



# WENTWORTH FALLS PRESCHOOL

ABN: 62 959 946 758

## Family Handbook

Our Family Handbook provides important information you need to know to ensure the best possible start to quality education and care at Wentworth Falls Preschool.

Wentworth Falls Preschool acknowledge the traditional owners of our play spaces – the Gundungarra and Darug People, and pay our respects to their Elders both past, present and emerging.

Wentworth Falls Preschool extends a warm welcome to you and your family. You've chosen to allow us to share in supporting, nurturing and nourishing your child during these important preschool years, and we look forward to setting out on this journey together. Your child and family will become valued members of our community-based Preschool and we hope that this will be a happy, educational and socially expansive experience for your child and family.

You've chosen a Preschool that values the role of play and recognises the importance of relationships in children's early years. We follow the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) which has play at its foundation, and gives children opportunities to explore, discover and understand the world around them, and to communicate, imagine and create, all in a play-based way. We endeavour to instil a love of learning. As each child matures and their strengths, range of interests and confidence grow, we tailor our program to extend their interests and provide achievable challenges to promote further development.

This booklet has been prepared to help you understand how the preschool works and the responsibilities we each have in this partnership. Please take the time to read it and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask Tammie or any of our staff members. Most importantly, talk to our teachers and educators about your child's interests, aspirations and development. We encourage you to embrace the vital role you play as your child's primary educator and to work closely with us to facilitate the building of solid foundations for your child.



## **Service Information**

Wentworth Falls Preschool educates and cares for children aged 3 to 5 years. We are open from 8.00am to 3.30pm Monday to Friday and close during all school holidays, which are the same as the NSW Department of Education schools.

## **Contact Information**

Phone: 02 4757 1044

Email: [wfallspreschool@bigpond.com](mailto:wfallspreschool@bigpond.com)

Website: [www.wentworthfallspreschool.com](http://www.wentworthfallspreschool.com)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/wentworthfallspreschool/](https://www.facebook.com/wentworthfallspreschool/)

**Director:** Tammie Hughes

**Assistant Director:** Fenella Cios

**Educational Leader:** Amanda Bowers

## **Management Committee**

The Preschool is a community-based, non-profit organisation run by a volunteer Management Committee, which is made up of parents/carers of children attending the centre and interested community members. The Management Committee consists of four office-bearers (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) and a number of ordinary members. All of these people are elected at an Annual General Meeting in March. By law, community preschools cannot operate without such a committee so it is vital that parents/carers be involved either on the Committee or by attending the General Meetings. You do not need to be a Committee Member to attend meetings. Meetings are held every term, and ALL parents are encouraged to attend.

The Management Committee is responsible for the overall performance of the Preschool. They determine the Preschool's aims and objectives, set the strategic directions of the organisation with the Director/Nominated Supervisor, ensure staff and educators are employed in accordance with industrial obligations, ensure compliance with legal obligations, ensure the ongoing financial viability of the service, monitor and evaluate the Preschool's performance against the strategic plan, enhance the profile of the service in the community and recruit and orient new Committee members.

Details of current Management Committee office-bearers are displayed in the foyer. If you would like to find out more about participating in the Management Committee, please approach any Committee member, Tammie or Fenella.



## Our Educators

Our Service is made up of a team of high-quality professional teachers and educators who are committed to and passionate about early childhood education and care. Our staff promote the human rights, safety and wellbeing of all children and consider and respect the diverse backgrounds and needs of children. We create an environment that promotes and enables children's participation and is welcoming, culturally safe and inclusive for all children and their families.



### **Tammie**

Educator  
Director/Nominated Supervisor

Diploma in Children Services  
Senior First Aid  
Asthma & Anaphylaxis Training



### **Fenella**

Educator – Teacher  
Assistant Director/Nominated Supervisor

Bachelor of Education  
Justice of the Peace  
Senior First Aid  
Asthma & Anaphylaxis Training



### **Amanda**

Educator  
Educational Leader

Diploma in Children Services  
Senior First Aid  
Asthma & Anaphylaxis Training



### **Danielle**

Educator

Diploma in Children Services  
Senior First Aid  
Asthma & Anaphylaxis Training



### **Lisa**

Educator

Trainee  
Certificate 3 in Children Services  
Asthma & Anaphylaxis Training



### **Georgia**

Educator

Trainee  
Certificate 3 in Children Services

## Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct establishes the standards for all employees of our Service. Employees are committed to adhere to the ethical responsibilities of early childhood professionals outlined in the Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics. The values that underpin our work ethic include equality, respect, integrity and responsibility.

## Our Commitment to Child Safety

Our Service is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children is maintained at all times whilst being educated and cared for by educators and staff at Wentworth Falls Preschool. We promote a child safe environment that minimises the risk to all children in our care from all types of abuse, harm and neglect.

We understand our responsibilities and statutory duty of care to adopt and comply with the National Principles of Child Safe Organisations and the Reportable Conduct Scheme to build our capacity as an organisation to prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse.

Our staff carry out their responsibilities as mandatory reporters as required by law under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection Act 1998) and maintain up to date with knowledge of child protection law and child protection training. We have a zero tolerance for inappropriate behaviour towards children and any breach of child protection law. Any allegation or concern will be responded to promptly by management. We request that you contact our Director if you have any concerns.

### **National Quality Framework**

Our Service complies with the Australian Government's National Quality Framework (NQF) which consists of the legislative framework of the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations, the National Quality Standard and a rigorous assessment and rating system.

Our educational program and curriculum are based on the Australian Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). We regularly self-assess our practices against the National Quality Standard and strive for continuous improvement through our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The QIP assists our service to identify quality aspects of care we are already providing and assists in developing future goals for further improvement. Families are welcome to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.

We exceed the National Regulations for educator to child ratios across our Service to ensure adequate supervision is provided for all children. Ratios are calculated across the service (not by individual rooms). This provides us with flexibility to respond to children's interests and needs at different times during the day.

At Wentworth Falls Preschool we encourage children to be responsible for their own learning through choices in experiences, interests and routine. We use conversations, actions and play as the basis for teaching which involves the children being partners in teaching by seeking out ideas, opinions, thoughts and questions. We encourage children in promoting their independence and self-help skills by assisting within the routine and involving the children in interest-based projects to further enhance their learning and knowledge.

We value children and family input and encourage family involvement in order to gather a comprehensive and holistic view of the child. We know that children learn effectively through play and educators who are diligent in their responsiveness to each child support this. Applying strong intentional teaching practices provide the children with an authentic and meaningful learning environment that challenges, supports and nurtures a child's development.

If we as educators have any areas of concern about your child's development, we will inform you and share our observations and advise of follow up assistance e.g. speech therapy. We understand this may be a sensitive topic and it is always your decision to follow up intervention. Educators are willing to discuss any aspect of learning and development with parents and support discussions with allied health professionals.

The environment and daily program are designed to build upon the curiosity, wonder and richness that children bring to preschool. Children have the opportunity to engage in a rich array of experiences and activities. The learning spaces are fun, exciting, spontaneous, hands-on, comforting, relaxing and challenging, providing opportunities to explore, discover, investigate and create with the support of friends and Educators.

In correlation with families we will create a range of short and long-term goals and objectives for each child at the beginning of the child's enrolment and which will be revisited during the course of the year that we will use in programs and observations. We strongly encourage communication between families and educators to ensure continuity in what we are delivering to your child and acknowledge that the role of the educator is to work in partnership with families, children's first, and most influential educators.

### **Communication**

We work in partnership with you and your family. We support and encourage communication with your child's educators about your child's unique needs and their general enjoyment of their day at our Service. Everybody has a preferred time and method of communication. Sometimes, mornings and afternoons can be a little rushed, and not the best time to discuss your child's progress. You are encouraged to talk to your child's teachers to arrange to meet at a mutually convenient time.

## **Enrolment conditions**

### **Cancellation of enrolment**

Two weeks written notice must be given to cancel a booking and any outstanding fees must be paid.

### **Child Absence**

In the event of absence for any reason, including illness, exclusion of non-immunised children during a vaccine preventable disease outbreak (as cited by the Health Department), or the taking of holidays outside the Preschools normal holiday closures, fees are still payable. Parents/carers are asked to notify the Preschool if their child is going to be absent.

### **Centre Closure**

Fees are not charged for public holidays, educator development days or school holidays. In the event of an unforeseeable incident such as a natural disaster (bushfire), extreme weather conditions (including snow), Incident/Emergency in the community, fees are payable.



## Service Closing Time and Late Collection Fees

Please be aware our Service and program closes at 3:30pm. In accordance with National Regulations and licensing, we are not permitted to have children in the service after 3:30pm. A late fee is incurred for children collected after 3.30pm. The fee is \$25 per child for every 15 minutes or part thereof and will be added to your next account. The late fee is strictly adhered to, as two staff members are required to remain at the Service until all children are collected. If we are unable to contact either the parent or a person nominated by the parent on the enrolment form to arrange collection of the child/children within an hour of the Service closing, we may need to contact the Police or other authorities to take responsibility of your child.

## Payment Method

At the beginning of each term families will receive a statement of their account showing the terms fees (Including Annual Enrolment & Membership Fees + Equipment & Maintenance Fees). Fees may be paid in full at the beginning of the term or fortnightly during the term. Fees must always be paid a fortnight in advance of the current week. Details of an individual's account are confidential and are stored appropriately. The Preschool's preferred method of payment is via electronic funds transfer into the Preschool's nominated account.

Preschool bank details are below:

**Bank:** Commonwealth Bank

**Branch:** Katoomba

**Account Name:** Wentworth Falls Preschool

**BSB:** 062559

**Account No:** 00902397

**Payment Reference Details:** Invoice number or enrolled child's name,  
i.e. Family name / First name



**Important Note:** *If the payment reference details are not included as above, the correct allocation of the payment cannot be guaranteed. In such instances the Preschool shall not accept any responsibility or liability for lost funds.*

## Overdue Fees

Our Preschool operates as a non-profit service and the fee is set as low as possible in order to make Preschool accessible to as many children as possible. The fee is based on the assumption that all families will pay their accounts promptly and in full – otherwise fees would have to be raised dramatically to compensate for the outstanding debts. Families are urged to ensure that their accounts are paid regularly.

All accounts must be settled prior to the end of each term to ensure a place is held for the coming term. All accounts must be at a nil balance to enrol for a further term. If families experience difficulties paying their Preschool account, they are urged to speak to Tammie or Fenella. All discussions concerning fees and financial matters are confidential.

## **Casual bookings**

We offer casual bookings, if we have places available on the day for currently enrolled children. Please speak to Tammie or Fenella if you require a place. You can also request a place in advance, and we will let you know as soon as possible if or when a space becomes available for that day.

## **Waiting list**

If you would like to increase your child/ren's permanent sessions but there are no permanent vacancies, your child/ren will be placed on a waiting list until a position becomes available. Positions will be allocated in order of application.

## **Service Policies and Procedures**

You will find a copies of our Service policies and procedures in the office. We expect our staff and families to adhere to our policies and procedures at all times to ensure we maintain compliance and abide by the National Law and National Regulations. Educators cannot make exceptions for individuals unless the Nominated Supervisor or Management do so on account of serious and/or unusual circumstances. We are constantly reviewing our policies and procedures and ask for staff and family participation to ensure our policies and procedures adhere to the needs of our families and meet required regulations. Your involvement helps us to improve our Service and may lead us to change our policies and procedures. If you would like a copies of particular policies or procedures, we are happy to email or print copies for you.

## **Preparing for your child's first day**

Orientation is an important start for your child and family to connect to our Service. We encourage each child to attend our Service in the company of a family member before they start their first day with us. This gives you and your child the opportunity to gain an understanding of our program, the lay out of the room, where to put your child's belongings, provide teachers and educators with additional information about your child and how we can best support their transition and settling in period. Please contact Tammie to arrange suitable times and days for visits. If your child is reluctant to attend, please discuss this with their assigned educator so that they can develop strategies with you to support the transition from home to the Service. You are welcome to take photos of your child in our environment to show and discuss at home with them.



## **Arrival and Departure**

Each day, you must sign your child in upon arrival and sign out upon departure and note the best contact number. We are required by legislation to maintain our attendance record at all times. This record may be used in the event of an emergency situation at the Service. We are flexible about arrival and departure times as we know that it is difficult for parents/carers with young families to adhere to a strict timetable.

We recommend that parents/carers endeavour to arrive before 9:30am to ensure that your child can participate in the morning rituals that foster the child's sense of membership to his or her group. You are welcome to collect your child any time that suits you, before 3:30pm. Please remember to encourage your child to wash his/her hands on arrival and departure to reduce the risk of cross-infection.

## **Authorisation to collect children**

Our staff have a duty of care to your child and will only allow your child to be released into the care of either a parent, guardian or an authorised nominee as listed on your child's enrolment record. If your child needs to be collected by another person for some reason please telephone the Preschool and inform a staff member of the full name of the person collecting your child. Our staff may ask to view photo identification of the adult collecting your child from preschool to confirm their identity. All people authorised to collect your child must be a minimum 18 years of age. They must provide photo I.D. the first time they collect your child on your behalf, unless you introduce them in advance in person, to your child's educators.

## **The first day/week**

The first day in a new service is a big step for you and your child. Please don't be alarmed if your child experiences some separation anxiety. This is normal and our experienced educators will assist you and your child through this transition period. We encourage parents to stay as long as they like during the morning drop off to help your child settle into an activity. There may be tears and extra tight hugs when saying goodbye for the first few weeks but there are always cuddles, reassurance and genuine care from educators for both the children and their families. We offer support through phone calls during the day and open communication.



## **Saying goodbye**

Ideally, your child will be settled at an activity before you leave, however some children find it hard to settle until their parents have gone. Please tell your child when you are leaving as they may become upset if they haven't had the opportunity to say goodbye. This will gain trust from the child, not only in you but in the educator, who is reassuring your child about their day and when you will return. Rest assured; we'll contact you if your child becomes distressed.



# What do I need to bring?

## Backpack

For independence, we work towards all children being able to recognise and open their own bag. You can help by allowing them to be involved in selecting their bag and taking ownership of it. Please ensure it is large enough to hold all their belongings and is clearly labelled.

## Spare clothing

Every now and then, accidents occur, and it may be necessary for your child to get changed into a fresh set of clothes. We also engage in lots of messy and sensory play. Please include a complete change of clothes every day which can stay in your child's bag...just in case!

## Warm coat or waterproof jacket, beanie and gloves

Our mountain climate is very unpredictable! Even sunny mornings can turn chilly and bleak in the afternoon.

## Enclosed Shoes

We request that children have some enclosed shoes in their bag if they are wearing sandals. This will allow us to utilise the bush area next door.

## Drink bottle

A labelled drink bottle is required every day for water. Children are able to refill their drink bottle when necessary throughout the day. We always provide water and cups, but a drink bottle is a great start to school readiness.

## Sun hat

A protective sun hat (either your Wentworth Falls Preschool hat, a broad brimmed or legionnaire hat) must be worn every day when playing outside for protection against the sun. Please make sure to label it and include it in your child's bag every day regardless of the weather conditions.

## Morning tea and lunch

Children are asked to bring their morning tea and lunch in a clearly labelled plastic/metal lunch box with a lid that they can open. As all lunches are placed into the fridge so **please do not send it in a cooler bag**, as these are not effective in the fridges. We try to encourage healthy food choices at Preschool. Preschool aims to greatly reduce the amount of rubbish generated each day and one way of meeting this aim is to reduce the packaging used in lunches and snacks. To achieve

this goal, lunches and snacks should be brought in reusable containers, avoiding the use of plastic and paper bags, plastic wrap and other disposable pre-packaging.



## **Birthday and celebration foods**

Birthdays are always a special event for the majority of children and can be celebrated at Preschool. We also appreciate that not all families celebrate birthdays. If your child's birthday falls on a preschool day, or another day, you are very welcome to bring something to share to celebrate. Cupcakes are the preferred 'birthday cake' option because they require minimal handling and therefore reduce the risk of cross infection. If your child has an intolerance or allergic reaction to foods, please send some special treats that can be safely stored in the cupboard, fridge or freezer, for use during these celebrations.



## **Toys from home**

We know that children love to bring a favourite or special toy to preschool to show their friends or educators. We respect this; however, children will be given some guidelines on the use of their toys at preschool.

It may be that children will be able to spend some time playing with their special toy before returning it to their locker or to the office for safekeeping. However, possessions from home can be the cause of children becoming upset about ownership or that they have become lost or broken. For some older children this can be

a valuable life lesson, but some children will find losing or breaking a toy very difficult. We will be guided by the decisions you and your child make about this. We also recognise that when some children are first settling in, they may need to bring a special toy or comforter with them to provide reassurance. Finally, your child might take small pieces of equipment and other little treasures home without your knowledge until you unpack their bag or empty their pockets. If this happens, please bring them back without embarrassment.

## **Clothing**

Parents are encouraged to dress children in clothing that gives protection from the expected weather conditions for the time of the year and allows full participation in the education program. Children are encouraged to wear old play clothes to Preschool, which will not cause concern when they become dirty, paint stained or the recipient of any number of small disasters that may befall their clothing during the course of a normal Preschool day. Although every effort is made to protect your preschooler's clothing (aprons etc.), we recommend your child wear clothes that are not of high emotional or monetary value because accidents do occur when children are learning and exploring. Children are to be dressed in loose fitting, closely woven clothing that covers as much skin as possible including the shoulders, back and stomach. Tops with elbow length sleeves, and if possible, collars and knee length or longer style shorts and skirts are best to ensure proper sun protection. We encourage children to wear flat shoes, secured to the foot, suitable for outdoor play. Thongs are not secure enough for fast running and changing direction, and are not considered appropriate footwear. During the colder months the building is heated to a comfortably warm level, with long sleeves still necessary inside. Children are NOT to wear expensive jewellery or carry personal money.

## Craft Resources

Please bring along ice cream containers, little boxes, wire, feathers, beads and buttons, costume jewellery, tape, string, ribbon and yarn, old keys, small machines that don't work, corks and bottle caps, leather remnants, and natural objects such as, shells, sponges, small seed pods, wood scraps, baskets, cardboard pieces: all kinds and shapes (but not with writing or print), paper of different weights, textures and colours, nails, screws and bolts, small mirrors, etc. These are great materials for us to put out for the children to explore and be creative with.



## Behaviour Guidance

We encourage children to engage in cooperative and pro-social behaviour. We give children the opportunity to self-regulate their behaviours during play to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Educators follow a Behaviour Guidance Policy that extends across the whole Service giving consistency of expectation in all rooms. We use a positive approach to guiding children's behaviour to help them develop a respect for others, for property and respect for self.

## Rest and Sleep

Children's rest and sleep are crucial to their healthy development and wellbeing. In today's contemporary, fast paced society, stress is becoming an ever-increasing problem for young children. Our educators provide an environment and routines that are flexible in supporting children who do not require a sleep and those who seek rest and relaxation throughout the day. Our educators work in partnership with families with the aim of information exchange and development of consistent and appropriate children's sleep and rest behaviours. Please discuss your child's rest needs with your child's educators.

## Sustainability

Our Service is passionate about sustainability. We believe in supporting children to appreciate and care for the environment by embedding sustainable practice into the daily operation of our Service. In order to empower our sustainability program, we emphasise



children's ability to make a difference, enabling them to learn and appreciate their environment in an engaging, fun and exciting manner. We do this by engaging children in discussion about sustainable practice, encouraging them to participate in a recycling program, reducing energy and conserving water. We aim to provide children with the skills and knowledge required to become environmentally responsible.

## **Family Photos**

We encourage you to send photos of your family to use in each of our rooms at the beginning of your child's enrolment. This is a strong and valuable tool in our environment for your child to connect to, feel that they and their family are valued and that their family is as much a part of the Service, even if they are not always there. If you would like to bring in a photo, or a couple of photos that represent your family, we would love to add it to our learning environment.

## **Family Participation and Feedback**

Our Service has an Open-Door Policy and actively seeks and encourages families to be involved in the Service. We welcome and encourage the involvement of all parents/families at our Service. Your ideas, experiences and skills are greatly valued and will enable us to extend each child's interests, abilities and knowledge.

## **Sun Safety**

Our Service implements a combination of sun protection measures to ensure the health and safety of your child at all times. We monitor the UV index levels daily and schedule outdoor activities when levels are safe. Our outdoor environment provides shade for play experiences and we conduct regular risk assessments to ensure the play space and equipment is safe for children. Children must wear hats and appropriate clothing when outside. Educators will encourage children, including by way of modelling behaviour, to avoid excessive exposure to the sun and to wear suitable sunscreen (at least SPF 30+). Where a child requires a particular type/brand of sunscreen other than that supplied by the Preschool, parents/carers will be requested to provide sunscreen for their child. This sunscreen is to be kept in a secured location for the term. Please do not leave sunscreen in your child's bag.

If for some reason a child cannot wear sunscreen, they will be required to cover up with a long-sleeved top with a collar or high neck and long pants and wear an appropriate hat.



## **Preschool Hats**

Preschool hats are available to purchase for \$12 each and come in two different sizes. To purchase one, please speak with Tammie or Fenella.

## Bush Kindy

Bush Kindy is an approach to preschool education derived from “Forest Schools” found all over Europe. It aims to help children connect to nature. Nature play has many recognised benefits including physical benefits, improvements in wellbeing, cognitive benefits, resilience, cooperation, imagination and self-regulation.

Bush walks, picnic and nature play all comprise our “Bush Kindy” program. The philosophy behind these learning experiences involves helping to teach children to assess risk, build resilience and become independent. We understand that these types of activities may cause you concern for your child’s safety. Please note that the preschool has a completed risk assessment and the safety of the children is our priority.



## Special events

Our Service organises special events throughout the year. We will communicate these to families in a timely manner. We encourage parent input in all aspects of these events. Some of these include fundraising, incursion, excursions, celebrations and information sessions.



## When should I not send my child to Preschool?

Our Service is a busy and demanding day for the bodies and minds of our children. We are not equipped to care for sick children; however, we will do everything we can to comfort a child who has become sick whilst in our care. To minimise the spread of infections and diseases, and maintain a healthy environment for all children, educators and staff, we implement recommendations developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)- Staying Healthy in Childcare. Please monitor your child's health and do not bring your child to the Service if they are suffering from an infectious disease/illness or are generally unwell.

If your child becomes ill whilst at the Service, we will contact you or an authorised nominee to collect your child. Your child should not attend the Service if they have had paracetamol within 24 hours for a temperature. Children who are on antibiotics are to be kept away from the Service for the first 24 hours to allow the child to rest and the risk of spreading the infection to decrease. If your child has been vomiting or had diarrhoea, they will be excluded for 48 hours. For certain illnesses, a medical clearance certificate may be required before your child returns.

### Immunisation

The Public Health Act 2010 requires all families to provide an Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) for their child prior to enrolment in an early childhood education and care service. The immunisation history statement must show that each enrolled child is up to date with immunisations for their age. The relevant vaccinations are those under the National Immunisation Program (NIP), which covers the vaccines usually administered before age five. These vaccinations must be recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR). The only unimmunised children who can be enrolled in child care (after 1 January 2018) are those who are on a recognised catch-up schedule or those who are unimmunised due to medical reasons as described in the Australian Immunisation Handbook. Parents must provide an AIR Immunisation History Form or an AIR Immunisation Medical Exemption Form upon enrolment. In the case of an outbreak of any vaccine preventable disease, management will contact families as soon as possible. We ask that families immediately inform our Service if someone in their family is diagnosed with an infectious disease to help minimise the risk to other children, families and educators. We are legally required to notify the Public Health Unit of any cases of vaccine preventable diseases occurring at our Service.

### Finally....

Thank you for choosing our beautiful Preschool and taking the time to read our handbook. We trust that it will be a handy reference guide for you during your child's journey at Wentworth Falls Preschool. Please feel welcome to discuss any issues with our educators.

