

Walcha Preschool

215N Uralla Road,
Walcha NSW 2354

P: 02 6777 2117

E: preschool@walcha.nsw.gov.au



Caters for all 3 to 5 year olds and provides a balanced program to foster all aspects of a child's development.

Parent handbook 2025



An enriching stimulating place to be...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

As we gather together in this special place to continue our learning journey, we acknowledge the Dunghutti people as the traditional owners of the land that we meet, play and learn on.

The Dunghutti Nation.

We pay respects to elders, past and present. We acknowledge and recognise their continuing connection to the land, water and community of which we are a part of.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is: to provide quality accessible care for 3 to 5-year-old children in a safe, supportive and educational environment that is responsive to the needs of our community's children and their families.



PRESCHOOL AND YOUR CHILD

Welcome to Walcha Preschool and thank you for enrolling your child. We trust that the time spent here will be rewarding.

The early childhood years are a time of rapid growth and development. Walcha preschool aims to provide an environment that will nurture your child's stage of development and potential. Research proves that children aged between 3 and 6 learn best through interactive experiences. They learn extraordinary amounts through play and exploration. These are the formative years of their lives and already they have learnt so much at home with you as their first teacher.

In providing a developmentally appropriate program, we aim to make our preschool an enriching place for your child. We are eager to learn as much as possible about your child's interests, their cultural background, past experiences & current circumstances.

You can help us by:

- Sharing ideas and information;
- Helping with excursions'
- Becoming a parent representative on the Preschool Advisory Committee;
- Talking to your child's educator and to your child about their time at preschool;
- Dropping in once in a while to spend a little time at preschool with your child;
- Informing your child's educator about events happening in your child's life
- Sharing information through the Xplor Home app
- Posting supportive comments on Xplor Home and positive Facebook posts

THE STUDENTS

3 to 5 year olds

Koala room (Preschool room) – 3-4 year olds

Kangaroo room (Transition room) – 4-5 year olds

Up to 59 enrolments per day



Our staff

Nominated Supervisor & Educational Leader	Melinda Bird
Kangaroo room Leader	Sarah Bruce
Koala room Leader	Debbie Buckland
Educators	Maree Brazel Emily Lordanic Sakulsri Wechakul
School based Trainee	Isabella Booth
Casual educators	Arokiya Dark Eleanor Brazel Lacie Slater
Administration Officer	Alice Flanagan
Executive Manager Community & Tourism	Karen Kermode
Council Representative	TBA
Early Intervention Coordinator	Rhonda Barnet

OPERATING HOURS

Monday to Friday	8.30 am to 4pm
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Extended hours – Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday	8am - 8.30am & 4pm-5pm
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Staff members are unable to supervise except in these hours.

National Quality Standard (NQS): the NQS sets a high national benchmark for early childhood education and care services in Australia. Services are assessed and rated by their regulatory authority against the NQS and given a rating for each of the 7 quality areas and an overall rating based on these results.

We were assessed in February 2021 and received the rating of meeting the national quality standard.

For more information about the Assessment and Rating Process visit the ACECQA website and click on the *Information for families* tab

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

PRESCHOOL TERM DATES 2025

Term 1 Monday 3 rd February to Friday, 11 th April 2025
Term 2 Monday 28 th April to Friday, 4 th July 2025
Term 3 Monday 21 st July to Friday, 26 th September 2025
Term 4 Monday 13 th October to TBC 2025



ENROLMENT OF YOUR CHILD

All enrolment enquiries are handled by the Administration Officer and the Nominated Supervisor. The Administration Officer will work with you to complete your enrolment and any booking requests.

If there are no vacancies, your child's name will be added to the waiting list. When a vacancy occurs, the Administration Officer will contact the parent of the first child on the list and offer that child a place at the preschool. Preference is given to children from low income and working families.

After you have completed the enrolment form for our centre, you will receive a confirmation email via Xplor. Once we have finalised your information and made your child active, you will receive a Welcome email.

- Click the orange 'Create Account' button, it will take you to a new screen. As a new parent who has not created an account before, select 'Create Account.'
- From here, create a password that is 8 characters in length and includes a capital letter, number and special character. Then create a 4-digit Account Pin. This can be used to sign in with your mobile number which you will enter in the next step. Press 'Next.' Enter your mobile number. Press 'Next.'
- Press 'Finished.'

Your phone number and pin will be used to sign your child in & out each day.

It is essential that you have an Emergency Contact listed on your child's enrolment form. Please include their phone number and their address as we use this to verify who they are. If on any day you cannot be contacted while your child is at Preschool, an Authorised Person can be contacted.

YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAY

The first day of Preschool can be an exciting and sometimes daunting experience. We are here to make the transition as easy as possible. On arrival stay for a couple of minutes to help settle your child into preschool. Becoming involved in an activity with your child is always a great way to help settle them.

Upon entering the Preschool, please sign in at the front desk on the Xplor Kiosk (iPad). The Administration Officer will assist you if required. Next, please place your child's bag in the cube in their room. Morning tea bags and drink bottles are placed in allocated baskets. If you have not yet received a Morning tea bag, please see any member of our staff.

When the time comes for you to leave, your child may be upset. Don't worry – just call an educator and say goodbye to your child, then leave quickly. Most children don't stay upset for too long but will find it harder if they sense that you are also upset. Remember to say goodbye and tell your child that you will be back. Be assured that you will be contacted if anything is wrong.

If you are worried, please give the preschool a call.



Walcha Preschool supports *Munch & Move*, a NSW Health initiative that supports the healthy development of children birth to 5 years by promoting physical activity, healthy eating and reduced small screen time.

To support this initiative, the preschool requires families to pack **only healthy food** and **only water** as a drink. If you need suggestions on what to pack please talk to an educator.

WHAT TO SEND ON THE FIRST DAY

- One clearly labeled cot sheet in a pillowcase. This will be placed with your child's bag at the end of each day.
- Morning Tea and Lunch – please pack morning tea in the supplied bag and lunch in a separate bag. Please place an ice brick in your child's lunch and morning tea bags, as they are not stored in the refrigerator. We are also unable to reheat food. Please remember when packing your child's lunch that life long eating habits are established in early childhood.

If we have a child who is anaphylactic, families will be advised not to include the triggering products in their child's lunch.

- Water bottle – pack a water bottle that's easily managed by your child, they will be refilled as needed throughout the day.
- Morning tea – a piece of fruit which is manageable by the child (i.e. cut into pieces), yogurt, cheese and crackers etc.
- Lunch – a nutritious lunch (i.e. sandwich/wrap etc.), if you feel your child needs more for morning tea or lunch please only send nutritious food (i.e. piece of fruit, veg sticks, muesli bar, popcorn, crackers etc.).
- Afternoon tea – if your child uses the extended hours you will also need to send something for afternoon tea. A piece of fruit or a nutritious snack will suffice.
- Clothing – so that your child is able to join in all activities especially messy ones, please dress them in older, well-fitting clothes they can move freely in. Children should be dressed in long sleeved shirts, to protect them from the sun. **Please provide a spare set of clothes, including underwear and socks in backpacks at all times.**

PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING.

- Preschool has a “no thongs” policy for safety reasons. Please do not send your child in thongs, crocs, or other uncovered footwear.
- Please bring your Health Care Card for our office records.

- Each child will be given a sun smart hat to wear at preschool. This hat will stay at the Preschool. Please make sure your child has sunscreen on prior to commencing their day at preschool. Sunscreen is available in the foyer at the Preschool.
- Please bring in a recent photograph of your family or send one to us on the Xplor Home app. This will bring a little bit of home into the preschool and will be used in the first few weeks to help the children become familiar with their new friends and their new surroundings.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Please remember to sign your child in and out on the iPad located in the foyer. (This is a departmental regulation and is held as a legal document).

Please check your communication pocket regularly for general information and upcoming events.

At no time will a child be handed over to another person other than the child's parents, or the persons indicated on the enrolment form under "Authorised Persons".

All gates should be closed firmly after entering and leaving. Please do not let a child out the gate without an adult.

CAR PARK

All vehicles are to reverse angle park into designated car parks on left or parallel park on the right-hand side. Entry to preschool is opposite the showground via Derby Street (orange chair). Exit is onto Uralla Road. Please take care when entering and exiting the preschool.

Families are reminded that the Preschool building and car park is a smoke-free environment.

Parents are reminded that leaving a child or a young person unattended in a motor vehicle is an offence under section 231 of the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW).

Please drive carefully into the car park.



Bus Service

Walcha Preschool offers a bus service on Monday to Friday (availability may change depending on numbers) for Kangaroo room children from rural/isolated and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander families.

The bus company has specified that the children who catch the bus must be 4 years of age and attending school the following year.

An educator will collect children from the school buses at Walcha Central School and transport them to preschool in the morning and return in the afternoon via the Mirani bus.

If you would like to use this service please fill out a permission form available from the office. If you would like to see a copy of our regular transportation policy please ask Admin for a copy.

HOW IS THE PRESCHOOL RUN?

Walcha Preschool is a community based Early Childhood Education and Care Service managed by Walcha Council. We have the support of an Advisory Committee which is comprised of Council, community and parent members. Walcha Preschool is state-funded by a grant from the Department of Education and fees from parents.

Walcha Preschool's License is held by Walcha Council and all administration functions are carried out by Walcha Council.

Walcha Preschool has a Quality Improvement Plan and a Self-Assessment Tool that is reviewed continually. This will be assessed as a part of the National Quality Assessment and Rating process.

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Walcha Preschool has a Parent Advisory Committee. The committee is made up of four (4) members from the Walcha Community who are approved by the General Manager. Parent/citizen representatives are to be elected for a two-year term. Representatives are also restricted to a maximum of three consecutive terms (6 years).

These members will “advise and where applicable, recommend to Council on policy matters and strategic issues regarding the management of the Walcha Preschool”.

A Walcha Councillor will chair the Advisory Committee. Council’s Mayor and General Manager have delegated authority to attend and participate in any of Council Advisory Committee meetings.

Please ask the Nominated Supervisor for a list of current members.

CHILDREN’S LIBRARY

Each child is encouraged to borrow a library book from the library display in the foyer or from the shelves near the front desk. A book is available for parents/carer to write down the name of their child and the date it was borrowed and returned.

Please ask a staff member if there is a specific book you are after.

If by some accident a book is lost or damaged it is the responsibility of the parent to purchase a replacement.



FEES

Walcha Preschool does not make any profit from fees. Invoices are posted to you mid & end of term. Each invoice is due within 4 weeks of receiving.

Fees are still payable if a child is absent for any reason, however, fees are not charged during school holidays or transition to school visits.

Fees are to be paid at Preschool, the Walcha Council office or directly into Council's bank account (details are listed on your invoice). Arrangements can also be made to have amounts direct deposited from your bank account. Please ask our Admin if you would like to use this option and complete the form.

A fees schedule is available at the Preschool office.

The Nominated Supervisor should receive notice of a child leaving preschool as soon as possible. Two weeks written notice is required or fees will be charged.



Low Income fee

Walcha preschool has an affordable fee plan available to families who hold a Health Care Card. If you have a Health Care Card please provide us with a copy and the subsidy will be automatically applied to your fees.

*In case of a medical emergency, the Nominated Supervisor will phone 000 immediately.
All ambulance fees are to be paid by the family, so it is recommended that ambulance cover is held.*

Families are reminded that the preschool building and car park is a smoke-free environment

CHILDHOOD ILLNESSES

Below are some common childhood illnesses. Children should be excluded from preschool for at least the period indicated.

Illness	Exclusion Period
Conjunctivitis	Until all discharge has ceased
Chicken Pox	At least 7 days after spots appear and only if marks have cleared
Measles	At least 5 days from the appearance of the rash
Mumps	10 days from the onset of swelling
German Measles	At least 7 days from the appearance of the rash
Lice	Until treatment has commenced and live lice are no longer present
Ringworm of the body	7 days, if not completely healed, then must be covered
School sores (impetigo)	Excluded until the child has received antibiotic treatment for 24 hours. Any sores must be covered with a waterproof dressing.
Gastro/vomiting	48 hours after last episode of vomiting or diarrhea.
Hand/foot/mouth	Excluded until all blisters have dried.

HEALTH

The Public Health Act 2010, and Public Health Regulation section 43 requires parents to provide documented evidence of a child's immunisation status to be eligible to be enrolled. If your child is unable to be vaccinated due to medical reasons, please contact your family doctor to obtain a vaccination exemption certificate.

In the event of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, non immunised children will be required to remain at home for the duration of the outbreak for their own protection.

If your child is sick, they should stay at home until better. This is important as the children are in very close contact with each other and illnesses can spread quickly. Parents are requested to notify the Nominated Supervisor immediately of any infectious diseases contracted by their child. The Nominated Supervisor may use their discretion and request an unwell child be taken home.

Prescription only medication can be administered at preschool. The medication must have the child's name on the prescription label. The parent must fill in the relevant details in the *Administration of medication form*. An educator will counter-sign these details.

Home remedies and non-prescribed medication will not be administered.

If your child has a chronic disorder such as asthma or an allergy please let the educators know so the required action, medication and communication plans can be put in place. Asthma and allergy plan need to be completed by a Doctor and a copy has to be provided to the Preschool.



EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK

Walcha Preschool's program is guided by the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) which is the National Quality Framework for children from birth to 5 years old. The framework's vision is for all children to experience play based learning that is engaging and builds skills for life. The Framework is a guide for early childhood educators to use in partnership with families to develop play-based learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities. The EYLF describes early childhood as a time of *belonging, being and becoming*.

Belonging

This is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel that they belong because of the relationships they have with their family, community, culture, and place.

Being

This is about living here and now. A time for children just to "be" – a time to have fun, play and try new things.

Becoming

This is about children starting to form their own sense of identity that shapes the type of adult they will become. It is also about the learning and development that young children experience.

The framework focuses on your child's learning and building relationships. Educators will work with you in order to get to know your child well. Through the framework's five learning outcomes, educators will assist your child to develop:

- A strong sense of identity
- Connections to their world
- A strong sense of wellbeing
- Confidence and involvement in their learning
- Effective communication skills



XPLOR FOR PARENTS

Once you have created your Xplor Account after enrolling, you can use the email address and password listed to log into the Home App. You can use this app to sign your child in and out and view any observations the Preschool staff do on your child/ren.



Download the Xplor Home app once you've created your account and access all their great features. Download the Home App via the App Store or Google Play Store. Enter the email address and password you have set up to log in.

Visit the [New Parent/Guardian Set Up – Xplor \(ourxplor.com\)](https://ourxplor.com) website for all the details on how to use the app.

Observations / Learning:

Moments are a fantastic way to capture the learning journeys of your children. These moments will be combined in the learning timeline with other documentation that gets created by educators.

To view any observations, select the Learning tab at the bottom of the Home app and look under the heading My Learning Events.

For parents/carers to create a moment for our educators to view:

1. Open the Xplor Home app and press on the Learning tab (bottom left corner).
2. Click view all under the heading My Learning events
3. Press on the Camera icon at the top of the screen
4. Select the type of media you would like to attach: Camera, Video, Gallery and upload the description in the caption.
5. Click the arrow in the top right corner and the moment will be shared with our educators.

PRESCHOOL POLICIES

Walcha Preschool has a policy and procedure manual that describes how the preschool is run, how children's programs are developed, and how the council, educators and the committee work together.

For families who would like to view the policy manual, a copy is available at all times. Please ask an educator. This can help you to better understand how the preschool works, and to have a say on the things that matter to your family. This manual is reviewed and updated frequently so your feedback is very important to us.

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Walcha Preschool welcomes all feedback from the families, even if it means raising concerns or suggesting changes. We believe that families are the experts on their child, and we aim to work in co-operation with families to get the very best outcome.

If you have any concerns, please discuss it with the Nominated Supervisor who will aim to resolve the matter quickly and confidentially, wherever possible. Alternatively, contact the Executive Manager of Community & Tourism. A suggestion book is located in the foyer near the sign on Kiosk (iPad).

All concerns and complaints are treated sensitively and confidentially. If it is important to you, then it is important to the preschool. Please refer to our policies and procedures manual for details on how to lodge a grievance.

FUNDING AND LICENSING

Walcha Preschool receives a grant towards our operating costs from the NSW Department of Education. To ensure the quality and safety of the service provided, we are also licensed by the Department. For further information on funding and licensing please contact the Early Childhood Education Directorate on 1800 619 113.

CHILDREN'S RECORDS

Walcha Preschool keeps individual records about children who use our service. Many of these records are licensing requirements, and they also help us to identify and respond to your child's changing needs and abilities.

Each child's file includes:

- Enrolment forms
- Contact details
- Any case conference notes
- Copies of correspondence
- Any critical incident reports
- Consent forms
- Authorisation for collection
- Medical Management Plans

Families may ask the Nominated Supervisor for access to their child's file at any time. If a family believes that any information held about them is incomplete, incorrect, out of date, or misleading, they should raise the matter with the Nominated Supervisor. If any of your information changes (e.g. postal address, phone number etc.) please let us know.

YOUR FAMILY'S NEEDS

Walcha Preschool works towards catering for the community's early childhood needs, both in education and care. We are in contact with other early childhood services in the area such as Walcha Early Intervention, Gubi Guban mobile playgroup and family daycares. If you would like more information, please ask our staff.

WALCHA EARLY INTERVENTION

Provides individualised educational programs that are child centered and activity based. The programs can be carried out through home visits, playgroup, individual sessions in the early intervention room, preschool integration or therapy sessions.

If you have concerns about your child's learning or speech, please talk to an educator. Likewise, if educators have concerns they will be raised with you. The early years is the best time to address learning difficulties.

For more information about children's services please contact the Early Intervention Coordinator on ei@walcha.nsw.gov.au (please note: Early intervention is only open on Fridays).



Walcha Preschool has Facebook!

Request to join **Walcha Preschool Parents 2025**
Please note that this is a private group only for parents with children attending Preschool in 2025.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Preschool Facebook group is a closed group for confidentiality of children. This means that parents are not to screenshot or save group photos from Xplor, Facebook or Preschool and repost them on their social media page.

You and your child's confidentiality are really important to us at Preschool. Please make sure you sign the photo permission form based on your preference.

PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

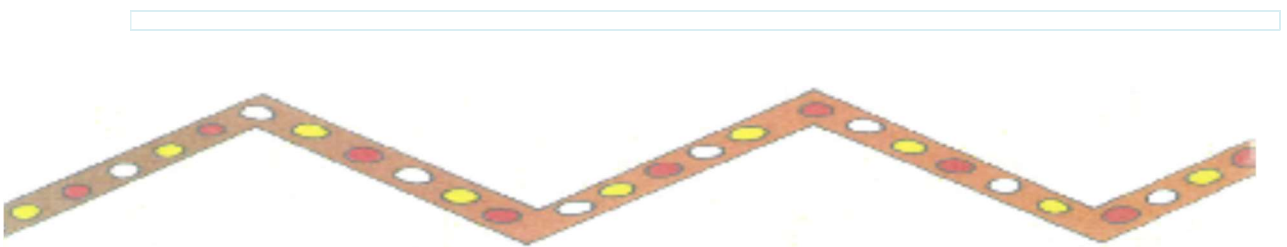
Here at Walcha Preschool our Educators believe:

- The Dughutti people are the traditional owners of the land.
- In recognising all Aboriginal mobs.
- Children have the right to feel safe, secure and respected.
- That through a play-based program child learn.
- Families are the children's primary teachers.
- Educators, families and the community should work together to educate and stimulate children.
- In respecting the uniqueness of each family and endeavour to learn more about them.
- The environment provided will allow children to develop, learn and explore at their own pace.
- Families are crucial to a child's wellbeing; their feedback and involvement is valuable to Walcha Preschool.
- Children will be encouraged as they play for their efforts, successes and positive behaviour.
- Communication between all stakeholders is paramount for high quality care and education of the children at Walcha Preschool.
- The programme planned for the children will be guided by the Early Years Learning Framework including the principles, practices and outcomes to encompass Belonging, Becoming and Being.
- Walcha Preschool embeds sustainable practices into the everyday routine and believes these strategies will educate children through creating learning opportunities.
- All children will be observed equally.
- All children are individual, unique and have amazing ideas to share.
- Music encourages holistic learning and is an integral part of our programme.

- Physical activity and healthy eating are important for children as these good habits will serve children well into a happy adulthood.
- Intentional teaching is an important part of the program and of each child's learning.
- In instilling values, principles and manners to mould the whole child. We model kindness, respect, gratitude, fun and love.



NOTES



NOTES



Have a wonderful year with us at Walcha preschool and remember if you have any problems or queries let us know so that we can work on them together. Please keep this booklet as it may be a useful resource throughout the year.



Regulatory Authority

Early Childhood Education Directorate
NSW Department of Education
Locked Bag 5107
PARRAMATTA NSW 2124

Free call 1800 619 113

www.dec.nsw.gov.au