Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Welcome to the Soldiers’ Settlement Public School community. Our Preschool provides that important first step in your child’s education, which sets the pathway to learning and brings a sense of belonging to the wider school community. Through ongoing links and transition programs with our K-6 school, your child will be a part of our positive school community. We look forward to an exciting, challenging and rewarding learning journey with your child.

The Preschool Curriculum

We are implementing *Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*. The Framework conveys the highest expectations for all children’s learning from birth to five years and through the transitions to school. It communicates these expectations through the following five Learning Outcomes:

- 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.

Please see the enclosed two-page handout titled ‘Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia Information for Families’ which explains the Early Childhood National Curriculum in further detail. Please note that regular and consistent attendance is important to achieve the best possible educational outcomes for your child.

In the first week that your child comes to preschool we ask that you please bring in a 15cmx10cm photograph of your beautiful family to add to our “Belonging” area. You might even want to include the family pets.

The Preschool Staff

Polly Palaitis – Principal
Elizabeth Wulff - Early Childhood Teacher Mon-Wed
Julie Hayes - Early Childhood Teacher Wed-Fri
Shelley McCarthy - Preschool Learning Support Officer Mon - Fri

Preschool Attendance Pattern

Your child is booked in to either the first half of the week or the second half of the week. Please note that you have accepted a two and a half day position in the preschool. Attendance patterns are as follows:

- Class A: Mondays and Tuesdays 9:00am-3:00pm and Wednesdays 9:00am-11:30am.
- Class B: Wednesdays 12:30pm-3:00pm, and Thursdays and Fridays 9:00am-3:00pm.

*Before and after school care is not available for preschool children.*

Department of Education Policies

The DoE determines our preschool policies. These can be viewed online at: [http://www.matravilss-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/our-school/rules-policies/department-policies](http://www.matravilss-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/our-school/rules-policies/department-policies) and on the classroom laptop. Alternatively, if you wish to view a printed copy of preschool policies, these are available in folders in the parent information area in the classroom.
Fees and money collection

The fees for 2016 are $45.00 per two and a half days. If a term is ten weeks long, the fees for that term will be $450.00 per student. You will be issued with an invoice at the beginning of each term for the term’s fees. These fees are compulsory and go directly to the State Government. The school accepts cash or cheques and parent online payments are also available by going to the school’s website and clicking on the “$” icon and entering the information requested. If paying by cheque please make cheques payable to: Matraville Soldiers’ Settlement Public School. Please pay your fees at the school office. Submit your fees in an envelope marked clearly with your child’s full name and the amount being paid.

A fee reduction of 50% is available for health card holders. If you have a Health Care card you must bring in the original card to the school office where a photocopy of the card will be made for our records.

Should you wish to discuss your family’s situation, it is important that you make the time to call Mrs Polly Palaitis on 9311 1175 about any concerns you may have about your eligibility for fee relief so that an appropriate fee can be arranged for your child’s attendance at preschool.

Communication

When your child begins in the preschool you will be shown your child’s communication pocket. Please remember to check your child’s communication pocket on a daily basis for school/preschool notices and receipts. In the preschool we use several ways of communicating with parents and caregivers, these include the following:

- Daily visual diary on the television which displays photographs of the children’s learning from the previous day (please take the time to have a look)
- School weekly newsletter
- Preschool newsletters
- Daily programming and daily diary on display
- Informal chats
- Meetings with parents/guardians
- Messages written on the daily roll
- Children’s portfolios: a copy of which will be given to each parent at the end of every semester.
- Feedback through surveys.

The latest preschool/school news can be viewed on our school website: http://school.schoolenews.com.au/soldierssettlementps/. Or via the ENews app on your phone.
Sign in/Sign out/Roll
As you arrive each day you must sign in your child and at ‘home time’ you must sign out as you pick up your child. Please check the message column each day for any important messages from staff. If somebody new will be picking up your child please let preschool staff know and remind them that they will require photo identification (such as a driver’s licence) when collecting your child to ensure we are releasing your child into the care of the correct person. Legally we are only permitted to release your child into the care of an adult (18 years or older).

Important Checklist

What to supply to the preschool:
- On your child’s first day please supply a labelled roll-on SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen which will remain at the preschool for your child to reapply during the day. Please check regularly and replace this item when necessary.
- A family photo to display on our belonging wall.
- Each term we ask for parents to donate a box of tissues and wet wipes to the preschool.
- Updated contact details so we can get in contact with you at any time.

What do I need in my child’s bag each day?
Please ensure all items listed below are labelled with your child’s full name.
- Drink bottle containing WATER ONLY (no sweet drinks or fruit juices permitted).
- Wide brimmed hat: Your child should arrive at school wearing their Soldiers’ Settlement school hat. This is a compulsory part of attending the preschool. These hats are available for purchase from the preschool or school uniform shop for $12.00
- A whole set of spare clothes in a plastic bag.
- Fruit/vegie snack box/bag with an ice pack.
- Lunch box/bag with an ice pack (excluding Wednesdays).
  Please remember food should be cut up and ready for your child to eat. You will also need to supply any utensils your child needs to eat their food with. Food provided needs to be healthy and must not contain any traces of nuts (Please refer in the sections below for healthy food options)
- A jacket/jumper in case it gets cold.
- A raincoat: When it is lightly sprinkling we will let children play outside under the many covered areas in our playground. We ask that you always leave a raincoat in your child’s bag to cater for this.
- A backpack large enough for your child to fit all the above equipment in and any artwork they make at preschool.
- NO TOYS: Please support us by discouraging your child/children from bringing toys to school. We ask that toys stay at home as children become very upset when they are lost or broken at school.
Upon Arrival:
- Please assist your child to wash their hands with soap.
- Put sunscreen on your child if it hasn’t already been applied that morning (Please ensure that you leave a labelled roll on screen bottle for your child at the preschool so they can reapply it during the day).
- Please assist your child to place their morning tea, lunch and drink bottles in the appropriate areas.
- Sign your child in.
- You are required to supervise your child until the bell rings at 9am (you are always more than welcome to stay longer, play with your child or talk with staff at any time).

On Departure:
- Come inside the Centre and talk to staff. They will always have something to say about what your child has done that day.
- Sign your child out.
- Check your child’s bag to ensure you have taken all their belongings (please ensure to take their water bottle home each day to be cleaned and refilled for the next day).

Sensible Sun Smart Clothing
- The preschool follows the DoE sun protection policy;
- Please note: that suitable clothing must cover as much skin as possible including the shoulders, back and stomach e.g. collars, covered necklines, sleeves, longer skirts, shorts and trousers. **Singlets and midriff tops are not recommended**;
- Children without hats will remain protected from the sun by borrowing a spare hat from the preschool.

Appropriate Shoes
Please make sure that your child wears shoes with backs or joggers to school. Sorry NO THONGS or CROCS as they can be a tripping hazard and difficult to climb in. Sandals with backs are OK.
Important information regarding fruit/vegie snack (morning tea) and lunch

Fruit/vegie snack and lunch should be in separate, clearly labelled containers with freezer packs to keep food cold. We are asking that you send in healthy food only such as cut-up fruit, vegetables, sandwiches with healthy fillings and cheese or yoghurt. Please do not send in any processed foods, that is, items such as lollies, chips, muesli bars, popcorn and biscuits etc. These items are not permitted. Please note: we are asking that you do not send in any food items containing nut products or oils. Peanut butter, Nutella and nuts are not allowed at school.

We like to encourage healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle. Please remember to send in a drink bottle containing water on a daily basis. We frequently discuss ‘sometimes food’ and ‘all the time food’. ‘Sometimes food’ is food that should be eaten only sometimes like cakes, muffins, pizza, lollies, chips, highly processed foods etc. ‘All the time food’ such as fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, cheese, yoghurt; sandwiches with healthy fillings are good items to send in for morning tea and lunch.

The following information may help you when choosing healthy food to send to preschool. Please keep ‘treats’ for home. This information comes directly from the website: http://www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/gug-family-toc-gug-family-guidelines

Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood - Family Book
Food for Health: Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia

Children and adolescents need sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally.

- Growth should be checked regularly for young children.
- Physical activity is important for children and adolescents.

Enjoy a wide range of nutritious foods

Children and adolescents should be encouraged to:

- eat plenty of vegetables, legumes and fruits
- eat plenty of cereals (including breads, rice, pasta and noodles), preferably wholegrain
- include lean meat, fish, poultry and/or alternatives
- include milk, yoghurts, cheeses and/or alternatives. Reduced-fat milk is not suitable for children under two years, because of their high energy needs, but reduced-fat varieties should be encouraged for older children and adolescents
- choose water as a drink

Care should be taken to:

- limit saturated fat and moderate total fat intake. Low-fat diets are not suitable for infants
- choose foods low in salt
- consume only moderate amounts of sugar and foods containing added sugars.
- care for your child’s food: prepare and store it safely.
Children are more at risk of food poisoning and other infections than healthy adults. Food poisoning can be a serious health risk and further effects may include doctor’s visits, medication costs, time off work for parents to care for their sick child and in most cases, time off school for the child.

**Keep It Cool!**

The most important thing to remember in keeping food safe during storage is to keep potentially hazardous food out of the ‘temperature danger zone’ of 5 degrees Celsius to 60 degrees Celsius. As schools generally do not provide students with access to heating devices, any potentially hazardous food in a school lunch box needs to be kept at a safe temperature of below 5 degrees Celsius.

**Keeping in mind that school lunches usually sit for a few hours before being eaten, below are some simple tips to help ensure food is kept at a safe temperature until the time it will be consumed:**

- use insulated lunch boxes or cooler bags
- keep a frozen water or freezer brick inside the lunch box
- if preparing lunches the night before, keep it in the fridge until leaving for school

Any perishable food such as meat, poultry or egg sandwiches, should be thrown out if not eaten that day.

**Food safety tips**

Parents and caregivers are reminded of a few simple food safety rules to prepare safe and healthy school lunches and avoid the growth and contamination of food poisoning bacteria:

- wash and thoroughly dry hands before handling food. Children should be encouraged to always wash their hands before eating
- wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly
- keep food preparation areas clean and dry
- keep lunch boxes, utensils and reusable water bottles clean and dry.”

*(Food Safety Fact Sheet Lunch box safety The State of Queensland (Queensland Health) 2011)*

**Healthy snack suggestions**

Snacks are an important part of a child’s food intake for energy and nutrients. What children eat is more important than when they eat. Children who snack on lollies and chips may not get all the nutrients needed for good health. Healthy snack suggestions include:

- Fresh and dried fruits, or fruit packed in natural juice
- Yoghurt or cheese (with a freezer block to keep cool)
- Bread, rice cakes or crackers with spread
- Vegetable pieces and dip (with a freezer pack to keep cool).”

*(www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)*

- Sandwiches with healthy fillings

**Please remember we ask that the only drinks to be brought to preschool are a bottle of water each day (and if you wish PLAIN milk). Please keep treats for home/special occasions.**
Guiding Behaviour

We endeavour to guide or teach the children to act thoughtfully. We believe behavioural mistakes are inevitable. Positive strategies are used to guide children’s behaviour in a positive direction. Children are learning and developing in all areas including their behaviour. Specific teachings and assistance is given to the children to help develop their social/behavioural skills further.


Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are a very special event in your child’s life, we are very happy to celebrate this special occasion at preschool. On the day of your child’s birthday celebration please send in a photograph of when they were born, when they were one, when they were two, when they were three and when they were four (if turning five). We then use these photographs to tell their ‘life story’ so far. If you wish, you may send in twenty small cupcakes (please no lolly bags or any other treats). Please remember do not send in any cupcakes containing nut or nut products (including peanut oil). We also love it if the parents can share in this time- please organise this with staff. We would normally ask that you arrive half an hour before the end of the session to share in this special occasion.

Phonecalls

If your child is sick please call the school on 9311 1175 between 8:30am-9:00am to let us know that they will not be attending for the day. Between 9:00am-3:00pm our main priority is the safety, well-being and education of your children- for these reasons we cannot be involved in long telephone conversations during these times. In cases of emergency or to let us know that you are running late please call the school on 9311 1175.

If your child is unwell

Please keep your child at home if they have a temperature, are contagious, are sick or are coughing and sneezing. If your child has a contagious illness please remember to phone the school and inform a preschool staff member of their condition as information may need to be relayed to all parents and staff. On returning to preschool they will require a doctor’s certificate to ensure they are safe to return to school. The doctor’s certificate should state that they are no longer contagious and are fit and healthy to return to the preschool program.
Medication

Children should not attend preschool if they have a temperature, are contagious or unwell. Medication cannot be administered at school unless in the original packaging. Prescribed medication is usually sent on a daily basis and in a pharmacy labelled container detailing the student's name and the prescribed dosage. An administration of medication form is to be completed by the parent/caregiver.

Supply and storage of prescribed medication and ‘consumables’

- Secure delivery and storage of prescribed medication is important for the safety of the student requiring prescribed medication as well as for the safety and welfare of other students in the school.

Supply of prescribed medication and consumables

- Parents are responsible for supplying their child’s prescribed medication and any associated equipment needed for the administration, which is replaced after use (i.e. consumables). These items need to be provided in a timely way.

Prescribed medication is usually sent on a daily basis and in a pharmacy labelled container detailing the student’s name and the prescribed dosage.

- In some cases the principal and parent may agree that it is more practical for the parent to send a week’s supply of prescribed medication.
- The parent/caregiver needs to provide written instructions about any special requirements for storage indicated by their medical practitioner or pharmacist.
- If the parent is unable to deliver the prescribed medication to school, it is advisable that a responsible person, who is not a staff member, be nominated by the parent to transport the prescribed medication to the school as agreed.

It is the role of parents to:

- cooperate with the school on student health matters
- support their child’s health
- inform the school of the health needs of the child when they enrol or when health conditions develop or change
- liaise with the child’s medical practitioner about the implications of the child’s health condition for their schooling
- where medication is prescribed, ask the medical practitioner whether the medication is available in a form which minimises or eliminates the need to provide the medication during the school day
- convey all relevant advice and information from the medical practitioner to the school
- complete a written request form (supplied by the school) for the school to administer prescribed medication or for other support
- provide prescribed medication and ‘consumables’ for administration by the school in a timely way and as agreed with the principal
- collaborate with the school in planning to support the child’s health needs at school including updating information and reviewing plans.
Asthma
If your child suffers from asthma, before beginning in the preschool you must provide the preschool with an Asthma Action Plan from either the hospital or your doctor. It must also have a close up photo of your child’s face attached. You must bring your child’s asthma medication (puffer), as well as a spacer in a clear lunch box. All items must be clearly labeled. Please check expiry dates before giving to the preschool.

Anaphylactic Reaction
Where a student is known to be at risk of an anaphylactic reaction, an individual health care plan is developed. Parents will need to provide information from their child’s medical practitioner, including an ASCIA Anaphylaxis Action Plan. This information will be used in the development of an individual health care plan. This Anaphylaxis Action Plan and the child’s medication must be provided to the principal before beginning in the preschool.
Action Plans for Anaphylaxis
Translated information and forms

Grievances
Any complaints are to be directed to the School Principal Mrs Polly Palaitis phone: 9311 1175.

The School Principal, Mrs Polly Palaitis is the:
- Nominated Supervisor
- Educational Leader and
- Responsible person in charge
- Under regulation 286 this preschool is taken to comply with regulations 107, 108, 115.
- NSW Regulatory Authority - NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate
  Phone number: 02 9716 2100 or 1800 619 113 (toll free)
Soldiers’ Settlement Public School Preschool Daily Routine

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

Parents asked to apply broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen before arriving at preschool. For those who forget broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen is available to apply as they arrive.

9:00am- 10.45am     Children wash hands with soap upon arrival.
Children unpack water bottle, morning tea/lunch.
Outdoor Play
Progressive Morning Tea during this time

10.45am-11.00am     Pack away outdoors
Transition to indoor play

11.00am-11.25am     Group / Morning Meeting

11.25am-12.45pm     Indoor play

12.45pm-1.00pm     Pack away
Transition to lunch (hand washing, collecting lunch/water)

1.00pm-1.45pm     Lunch
Verandah activities

1.45pm- 2.00pm     Pack away

2.00pm-3.00pm     Indoor activities including relaxation, music/dance, stories and play

3:00pm        Home time / Daily staff meeting

Wednesday Timetable

Morning Session
Parents asked to apply broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen before arriving at preschool. For those who forget broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen is available to apply as they arrive.

9:00-10.00am     Outdoor Play
Progressive morning tea

10.00am-10.25am     Group time/Morning Meeting

10.25am-11.30am     Indoor Play
Pack away

11.30am        Home time
Preschool staff meeting between sessions 11.30am-12.30pm

Afternoon Session
Parents asked to apply broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen before arriving at preschool. For those who forget broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen is available to apply as they arrive.

12:30pm-1:30pm  Indoor Program
1:30pm-1:50pm  Group/Afternoon Meeting
1:50pm-3.00pm  Outdoor Play
               Progressive afternoon tea
               Pack away
3.00pm   Home-time

The preschool program is flexible and subject to change depending on what is happening on the day.

If you have any questions or concerns please don’t hesitate to talk to the preschool staff.

We look forward to a wonderful year with your children filled with amazing learning opportunities.

Polly Palaitis
Principal

Julie Hayes and Elizabeth Wulff
Early Childhood Educators