



# MT WARNING COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL



**2024**

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## IF YOU READ NOTHING ELSE IN THIS BOOKLET...

- Mt Warning Community Preschool relies on its members to operate successfully
- School hours are 8am – 3.30pm, note late charges apply for late pickup.
- Children need to come with appropriate 'sun safe' clothing and a nutritious lunch.
- You may be entitled to a subsidised fee – please check with the preschool.
- Fees are invoiced with payment options to be paid 2 weeks in advance.

## ABOUT OUR PRESCHOOL

Mt Warning Community Preschool was incorporated in 1985 and is one of the many community preschools in the Tweed Valley. As a community-based preschool it is operated as a not-for-profit service, which means any profits go straight back into the service for ongoing enrichment of resources and maintenance of the building and grounds.

The service is managed by a voluntary Management Committee comprising of families and community members who are elected to their positions each year at an Annual General Meeting and are responsible for all major legal, financial, employment, planning and policy making decisions. The Management Committee hold meetings throughout the year which all members of the preschool can attend.

The Preschool employs qualified early childhood educators and collaborates with diverse community groups to support the children's wellbeing. Our Director (Nominated Supervisor) Ness Bryant, has worked with our preschool since 2018 and previously was one of our parents when her two children attended. Many of our educators had children who attended the preschool, or attended as a child themselves!

Our preschool caters to children between the ages of 3 to 5 years of age.

## HOURS AND TIMES OF OPERATION

Our preschool operates in line with the ordinary NSW public school terms and closes for NSW school holidays and public holidays.

Children's hours are 8am to 3.30pm Monday to Friday.

***We strive to be responsive to the needs of families and understand social learning between mixed ages can be a positive experience,*** however we suggest:

Monday and Friday are for younger children

3 yr.

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday are for older children

4 / 5 yr.

## FEES & CHARGES

Whilst the Management Committee may change rates throughout the year, generally the preschool strives to set rates once each year. Any changes must be communicated to families two weeks prior to fee changes.

Fees are invoiced at the beginning of each term and must be paid *fortnightly in advance* if you elect fortnightly payments.

If you pay the whole term's fees in a lump sum you will also be expected to pay *by the first day of the term* your child attends.

The first fortnight's fees must be paid *no later than* the first day of your child's start to preschool.

	Standard Daily Rate	Affordable Preschool funding (2 fee-free days)*	Daily fee with Start strong fee relief
Full fee	\$50	\$0	\$30
Equity fee	\$40	\$0	\$15

\*Conditions Apply: If families are accessing *Affordable Preschool Fee Relief* funding from another NSW education and care service, they will not be able to access the Affordable Preschool fee relief.

The *NSW Department of Education* Start Strong program provides 'Start Strong: Fee Relief' funding to provide opportunities for all children to access quality preschool programs. To be eligible for funding under Start Strong Affordable Preschool, a child will need to be:

- at least 3 years old on or before 31 July in that preschool year and not in compulsory schooling; and
- attending an eligible early childhood education program.

Families who authorise our service to use Affordable Preschool funding will be able to access two fee-free days.

Although all children aged 3 years and above are eligible for funding, services need to consider priority of access guidelines when making enrolment decisions. Families will need to sign a

Declaration form to confirm they are only accessing the Fee Relief funding for Mt Warning Community Preschool.

Under the NSW *START STRONG Funding* guidelines, we are able to pass on further fee relief to all families as a two-tiered daily discount- Equity and Non Equity.

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR EQUITY FEE ASSISTANCE**

“Services are required to give equal priority of access to:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- children from low-income families (Health Care Card or Pension Card will need to be provided)
- children with disability or additional needs.
- children who are at least 3 years old on or before 31 July in that preschool year with English language needs
- children who are at risk of significant harm (from a child protection perspective”

(NSW Department of Education, 2024).

### **Other Fees and Charges**

Annual Membership	\$20.00 (every year per family)
Enrolment fee	\$35 (per child)
Occasional Days	Standard fee: \$50/40
& Temporary	What families are charged: Equity \$15.00
Enrolments (for visitors/one off days)	Non-Equity \$30.00
Late pick-up (3.30 pm onwards)	\$37 after 3.30pm then \$1 per minute thereafter

Fees can be transferred via Internet Banking, or paid in cash. Please note this to our Director if you will be paying in cash.

Bank Details:	<b>Bank:</b>	<b>St George Branch, Murwillumbah</b>
	<b>BSB:</b>	<b>112-879</b>
	<b>Account N°:</b>	<b>046847784</b>

### **LATE FEES**

We understand life can be not always go to plan, so we encourage families to please contact us as soon as possible if they know they will be late.

In emergency situations, families will not be charged late fees.

## MAKE UP DAYS

Make Up days are offered for children who are absent on their enrolled days. We ask you to notify us every time your child is going to be absent from their enrolled preschool day as a courtesy. As non-attendance on an enrolled day will still be charged a fee there will be no additional charge for attending preschool on a Make Up day.

- Make up days are only possible if your fees are up to date i.e. two weeks in advance
- Make up days are only offered if a place is available

## OCCASIONAL DAYS

If you wish your child to attend on a day they are not enrolled, you may request an Occasional Day. Occasional Days are only available by arrangement in advance and if a place is available on the day. Your fees must be up to date for a placement to be offered.

## DROP OFF & PICK-UP

Punctuality is very important. If you arrive late to collect your child, a late fee will be applied.

(Please refer to the Late Fees)

Every parent/carer must sign their child in immediately on arrival and departure at the end of the day. Once your child is signed off in the afternoon staff are no longer responsible for the supervision of your child.

Children must be brought to the preschool and collected by a responsible adult (over the age of 18 years).

If another person is to collect your child, you must nominate that person on the sign-on sheet upon drop-off or notify with a phone call through the day.

A child will only be allowed to leave the centre with a person who has been authorised by you as an authorised person on their enrolment form, or nominated by telephone in a call to the preschool prior to collection. Proof of ID will be required.

## COMMUNICATION

To stay informed on current events and to access parenting information please read the notice board, check your emails for newsletters, our Facebook page and website, and remember to check your child's labelled communication tray located above the sign in/out area.

## OWNA

Our preschool is transitioning to the digital platform OWNA. All enrolment information, policies, forms, invoicing, and newsletters will be accessible through OWNA. Parents/carers will be sign in/out their children through OWNA. Any family who prefers to use a paper-based form/sign in etc. will be respected and a non-digital alternative provided.

## CHILDREN'S WELLBEING

Our philosophy, values, curriculum, and pedagogy are centred on nurturing the wellbeing of the child- in mind, body, heart, and spirit. We do this through:

- Promoting children's engagement in diverse mindful and active learning through play.
- Promote a positive environment which reflects cultural and family values.
- Strengthening children's connection to country, Indigenous Australian perspectives, and culture and our multiple communities.
- Promote lifelong enjoyment of physical and mindful experiences.
- Limit time spent engaging in digital literacy and ensure interacting with digital technology is empowering and creative.
- Encourage communication with families about social and emotional health, physical activity, gross motor skills development, and fundamental movement skills development.
- Advocate for children's voices to co-create our daily programme, ensuring our curriculum is based on the Australian Government's *Early Years Learning Framework*, Early Childhood Australia's *Code of Ethics*, and the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority's [ACECQA] *National Quality Framework*.
- Ensure all aspects of the service are aligned to ACECQA's National Quality Standard and we encourage all members & staff to contribute to our mandatory *Quality Improvement Plan*.

## RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN [RAP]

Our preschool has been developing an ongoing RAP since 2020. We are committed to ensuring First Nation voices and perspectives are weaved throughout our programme and practices.

We invite all members of our community preschool and wider community, with strong focus on collaboration with First Nation families and communities to reflect and weave culturally competent practices throughout our curriculum.

## WHAT WILL YOUR CHILD NEED EACH DAY?

Your child will need to bring each day:

- A bag or backpack large enough to hold all belongings and suitable to hang on a peg.
- A broad brimmed hat...caps do not offer viable protection.
- Shoes or sandals
- Spare clothes especially if they love water and play
- Morning tea & Lunch – packed in a lunch box that your child can easily manage by themselves

If your child requires sunscreen and/or insect repellent, please advise the director on enrolling and staff will direct you on the day where to store these items.

## NUTRITION

We encourage nutritious food because a child's diet has a significant impact on their behavioural/neurological development, general wellbeing, and energy levels.

Lollies, fruit drinks, chocolates, chewing gum, chips, other packaged snack foods, heavily processed foods and cordials and flavoured milks are discouraged. Fruit straps are very similar in texture to chewy lollies and stick to your child's teeth in the same way.

However, we will never shame a child or family for their choices. Your family, your choices. We believe children need to develop healthy relationships with food just as much as they need nutritious foods.

We provide filtered rainwater for your child's water bottle when required.

We encourage families to reduce the amount of packaging and disposable plastics as we strongly believe in reducing our rubbish footprint and would prefer to recycle, as per our Environment Policy.

It is the Preschool's policy (and a requirement under law) to constantly review our risk assessment towards having nuts at our service. At this point in time, nuts are allowed at our service.

## BIRTHDAYS (N.B. We are required to file a copy of birth certificate upon Enrolment)

If your child is having a birthday, please feel free to bring a fruit platter along to share with their friends. We do not accept cakes at preschool due to allergy, intolerances, food choices of many children. If your child does not celebrate birthdays, please let us know so we can support your child, engaging them in alternate activities whilst the other children celebrate.



## FLOODS, STORMS & OTHER EMERGENCIES

Check the preschool OWNA app and/or Facebook page to get emergency updates.

In the event of flood, storms, or bushfires you should contact the school on the Preschool's phone on **02 6679 5313** or **0432705138** to check if the preschool will be open, or you may get an alert through OWNA or an email if we cannot reach the preschool to phone.

If it is unsafe for you to travel to preschool to pick up your child, please contact us to notify us. *Late fees will be waived under these circumstances.*

If you live on a property that is at risk of becoming isolated due to rising water or road closures, please keep your child at home.

If your child is at preschool during inclement weather and/or an escalating natural emergency (e.g. bush fire), the preschool may contact you to come and collect your child early.

If your child is 'stranded' at preschool (i.e. you are prevented from collecting them for whatever reason), a staff member will stay with the child at all times until such time as you collect them or a suitable alternative is agreed/arranged.

*Please refer to our Emergency & Evacuation policies.*

## SUPPORTING OUR PRESCHOOL

We love our families to be involved with our preschool. There are many ways in which you can assist us to keep the preschool running smoothly and nurture our love of community.

There are many ways you can help the preschool run more smoothly:

1. ***Join the Management Committee***: a great way to gain management skills, work in a team and make friends
2. *Helper days*: you can come and play and help for the day on one of your child's preschool days.
3. *Fundraisers and attending events*: become involved or organise events for your preschool.
4. *Working Bees*: These are held on weekends in the preschool grounds every term.

## IMMUNISATIONS, ILLNESS & MEDICATIONS

From 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2018 changes to the Public Health Act 2010 require that preschools only enrol a child once the parent/carer has provided documentation that shows that the child is fully vaccinated for their age or on a recognised catch up schedule from a registered doctor or has a recognised exemption form.

‘Temporary Exemptions (The following classes of children can be enrolled without the approved forms but directors of child care facilities must make reasonable efforts to source these forms within 12 weeks from the date of enrolment)

- Children evacuated following a declared natural disaster
- Children, who through exceptional circumstances, are determined to be in need of protection and/or placed in emergency care (e.g. children placed in emergency foster care; parent/guardian of a child needing urgent health care and the child is placed in emergency care)
- Children subject to a guardian order or in out-of-home care
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children’  
(<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation/Publications/immunisation-enrolment-toolkit.pdf>)

If your child is completing a planned catch-up schedule for any overdue vaccines, we can provide the relevant form needed for our records. This form needs to be completed and signed by your doctor and brought back to the Preschool for filing. These are required to be kept for three years.

You can obtain a copy of your child’s Immunisation History Statement at any time:

- using their Medicare online account through myGov
- using the Medicare Express Plus App
- calling the AIR General Enquiries Line on 1800 653 809

The Nominated Supervisor and/or Responsible Person of the day may refuse admission to any child who they believe may be infectious or contagious – e.g. Ringworm & Impetigo (school sores).

In addition, in the event of an outbreak of a specified ‘vaccine preventable’ disease a public health officer of the NSW Department of Health may direct the preschool to exclude any unvaccinated children and staff from attendance. Refer to our *Immunisation and Dealing with Infectious Diseases* Policies

## **Illness**

Please inform the preschool if your child is unable to attend an enrolled day due to illness.

As well as assisting the school administratively, it helps our educators be proactive in detecting illness in other children who may have been in contact with your child.

If your child contracts any contagious/infectious disease, please keep your child at home until cleared by a doctor. A medical certificate may be requested by the school in this regard.

## **Medication**

If your child is taking any medication, and you require the preschool to administer the medication while your child is in attendance, it is a requirement that you sign a form (provided by the preschool) each day that the medicine is administered by the preschool.

Information that you must provide includes your child's name, the nature of their illness, the name/type of medication to be administered, the dosage required and any additional instructions (e.g. time, manner etc.)

Your instructions must be consistent with the instructions on the label of the medication. If the preschool has any doubt, it reserves the right to refuse to assist in the medication of your child at its discretion.

Remember to collect your child's medication at the end of each day.

## **COVID REQUIREMENTS 2024**

If your child has any fever, a runny nose or feeling unwell we require you to keep your child home while they are symptomatic, just like any other flu or illness.

## **NATURE PLAY & BUSH KINDY**

In 2023, we started little adventures to our bordering creek. Any time we leave the physical service, there is ongoing risk assessments, and families are provided with an excursion note.

Gradually, we will be spending more time in our local, natural environment, with intentions to have collaborative nature excursions with others in our educational community.

*Wet weather* clothing and footwear will be provided by the service.

On other days, children are to wear broad brimmed hats, sun safe clothing and enclosed shoes, a water bottle, and if needed, insect repellent applied before commencement of their day.

## IF YOU HAVE A GRIEVANCE

Everyone's perspectives and views are important to us. And accountability and respecting multiple perspectives are integral to a positive environment.

Our policy is one of impartial, and transparent communication, and it aims to ensure every concern or complaint is dealt with promptly and professionally.

If you have a concern, or grievance, please communicate it to:

[director@mtwarningpreschool.com](mailto:director@mtwarningpreschool.com) and we will work with you to arrange a suitable time and place to discuss the matter.

You may find the following procedure a useful guide:

1. Speak directly with the preschool's Director/Nominated Supervisor. If appropriate, arrange a time so that you can speak freely.
2. If the Director/Nominated Supervisor is not someone you feel you can talk to, speak to a Committee Member or email them [committee@mtwarningpreschool.com](mailto:committee@mtwarningpreschool.com)
3. Please note that at this level, the issue will be brought to the full attention of all Members of the Committee.
4. If you feel your issue is not resolved or cannot be resolved by the preschool, contact the *Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority* for additional guidance <http://www.acecqa.gov.au>

Please refer to our *Complaints Procedures* and *Code of Conduct* policies

## POLICIES

All aspects of our preschool's operations and curriculum are guided by relevant policies and procedures. Not only is this best practice, but there are also certain policies that are required under relevant regulations and law.

Hardcopy policies can be found at the sign in/out desk and on our digital devices. Soon all policies, procedures, and risk assessments will be accessible soon digitally.

All members and staff of the preschool are provided with policies when reviewing and are encouraged to review, reflect, and contribute.

Thank you for becoming part of our community.