

Harrison School Preschool Handbook



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.



KEY CONTACTS

Education Directorate

13 2281

<https://www.education.act.gov.au/>

Harrison School - 6142 2200

Executive Principal: Ben Davies

Deputy Principal: Haeley Simms

Executive Teacher: Kristen Vellar

Preschool Teachers

Melanie Akhurst

Sandy Home

Lisa Buchanan

Pauline Mitchell

Preschool Educators

Pasang Om

Lisa Harvey

Garmisch Riley

Shivani Dhir



Welcome

Principal's Message

Our children are growing up in a complex world. To function effectively they need to develop the knowledge and skills that will allow them to lead happy and successful lives. They will need a strong foundation in literacy, numeracy, science and the arts, and be able to think critically and creatively. They will also need to be physically active and learn healthy habits for life.

Children need to solve complex problems and be able to communicate effectively with those around them, whether they are in the same learning group at school, or on the other side of the world. They also need to develop the interpersonal skills that support healthy and happy relationships with their peers and the adults in their lives.

At Harrison School we acknowledge and celebrate the important role that families and communities play in the education of our students. We provide a learning program from preschool to year 10 that caters for the whole child, celebrating difference and supporting the interests and aptitudes of all students.

Our school is a safe and happy place, where children are valued and nurtured. Our bright and stimulating open plan learning environments allow collaboration between students and staff where our values of Respect, Responsibility and Learning are evident.

Our preschool program is guided by Australian National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the Australian Curriculum as students move into kindergarten and beyond. Our collegial teaching teams plan together and deliver consistent programs which differentiate for individual student needs. Strong links to real life learning and experiences underpin our motivating and vibrant learning programs.

We enjoy the benefit of strong relationships with the community around us. Parents and carers are welcome and encouraged to participate in school activities through volunteering in the canteen, assisting in the classroom, attending school excursions or camps, helping out in the library, nominating for a role on the School Board or joining community events through the P&C.

Welcome to Harrison School!

Ben Davies

Executive Principal



Philosophy

At Harrison Preschool, we believe every child is capable, confident, and full of potential. Guided by our school values of respect, responsibility and learning, we provide a nurturing, inclusive and play-based environment where children feel safe, valued and supported to thrive.

We recognise play as the foundation for learning. Through intentional, child-centred and inquiry-based experiences, children are encouraged to explore, question, create and make sense of the world around them. We respond to each child's individual strengths, interests and needs, supporting their wellbeing and learning across all areas of development.

We value and embed Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing, honouring Australia's First Nations peoples and fostering respect, connection to Country, and a sense of belonging for all children.

Strong, respectful relationships are at the heart of our practice. We believe children learn best when they feel connected, supported and known. We work in partnership with families, recognising them as children's first teachers, and welcome their voices, knowledge and involvement in our preschool community.

Our learning environments are thoughtfully designed to reflect children's thinking, promote curiosity, and encourage collaboration. We value reflection for children and educators as a way to grow, improve and celebrate learning together.

We are committed to building strong connections with the wider school and community and to supporting children to develop a sense of responsibility for themselves, others and the world around them. Together, we strive to create a happy, healthy and sustainable future for all.



School Website

www.harrison.act.edu.au

Policies and Procedures

To view Education Directorate policies visit:

https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policies

All policies, procedures and our quality improvement program can be accessed using our QR code provided onsite at the preschool and at the end of the handbook.

Hours of Operation

Start of the Week Groups

Monday 8:45am to 2:45pm

Tuesday 8:45am to 2:45pm

Wednesday 8:45am to 2:45pm (Even weeks)

End of the Week Groups

Wednesday 8:45am to 2:45pm (Odd weeks)

Thursday 8:45am to 2:45pm

Friday 8:45am to 2:45pm



A Day at Preschool

The Early Years Learning Framework *Belonging, Being, Becoming*

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) is the guiding framework for children from birth to five years. The EYLF has been developed to ensure your child receives quality educational programs in their early childhood setting. Our vision at Harrison Preschool, in line with the EYLF, is for all children to experience play-based learning that is engaging and forms a strong foundation for success throughout life.

We use the Framework in partnership with families to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths, needs and abilities.

- **Belonging** is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they *belong* because of the relationships they have with their family, community, culture and place.
- **Being** is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just 'be'—time to play, try new things and have fun.
- **Becoming** is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the adult they will become.

Our reporting procedures, both formal and informal, reflect the EYLF.

Your child's routine will be established over the first few weeks. It will include opportunities for children to develop their dispositions to learning including developing curiosity, confidence, investigating, problem solving, building social connections, and expressing what they know about their world through arts, music, play and conversation.

Inside Play

With an indoor play area, children have the freedom to explore and develop their creativity in a secure and safe environment. Interacting with others helps children's language development, while also creating a space where they can share ideas, express their feelings and build friendships.

Outside Play

Playing outside gives your child the chance to explore the natural environment and have adventures. Your child can play games, test their physical limits, express themselves and build their self-confidence. Outdoor play can also mean more mess – and more mess often means more fun!

Group Time

Group time is an opportunity for the class of children to be introduced to new concepts and ideas, share in learning experiences, to talk together and collaborate. Group time is also a way to create a sense of belonging and togetherness within the class.

Provocations and Investigations

Provocations provoke children's interests, imagination and engagement. They motivate thinking and investigation. Resources are arranged in an aesthetically pleasing way, sparking children's interest and inviting them to engage and explore.

Food

Provision is made for the children to eat during the preschool session.

Parents and carers are urged to provide children with healthy snacks and lunch which will enable the staff to assist in the development of lifelong healthy eating habits. All children will need their own drink bottle with water only.

Please note: Harrison School is an allergy aware school due to the inclusion of students with life threatening anaphylactic allergic conditions.



Preparing for Preschool



You can support your child in preparation for preschool by providing opportunities to:

- Recognise their own name
- Open and close their own food containers
- Be independent with eating
- Put on their own shoes and socks
- Remove and put on jumpers, cardigans, coats
- Undo buttons
- Independently use the toilet
- Open and close their own school bag and place items inside
- Wash hands and blow their own nose.



What do I bring to Preschool?

- A school bag
- Lunch box with fruit, snack and lunch food
- Water bottle (only water at preschool)
- Spare change of clothes
- Hat (will be provided)
- Sunscreen (will be provided)

Drop Off and Pick Up

Preschool commences at 8:45am and finishes at 2:45pm each day. It is important that a parent or an identified adult on the enrolment paperwork is onsite to drop off and collect their child by 2:45pm. If you are running late to collect your child please notify the front office on 6142 2200.

Outside School Hours Care

Before and After School Care is available for preschool children and is run by OSH Club. Staff members from OSH Club can deliver your child directly to the preschool at 8:45am and collect your child directly from preschool at 2:45pm.

To see if there is availability, please contact them on 1300 395 735.



Enrolment Information

Voluntary Contributions

Public education is free. A school may offer or facilitate some specific optional items, activities and services for which parents may be asked to pay if they want their child to access them; including excursions, class photos and visiting performers.

Schools do ask families to contribute a voluntary contribution that is used to provide resources in a quality learning environment for our children. Purchases rely upon the commitment and generosity of our parent community.

If you would like to make a voluntary contribution please see the Harrison front office.

Enrolment Procedures

Children seeking to enter school at the preschool entry point should be four years of age on or before April 30 in that year. Preschool enrolments open in April prior to the commencement of the preschool year. Enrolment forms are now completed online. Information about the process is available at <https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/enrolling-in-a-public-school>

To be eligible to enrol, you will need to provide your child's birth certificate, immunisation details and proof of residence, i.e. utilities bill, mortgage document, lease or tenancy agreement.

Early Entry and Early Intervention

Early enrolment for children under compulsory education age is also available to children. Our Directorate stipulates three main criteria:

1. Early Entry for Identified Groups (English as an Additional Language or Dialect, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and Vision or Hearing Impaired requiring early intervention)
2. Early Entry for Mobility
3. Accelerated Entry – Gifted and Talented

An application may be made through the Education Directorate. Full information must be provided to the school principal at the time of application. Further information can be found in the *Early Entry and Accelerated Entry Procedures* on the Education Directorate website.

Feedback

If you have feedback about your child's education, please have a conversation with the preschool teacher. You are also welcome to contact the school executive staff.

Should the need arise, the ACT Education Directorate has a policy for complaints resolution. This policy can be accessed at:

https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policies



Parent Participation

Families are welcome to share their special skills, interests and diverse family cultures with the preschool.

Families are encouraged to participate in social activities to enable families to meet each other and form a sense of belonging with the school.

Families can help in the following ways:

- sharing knowledge and expertise of craft, cooking, music, storytelling, job skills
- interacting with the daily program
- working bees in the garden
- attending the Harrison School Parent and Citizens Association (you automatically become a member once your child is enrolled).



Volunteers

Volunteers have a special place in schools and assist in many ways. This may include interaction with individuals and small groups of students in a range of different activities. This assists schools in providing a safe environment and a positive educational climate. Volunteers are asked to comply with the *Code of Conduct for Volunteers*. This code of conduct has been formulated to clarify the type of conduct that is expected of volunteers when participating in programs and activities in ACT Government schools. By complying with the *Code of Conduct for Volunteers* you agree to:

- Observe similar standards of behaviour and ethical conduct to that required of staff.
- Appreciate that teachers have a special duty of care for students that cannot be delegated or transferred to others. Appreciate also that the principal is the spokesperson for the school.
- Appreciate that students have rights and aspirations. Treat students with dignity and respect.
- Observe confidentiality in respect of all information gained through your participation as a volunteer. All information held by schools should be handled with care. Some information is especially sensitive. Sensitive and/or personal information requires additional caution in the way it is treated.
- Accept and follow directions from the principal/supervisor and seek guidance through clarification where you may be uncertain.
- Observe safe work practices which avoid unnecessary risks, apply reasonable instructions given by supervisors and report to the supervising staff any hazard or hazardous practice in the workplace.
- Report any problems as they arise to your supervisor including incidents, injury or property damage.

The *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011* commenced on 8 November 2012. The Act requires people who have contact with vulnerable people while engaging in regulated activities and services to register with the Office of Regulatory Services. (ORS). Individuals volunteering in 'Activities or Services for Children' must have a Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Card. A photocopy of your card will be held at the school front office and at the preschool in secure locations. Volunteers must keep their WWVP card with them at all times and wear a badge indicating their status as a volunteer.

You can apply and find more information on working with vulnerable people at: <https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/business-and-work/working-with-vulnerable-people>



Medical Needs

Immunisation

The ACT Department of Health advises that all children attending school in the ACT should be immunised against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, measles, mumps, rubella and Hib (Haemophilus influenza type b). We would ask that you check your child's present immunisation status to see whether it is complete for their age. ACT Public Health regulations require schools to request proof of up to date immunisation when enrolling. Failure to provide this may result in your child being excluded from school should an outbreak of an infectious disease occur. A copy of exclusion periods for students with infectious diseases is available. Parents are asked to adhere closely to these requirements unless medical advice to the contrary is provided in writing.

Medical Conditions and Accidents

It is important that sick children are kept at home for their own comfort as well as the comfort of other children and staff. If a child becomes ill or is injured at school, appropriate First Aid will be given and if necessary parents will be notified and asked to take their child home. If emergency treatment is required parents will be notified immediately and the child will be transferred by ambulance to hospital. In such cases, ambulance services and treatment are free. All students who have an ongoing condition (e.g. asthma, diabetes, epilepsy) must have a treatment plan completed by parents and their GP and lodged at the school. Plan proformas are available from the front office or from a staff member in the preschool.

Prescribed Information

If a child is to take a **prescription medicine** while at school, written directions and medicine must be left with our teachers. We ask that parents and carers complete an 'Administration of Medicines' form if a student is required to take medicine throughout the school day. Information on a child's health status should be given on enrolment or on diagnosis. If the medical condition is serious please provide an up to date photograph of the child so it can be placed in our Medical Alert folder with their action plan.

Exclusion Periods

Exclusion periods for infectious diseases such as mumps, german measles, measles and chicken pox are provided at the end of this handbook (Attachment A).

Emergency Management

Harrison School has a policy on emergency evacuations and lockdowns. We are required to practise these procedures regularly. All staff and children participate.

Child Protection

All employees in schools are mandated to report any case of suspected child abuse. Failure to notify suspected physical and /or sexual abuse of children is a criminal offence.



Transitions



Your child is a member of the Harrison School community. If you have a provisional entry into our preschool, you will need to reapply for kindergarten. As with all transitions, the staff will ensure that the move from preschool to kindergarten is successful.

To achieve this we have an ongoing transition program through participation in whole school events. Our preschoolers access the school library on a weekly basis. We further support our transition program through regular on country walks, visits to other school learning environments, including outside play equipment, and the gymnasium for assemblies.

Kindy Connect

At Harrison School we begin a transition program in term 3 to kindergarten to help the children recognise and learn about their future learning environments, expectations and develop relationships with primary school staff members. Kindy Connect sees the children spend time in the kindy environments singing songs, playing, listening to stories and engaging in art sessions on a fortnightly basis.

School Canteen

Harrison School has a canteen available every day for lunch. A lunch order menu can be found on the website below. All canteen orders must be completed online. Online orders can be placed at <https://flexischools.com.au/>

Please inform the preschool staff if you have ordered online.

For more information about this topic please follow the link to this website for some handy hints:
https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/starting_school



Communication

Our school recognises the importance of a positive family and school relationship. We encourage:

- sharing knowledge to enhance the growth and development of your child
- developing positive relationships with families that are based on mutual trust and open communication
- developing a sense of belonging to the preschool for the children, parents and staff.

Important notices and required information under the Law are placed on the information boards located at the entrance to preschool. Class information and learning programs are shared on the whiteboard at the entrance to each classroom, shared via Seesaw and are available for viewing on each classroom's family table. Parent feedback and suggestions are always welcomed.

Other information is shared with parents via Seesaw, email, Facebook and the parent portal.

Parent interviews are held at the end of semester 1 and 2 to share information about your child's progress. This process is supported by a written report using the *Early Years Learning Framework* to identify how your child is progressing.

Teachers appreciate the opportunity to talk with parents and carers both formally and informally. This ensures valuable insights and understandings can be considered when planning for a child's individual developmental journey. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask for an appointment with your child's teacher.



PRESCRIBED INFORMATION

ACT Public Preschool Units are compliant with the Education and Care Services National Law (ACT) Act 2011 (Including the Education and Care Services National Regulations).

Approved Provider: ACT EDUCATION
DIRECTORATE

Provider Number: PR-00006465

Education and Care Service: HARRISON
SCHOOL PRESCHOOL UNIT

Service Number: SE- 00011198

The Nominated Supervisor for this service is: Ben Davies, Principal

The Educational Leader for this service is: Kristen Vellar, School Leader C

The Responsible Person/s for this service are:

- Kristen Vellar, School Leader C
- Melanie Akhurst, Preschool Teacher
- Lisa Buchanan, Preschool Teacher
- Sandy Holme, Preschool Teacher
- Pauline Mitchell, Preschool Teacher



Rating and Assessment

The Regulatory Authority contact details

are: ACT Children's Education and Care Assurance

Phone: (02) 6207 1114

Website:

<https://www.education.act.gov.au/early-childhood/act-childrens-education-and-care-services-regulatory-authority>

Email: ceca@act.gov.au

Mail: GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601

Location: Level 3, Hedley Beare Centre for Teaching and Learning, 51 Fremantle Drive, Stirling, ACT

THE NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD RATINGS

Ratings promote transparency and accountability and help parents assess the quality of education and care services available. Every service receives a rating for each quality area and an overall rating. These ratings must be displayed by each service and are published on the ACECQA and the MyChild websites.

There are five rating levels within the national quality rating and assessment process:

- Excellent rating, awarded by ACECQA
- Exceeding National Quality Standard
- Meeting National Quality Standard
- Working Towards National Quality Standard
- Significant Improvement Required

For more information go to:

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/assessment/assessment-and-rating-process>

Harrison Preschool was assessed and rated in 2025. The process involved observation, interviews and sharing products that evidenced our compliance with regulations and use of the Early Years Learning Framework. We received an overall rating of 'Exceeding National Quality Standard.'

Quality Area 1 - Educational program and practice

Exceeding National Quality Standard

Quality Area 2 - Children's health and safety

Exceeding National Quality Standard

Quality Area 3 - Physical environment

Exceeding National Quality Standard

Quality Area 4 - Staffing arrangements

Exceeding National Quality Standard

Quality Area 5 - Relationships with children

Exceeding National Quality Standard

Quality Area 6 - Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Exceeding National Quality Standard

Quality Area 7 - Leadership and service management

Meeting National Quality Standard

Overall rating: Exceeding National Quality Standard



Our families are always welcome to provide input to our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) each year. We also encourage families to provide written or verbal feedback to our educators on the preschool program.



QR Code

Use our QR code to access policies, procedures and our quality improvement plan.



Attachment A

The *ACT Public Health Regulations 2000* require children with the following conditions, and children who have been in contact with the following conditions, to be excluded from school, preschool, childcare or family day care for the periods specified.

Condition	Exclusion of person with condition	Exclusion of persons in contact with condition
Amoebiasis (<i>entamoeba histolytica</i>)	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Campylobacteriosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Chicken pox (varicella and herpes zoster)	Exclude until the last blister has scabbed over. The child should not continue to be excluded by reason only of some remaining scabs	Not excluded Any child with an immune deficiency (e.g. with leukaemia, or as a result of receiving chemotherapy) should be excluded for their own protection and seek urgent medical advice and varicella-zoster immunoglobulin (ZIG), if necessary.
Conjunctivitis (acute infectious)	Exclude until discharge from eyes ceases.	Not excluded
Cryptosporidiosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Diarrhoea	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Diphtheria	Exclude until - (a) at least 2 negative throat swabs have been taken (the first not less than 24 hours after cessation of antibiotic treatment and the second not less than 48 hours later), and (b) A certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Exclude family and household contacts until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer.
Giardiasis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib)	Exclude until a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded
Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Exclude if (a) child is unwell, or (a) child is drooling, and not all blisters have dried or an exposed weeping blister is not covered with a dressing.	Not excluded
Hepatitis A	Exclude for at least 7 days after the onset of jaundice and a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded
Herpes (cold sores)	Exclude young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices while the lesion is weeping. Lesion to be covered by a dressing in all cases, if possible.	Not excluded
Impetigo (school sores)	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced and sores on exposed surfaces are covered with a watertight dressing.	Not excluded
Influenza and influenza-like illnesses	Exclude until well.	Not excluded

Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer.	Not excluded
Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after the rash appears.	
Meningitis (bacterial)	Exclude until well.	Not excluded
Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has commenced.	
Mumps	Exclude for 9 days after onset of symptoms, or until parotid swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).	Not excluded
Poliomyelitis	Exclude for at least 14 days after onset of symptoms and until a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded
Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (lice), trachoma	Exclude until effective treatment has commenced.	Not excluded
Rotavirus	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded
Rubella (German measles)	Exclude for 4 days after the appearance of the rash.	Not excluded
Salmonellosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded
Shigellosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.	Not excluded
Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the person has recovered or has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours.	Not excluded
Tuberculosis	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer.	Not excluded
Typhoid and paratyphoid fever	Exclude until a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	(a) Not excluded unless the Chief Health Officer notifies the person in charge of the school. (a) If the Chief Health Officer gives notice, exclusion is subject to the conditions in the notice.
Whooping cough (pertussis)	Exclude for 21 days from start of cough, or at least 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the Chief Health Officer.	Exclude non-immunised household, home based child care and close child care contacts under 7 years old for 14 days after the last exposure of infection, or until 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the Chief Health Officer (whichever is sooner).
Worms (intestinal)	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded