives 15% commission.

Toys from home

Please do not allow your child to bring toys or precious belongings to Playschool as they may be broken, lost or cause conflict. Things made at home, postcards, photos etc. are most welcome.

Confidentiality

While volunteering for Parent/Carer Duty you will observe lots of 'normal' and predictable age appropriate behaviours and language. You may also observe some different, unpredictable behaviour. It is extremely important to use discretion when reflecting and talking about your experiences with others. Thank you for your sensitivity.



Mandated Reporting

In accordance with the *Children and Young People Act 2008*, all DCC staff are mandated to report any child abuse or neglect to the relevant authorities. Further information is available in our *Duntroon Playschool Policy and Procedure Manual* and through the following document;

http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/5660/Keeping-Children-and-Young-People-Safe.pdf

Behaviour Management

Behaviour management issues that require attention must be dealt with by a member of staff. People have different ideas of managing behaviour. At Playschool we follow the DCC Behavioural Policy. If you wish to view this policy you can go to our website www.duntrooncommunitycentre.org.au or ask a staff member for a copy or more information.

Inclusion Policy

Inclusion is recognising the individual qualities of each person. Inclusion is a right. It begins with community recognition and acceptance of difference and diversity. By acknowledging and valuing difference and diversity in our Playschool program, we highlight the importance of each one of us being accepted and valued as unique and special individuals. Please notify staff if your child has additional or cultural needs when enrolling in the Playschool program. The Committee, parents and staff will coordinate a plan and implement strategies to achieve the best possible outcomes for the child concerned.

First Aid Policy

It is part of the licensing requirement that a staff member with a Senior First Aid certificate is on duty at all times. In addition to this we are required to hold and maintain a First Aid Kit on the premises. A First Aid Kit, Asthma Kit and a mobile phone is always taken on a walk or excursion away from the Centre. First Aid training is conducted for DCC Members during first term. All parents are encouraged to attend.

Allergies

We are a **nut free zone**.

Please do not bring any products containing nuts into the Centre at any time. Thank you for your cooperation.

Staff are to be notified of any child that has any food or other allergies and appropriate first aid for that allergy. Parents of children with allergies must complete an ASCIA Action plan.

Incident / Accident / Illness Policy

An incident report is completed for any incident that involves a child from Playschool. Parents will always be informed as soon as possible of incidents of a serious nature. Parents are welcome to view a report if their child has been hurt. We believe that parents have a right to information about how their child spent his or her day.

Medication Policy

All medication that is brought into the Centre must be handed to a staff member. A medication form must be filled out on arrival and medications will be locked away out of reach of children. Medication will not be administered if it is out of date, if it is not provided in the original container supplied by the pharmacist, if it is a prescription for another person, the requested dosage is not the recommended dosage or if the Medication form has not been completed.

Health and Illness

If your child is sick please keep them at home including any post illness exclusion periods. If your child feels ill during the session we will notify you.

Please let us know if your child has been exposed to any communicable diseases. If they have other siblings with infectious diseases (gastro, measles, etc.) please consider keeping your child at home to minimise the risk of transmission to the entire group.

Anaphylaxis Management Policy

The Centre is committed to providing, as far as practicable, a safe and supportive environment in which children at risk of anaphylaxis can participate equally in all activities.

Policy is in place to minimise the risk of an anaphylactic reaction occurring at the Centre. Staff are adequately trained to respond appropriately and competently to an anaphylactic reaction. Whenever a child with severe allergies is enrolled at the Centre, or newly diagnosed as having a severe allergy, all staff will be informed of the child's name, the child's action plan and the location of the child's adrenalin auto injector.

If your child has an Action Plan, or other medical conditions on enrolment, please provide a copy of the Plan or written details from the child's doctor to our staff. Please ensure the Plan has appropriate responses to the condition and clearly labelled medication. Ventolin and Adrenalin (EpiPen) should also be provided to staff at the commencement of Playschool.

Nutritional Policy

The Centre recognises the importance of healthy eating to the growth and development of young children and is committed to supporting the healthy food and drink choices of children at the Centre. Healthy food and drink whilst children are at the Centre is encouraged to promote normal growth and development.

Birthdays

Children may celebrate their birthday at Playschool by bringing cupcakes to share with the other children. If you bring cupcakes to celebrate your child's birthday, please see staff prior regarding allergies or dietary requirements of other children at Playschool. Please be aware of our nutritional policy and that we are a **nut free zone**.

Children's Library

We offer a children's library. Please feel free to borrow books whenever it suits you and your child. Please provide a library bag to help protect the books travelling to and from Playschool. The Centre also has a Parenting Library - see our administrative staff if you would like to borrow any books.

Excursion Policy

We seek to provide children with opportunities which are available to us on Duntroon and other events of educational benefit. Parents will receive at least one week's notice of upcoming events and a reminder will be provided in the attendance book and by email. Approval is to be given for all excursions by the DCC Committee at least 3 weeks prior to the excursion occurring.

Photography

Parents/Carers are advised that photographs may be taken of their children/family during their time at the Centre. We ask that you complete the Photography at Duntroon Community Centre Consent Form when enrolling your child. Parents/Carers should note that during the year there may be occasions when other families may wish to take photos and/or videos of children participating in events at the Centre. Anyone wishing to take photographs are asked to speak to our staff beforehand. If you have any concerns regarding the photography or videography of your child please speak with the Playschool Director.

Toileting

Playschool supports children who are developing independence when toileting, and understand if children have accidents. We will encourage children to be independent and provide opportunities during the session to go to the toilet, allow children to go to the toilet when the child feels the need to go, assist children with clothing if needed and support and guide them.

In the event that your child soils themselves a staff member will call you to come back to the Centre to change your child as staff members are unable to be absent from the Playschool room for extended periods. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Hygiene Policy

There are a range of hygiene methods used in the Centre to minimise cross infection. The Centre ensures staff and carers wash and dry hands regularly and as required, as well as ensuring children wash their hands on arrival, before and after snack time and after toileting. Toys and equipment are washed and disinfected on a regular basis, facilities are kept clean, hygienic toileting methods are used and we encourage families to keep unwell children at home. Signs are displayed about Playschools hygiene methods throughout the Centre.

Emergencies and Evacuations Policy

The safety of children and staff is paramount. To ensure we can respond swiftly and appropriately in an emergency, and evacuate the children if necessary, we have emergency and evacuation procedures in place. We practice these procedures at least twice a term. The dates are recorded and filed at the Centre. The staff are responsible for the evacuation of children from Playschool.

Emergency Lockdown Procedure

A lockdown occurs when there is a severe natural disaster or threatening situation at the Centre or on the Garrison. All staff and children congregate indoors in the Playschool room or appropriate area in a secure place as far away from windows, doors or situation as possible. All blinds are drawn, windows and doors locked. Whilst the Centre is in lockdown, no phones, computers or other technology is to be used. All mobile phones are to be turned off or put on silent. All staff are to try and remain as calm as possible and initiate a normal group activity that will maintain a calm environment for the adults/children.

Management Committee

A voluntary committee manages the DCC which operates the Playschool. All parents are encouraged to offer their services as a member on the Committee and all parents are invited to attend committee meetings held each month at the Centre. Fresh faces and ideas are an important part in keeping the Centre an interesting and exciting place for everyone.

Grievance Policy and Procedure

Please see the Parent Information Folder or staff for a copy of the Centre Grievance Policy and Procedure.

Additional Information

If you have any questions please feel free to speak to the Playschool Director on (02) 6265 9411 or email playschool@duntrooncommunitycentre.org.au . Additionally you can contact the DCC Committee via email at committee@duntrooncommunitycentre.org.au.

We hope you enjoy your association with Playschool and the Duntroon Community Centre – we look forward to greeting you soon.

Please see the Parent Information Folder or staff for further details regarding any of the Centre policies.

Thank you and welcome to Playschool