



**WEST
WIMMERA
SHIRE COUNCIL**



Early Childhood Service Handbook

The best of country living

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Welcome to West Wimmera Shire Council's Early Childhood Services!

Whether you are new to our early childhood services, or a returning family, we are looking forward to sharing an exciting year with you.

West Wimmera Shire Council (WWSC) manages three kindergartens across the Shire – in Goroke, Edenhope and Kaniva - and a childcare program in Edenhope.

In all our early years services we offer a play-based, emergent curriculum, where children initiate and lead their own learning. Our focus is on exploration rather than on teaching specific skills. Children are encouraged to develop social and self-help skills, including learning ways to resolve conflict and become socially-aware.

Our educators acknowledge parents and families as their child's first teachers; and are passionate about encouraging a sense of belonging and providing the best outcomes for children and families.

We welcome you to our service and encourage you to come to us with any questions, concerns or ideas.



Early Childhood Services Contact Details

If your child is going to be absent, please call or text and let educators know. All our early childhood services have mobile phones and answering machines so you can leave a quick message outside of centre hours. Alternatively guardians can mark their child absent on XAP.

This helps us ensure the safety of your child; particularly for those children who are bus travellers.

Contact details for our services are:

Goroke Kindergarten

ph. 5386 1113

Mobile 0448 955 923

GorokeKindergarten@westwimmera.vic.gov.au

(9 Compston St, Goroke)

Edenhope Early Childhood Service

ph. 5585 1571

Mobile Kinder / 3-5 Room 0448 796 816

Mobile Under 3 room 0400 336 631

EdenhopeKindergarten@westwimmera.vic.gov.au

(52 Langford St, Edenhope)

Kaniva Kindergarten

ph. 5392 2671

Mobile 0448 785 317

KanivaKindergarten@westwimmera.vic.gov.au

(25 Baker St, Kaniva)

The Early Years Coordinator or Manager Community Support and Wellbeing can be contacted by phone 13 99 72 or by emailing

earlyyears@westwimmera.vic.gov.au

We understand that in small towns everyone tends to know everyone, and families may be friends with educators outside of the kindergarten. We ask you to please be respectful of our educator's work hours and to reserve your communication about your child in the kindergarten context to official communication channels. In turn, our educators will also respect your time and keep to official channels.

Enrolments

All enrolments are to be submitted via Xap. Please follow the link to submit your expression of interest.

Please fill out all sections in the expressions of interest form

<https://www.xap.rocks/waiting-list?organisationId=09fd5c4b-dec0-4fda-8fde-cf7e25ef274d>



[Open EOI Form in new window](#)

Further information regarding Xap can be found at: <https://www.xap.rocks>

Xap Support- 1300 543 792

[Help Page for Guardians & Carers Guides & Videos | Xap Help Center](#)

NO CHILDCARE AND/ OR KINDERGARTEN PLACE WILL BE CONFIRMED UNTIL ALL APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION IS SUBMITTED.

Please contact the Early Years Coordinator on 13 99 72 if you have any questions.

An iPad is provided for you to sign your child in and out of the kindergarten or childcare for each session via Xap, our software management program.

The enrolment form contains a space for you to authorise other people to collect your child (nominees). These people must be aged 18 years old or over and are the only people educators can allow to collect a child. Please let educators know if you need to add anyone to this list. If educators are not familiar with the person collecting your child, they will be asked to provide identification.

Please take care when entering and leaving the kindergarten to close all gates and doors securely behind you; and to only allow your own children out of the gate.

If you have been unavoidably held up and will be late to collect your child, please consider making alternative arrangements for pick-up. If you are unable to do so, please phone the educators to let them know you will be late. Late fees may apply.

Please ensure you communicate with educators if your child will be absent- or you can mark them absent on Xap. If we do not hear from you, an educator will text or ring to enquire if your child will be attending the session for that day.

Enrolments for the following year will be called for in August/September.

Due to licensing regulations, children cannot be left at the service prior to starting time and are required to be collected promptly at the end of the session. This is a requirement of the Education and Care Services National Regulations.

No photographs of children will be posted on XAP as per our Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy.

Hours of Operation

West Wimmera Shire Council is committed to delivering the Universal Access program of 15 hours of kindergarten per week for children in the two years before school. WWSC kindergartens will operate 2 x 7.5-hour sessions per week.

Goroke Pre School operate an additional 1 x 5-hour Pre prep session.

Child-care sessions will operate four days x 9 hours.

Additional before and after kindergarten care is also available subject to available places.

Please refer to the link on our website for specific service session days and times.

The session arrangements outlined below are closely monitored on an annual basis and are **subject to change based on enrolment numbers**, regulations and legislation.

Fees

Sessions	Fee	Per
6mth – 3-year-old childcare	\$135	Per day
3 – 5-year-old childcare	\$125	Per day
Kindergarten	Free	2 years (3- and 4-year-old kindergarten)
Before kindergarten care	\$8	Per session
After kindergarten care	\$16	Per session
Late fee	\$1	Per child per minute

Free Kindergarten & Childcare Information

West Wimmera Shire Council Kaniva and Edenhope kindergartens offer 15 hours of free kindergarten per week for both 3- and 4-year-old children over a two-year period. Goroke Preschool provides 15 hours of free kindergarten per week for 3-year-olds for one year, followed by one year of Pre-Prep for 4-year-olds, offering 20 hours per week.

Incidental Costs

While kindergarten is free, some minor costs (e.g. photos, excursions, late pick-up fees) may apply.

Childcare Fees & Payments

Childcare invoices are issued fortnightly in advance via Xap. Families are encouraged to register with PayChoice for fee payments. BPay is also available. Unpaid fees after two weeks may result in cancellation of your childcare place.

If you're having difficulty paying, please contact the Early Years Coordinator on 13 99 72 as soon as possible.

Cancellations

Cancel with **at least 14 days' notice** (including holidays/travel) to avoid charges. Cancellations with less than 14 days' notice will incur regular childcare fees.

Fees still apply on public holidays, as they are included in fortnightly billing.

Orientation

During the initial days we invite you to speak with your child's educators to make individual arrangements to suit your family, if necessary, i.e., shorter sessions, parents to stay for a visit, etc. In this way we can tailor the beginning of kindergarten to suit each family rather than have designated orientation sessions.

Child Care Subsidy

You may be eligible for childcare subsidy. All information is at the following link www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/child-care-subsidy



Eligibility for Kindergarten

We provide equal access and participation for all eligible children.

A child is eligible to be enrolled in 3-year-old kindergarten if they turn 3 before 30 April. Children enrolling in 3-year-old kindergarten must have turned 3 before they can commence kindergarten (eg. a child who turns 3 in March is eligible to attend 3-year-old kindergarten in that year, however, cannot begin sessions until the date they turn 3). Enrolments will be accepted from the beginning of the year.

A child is eligible to be enrolled in 4-year-old kindergarten if they turn 4 before the 30 April in the year that they will attend.

A child who will turn 6 before the end of the year will need to apply for an exemption from school (please ask the kindergarten teacher for assistance if this is the case).

A child must be 6 months of age to be eligible for childcare.

Centre Closure

On occasions, we have been unable to secure a suitably qualified relief educator at short notice and childcare/ kindergarten has been unavoidably closed for a day. Should this occur, you will receive a phone call between 7.00am and 7.45am to notify you. We have a pool of relief staff we can call on in the event of staff illness however staff availability can be an issue.



The Edenhope Early Childhood Service (childcare) will be closed for 4 weeks over January.

All WWSC kindergartens and early childhood services will close on gazetted Victorian Public Holidays and designated All Staff Professional Development (PD)

Days. These include two days in January following the Australia Day public holiday and the Monday prior to Melbourne Cup Day, in accordance with Department of Education and Training (DE) requirements for compulsory PD.

Dates

Term Dates, Public Holidays and starting dates for the year will be advised in the confirmation of enrolment letter which will be emailed to you. Hard copies can be posted on request.

Code Red Days – Information

It is important that all our families understand the circumstances that apply to Edenhope Early Childhood Service and Goroke Preschool on days declared as Code Red.

Edenhope Early Childhood Service and Goroke Kindergarten are on the Category 4 – grass fire register and are required to close on declared Code Red days.

About Code Red Days: What happens on a Code Red Day?

Schools, kindergartens, and licensed childcare centres that have been identified as being at high fire risk and on the Department’s Bushfire At-Risk Register and grass fire register will close on days declared Code Red. Schools and services not on the Department’s Bushfire At-Risk Register will remain open, unless directly threatened by fire or another emergency.

Where possible, up to three days’ notice of a planned closure will be provided. Families should, however, expect that in some instances fewer than 3 days’ notice may be provided.

Advice will be provided to you directly by your kindergarten and/or WWSC.

When a children's service is closed for bushfire, no staff will remain on site. The final decision to close a children’s service will be confirmed no later than midday the day before the planned closure. This decision will not change, irrespective of an improvement in the weather forecast. This will help limit confusion and help your family plan for how your children will be cared for when their school, kindergarten or childcare centre is closed.

No child should be left at home alone or in the care of siblings on high-fire danger days.



Drop Off and Pick Up Times

Session	Drop Off time	Pick Up time
Kindergarten	8:30am	4:00pm
Childcare	8:00am	5:00pm

Late fees of \$1 per child per minute may be charged to your account.

We welcome you bringing your other children inside with you at drop off and pick up times. **Please do not leave children in parked cars** - it is illegal to leave a child unattended in a vehicle, regardless of the weather conditions.

If you have a baby asleep in the car or are finding it difficult to come inside for any reason, please contact the kindergarten educators so we can work on ways to assist you.



Priority of Access

The Edenhope Early Childhood Service Priority of Access Guidelines will be used to allocate available places where there are more families requiring care than places available. When filling vacant places, Edenhope Early Childhood Service will fill places according to the following priorities:

- Priority 1 – a child at risk of serious abuse or neglect
- Priority 2 – a child of a sole parent who satisfies, or of parents/carers who both satisfy, the work, training, study test
- Priority 3 – any other child. Within these main Priority categories, priority will be given to children in:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
 - Families which include a person with a disability
 - Families which include an individual whose adjusted taxable income does not exceed the lower income threshold of or who or whose partner is on income support
 - Families from a non-English speaking background
 - Socially isolated families
 - Sole parent families

The Victorian Mandatory Child Safe Standards

West Wimmera Shire adheres to Child Safe Standards and have policies and procedures in place to protect all children at our childcare service and kindergartens.

The Victorian Child Safe Standards comprise of eleven Standards as follows:

Standard 1 - Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.

Standard 2 - Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

Standard 3 - Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Standard 4 - Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

Standard 5 - Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

Standard 6 - People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

Standard 7 - Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.

Standard 8 - Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

Standard 9 - Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

Standard 10 - Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.


Standard 11 - Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

Please contact WWSC Child Safety Officer is the Early Years Coordinator, Nikki Hollis if you have any concerns regarding child safety on 13 99 72.

Reportable Conduct Scheme

The Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme seeks to improve organisations' responses to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their workers and volunteers. The scheme is established by the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (the Act).

The Reportable Conduct Scheme has been designed to ensure that the Commission will be aware of every allegation of certain types of misconduct involving children in relevant organisations that exercise care, supervision and authority over children. The Reportable Conduct Scheme imposes new obligations on heads of organisations that are within the scheme.

 A child is anyone who is under 18 years of age.



The Reportable Conduct Scheme does not replace the need to report allegations of child abuse, including criminal conduct and family violence to Victoria Police.



[Child safe standards West Wimmera Shire Council](#)

Our Philosophy and Programs

Each room has its own Philosophy Statement, developed in conjunction with families and relevant to the individual community. A copy of the Philosophy Statement is on display at each kindergarten.

Each childcare service and kindergarten follow the National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF). Rather than setting a curriculum, these documents guide our practice with children.

The Framework conveys the highest expectations for all children's learning from birth to five years and through the transitions to school. It communicates these expectations through the following five Learning Outcomes:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

The Framework provides broad direction for early childhood educators in early childhood settings to facilitate children's learning. Fundamental to the Framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by "*Belonging, Being and Becoming*"

More broadly, the Framework supports Goal 2 of the Melbourne Declaration on Education Goals for Young Australians, that:

All young Australians become:

- *Successful learners*
- *Confident and creative individuals*
- *Active and informed citizens.*

Each group has an individual program. Educators plan experiences based on children's interests and offer a flexible, play-based program. Our focus is on social skills, self-help skills, encouraging exploration and wonder, and setting children up to have a love of learning.

Parents and families are encouraged to play a part in the program – sharing your ideas, talking about what your family has been doing at home, helping out during a session, attending special events, being involved with the Parent Advisory Group, and giving feedback on the program.

The program is displayed at the service. Please speak to your child's educator to learn more.

Policies and Procedures

A copy of the WWSC Early Childhood Service and Kindergarten Cluster's Policies and Procedures folder is available at each service and on our website. These policies guide the day to day running of our Early Years Services. Educators use these policies to make fair and informed decisions.

Our policies are reviewed on a regular basis, with parents encouraged to be involved in this process.

Please feel free to speak to educators if you would like to view any of the policies.

[Home](#) / [Community](#) / [Family and children](#) / [Early years documents](#)

Interactions with Children

In managing interactions with children, our educators use positive behaviour guidance and redirection techniques appropriate to the age and developmental level of individual children. No form of physical punishment or emotional blackmail (i.e., bribes or threats) will be used to guide children when behaviour is unacceptable. This is in accordance with our Interactions with Children Policy. (add link to policy)

We encourage you to discuss the interactions with your child with educators if you have any concerns or if your child talks to you about something that has happened, and you would like more information.

What to bring to the service?

- A hat (we recommend a wide-brimmed or legionnaires hat rather than a cap to ensure better protection from the sun). No singlets either please (not sunsmart).
- A change of clothes (this is not just for toileting accidents – at childcare/ kindergarten we love to play with water and mud! Please help us keep your child comfortable after such great exploration by providing a change of clothes)
- Morning tea (fruit), lunch and afternoon tea
- A drink bottle filled with water
- Nappies, wipes, sunscreen if required

Comforters (such as teddies or blankets) are welcome at our Early Years Service. However, we ask that families please **avoid sending toys from home**. Personal toys can sometimes be lost or damaged, which may cause unnecessary distress for children. Our services provide a wide variety of age-appropriate resources and materials for children to explore and enjoy, so we kindly ask that personal toys remain at home.

We encourage, learn about and support healthy eating at kindergarten. We recommend fruit, yoghurt, cheese and biscuits, sultanas, sandwiches/rolls/wraps, etc. Please support us in the choices you make with your child about what to put in their snack/lunch box; and leave chips, chocolates, lollies, etc. for “sometimes foods”.

We do our best to get all your child’s belongings back to you. Please help us out by ensuring anything and everything that comes to childcare / kindergarten is **clearly labelled and has your child’s name on it**.

Children's Clothing

At our Early Years' Service, children are busy, active, and often messy as they learn and play!

We encourage you to dress your child in comfortable "play clothes" that you don't mind getting dirty. Activities such as painting, cooking, water play, gardening, and digging in the mud patch can be very messy. Clothing that is easy for your child to manage when toileting—such as elastic-waisted pants—is also helpful.



Please consider footwear that is safe for running, climbing, and playing outdoors, while still being comfortable for your child. Children may take their shoes off for activities such as playing in the sandpit or during indoor play, so shoes that are easy to put on and take off are best.

Kindergarten polo shirts, windcheaters, and hats will be available to order in Term One. While uniforms are not compulsory, they are comfortable and wash well. Please see the kindergarten teacher if you'd like to place an order.

Nappies and wipes are not supplied by the service, so please pack enough for your child each day if required.

In line with our SunSmart Policy, SPF 30+ sunscreen is applied before outdoor play from September through April, or whenever UV levels reach 3 or above. Sunscreen is provided, but you are welcome to supply your own. Please ensure your child wears clothing that covers their shoulders (e.g., t-shirts rather than singlets) for extra sun protection.

During winter, we encourage raincoats and gumboots—cold or rainy weather doesn't stop us from exploring outdoors! If you'd like, a raincoat and gumboots can be left at the service for your child to use.

National Quality Framework

West Wimmera Shire Council's kindergartens are licensed with the Department of Education (DE). It is a requirement of services receiving government funding to undertake continuous quality improvement.

Each kindergarten is working under the National Quality Standard, which is based on best practice and achieving positive outcomes for children. Part of this process involves each kindergarten developing a Quality Improvement Plan. Families are encouraged to have input into their kindergarten's Quality Improvement Plan. Kindergartens are assessed by DE and receive a rating which is displayed at the service.

Immunisations and “No Jab, No Play” legislation

Please provide a copy of your child’s immunisation record upon enrolment, and whenever your child receives new immunisations.

In 2016 the Victorian Government passed the “No Jab, No Play” legislation, which aims to reduce the risk of vaccine-preventable diseases. Early childhood education and care services must now have on record evidence that a child is up to date with their vaccinations or has an approved exemption.

Copies of your child’s immunisation history statement can be accessed by logging in to your MyGov or Medicare online account at:

www.medicareaustralia.vic.gov.au/online or by phone on 1800 653 809.

Documentation needs to show that your child:

- Is fully vaccinated for their age, or
- Is on a recognised catch-up schedule if their child has fallen behind with their vaccinations; or
- Has a medical reason not to be vaccinated

If your child has a medical reason they cannot be vaccinated, an Immunisation Exemption Medical Contradiction form will need to be obtained from Medicare and signed by a GP.

If your child is not currently up to date with their vaccinations, please see your Maternal and Child Health Nurse or Doctor.

In accordance with our policy, children who are not fully vaccinated will be excluded during an infectious illness outbreak, until the period of exclusion for all cases at the kindergarten has passed.

Medication

On occasion, medication may need to be given to a child while they are at kindergarten. Educators are only able to give medication that is prescribed to a child by a Doctor, i.e., antibiotics. Cough mixture, pain or fever relief medications cannot be given by educators unless prescribed by a doctor, with a label clearly stating the child’s name, the dose, and when the medication is to be given. A medication form authorising educators to administer the medication must be filled out by a parent/guardian at drop-off time. This form will be filled out further by educators when administering the medication and signed again by a parent/guardian at pick-up time.

Allergies and Medical Conditions

Each year, educators will discuss individual children's needs with families and develop an appropriate risk minimisation procedure if necessary. Children with allergies will have their photo and allergy displayed in the kindergarten, to assist adults in keeping children safe and well.

At this point in time, none of our kindergartens have a "nut-free policy". The needs of children with allergies will be assessed, and educators will advise you if there comes a time when it is deemed appropriate for the kindergarten to initiate such a policy.

If your child has an allergy or is anaphylactic, please discuss this with educators and ensure an appropriate plan is in place.

If your child is asthmatic or has a medical condition, please inform educators of their needs and management plan.

Please note: Children diagnosed with asthma or anaphylaxis **cannot remain at the service without their prescribed medication.** If medication is forgotten, families will be required to take their child with them to collect it before returning to care.

Illnesses

If your child is unwell, please keep them at home. This ensures your child's comfort and helps prevent the spread of illness to others. Children who require Panadol or Nurofen before attending are not well enough to be at the service.

To participate in childcare and kindergarten, children must be well enough to join in all aspects of the program, including outdoor play. As outdoor play is an important part of our program throughout all seasons, children who are too unwell to go outside should remain at home until they are fully recovered.

If your child becomes ill, please inform educators. For certain contagious diseases we are obliged to alert families so they can look for signs and symptoms in their own children (names will be kept confidential).

If your child becomes unwell at the service and not well enough to participate in the program, educators will request that the child is collected from the service (this includes children observed with persistent visible nasal discharge, persistent cough and high temperature 38°C or above). Exclusion periods do apply for certain illnesses/diseases, as set out by the Department of Human Services. Details of exclusion periods can be found on the next page.

In accordance with our "Dealing with Infectious Diseases" policy; if your child has been suffering from vomiting or diarrhoea, they are required to be excluded from kindergarten for 24 hours after their last vomit or loose bowel motion. Please

support us in preventing the spread of infection by keeping your child home for the full exclusion period.

To support prevention of illnesses we encourage appropriate hand washing procedures and the use of hand sanitiser which is available at the kindergarten.

Please refer to Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness and Hygiene policy

[Exclusion periods for primary schools and children's services](#)

Health Care Record

Regulations require the service to read your child's health care record to improve outcomes for children. Please bring them in on your first day to show the kindergarten teacher or let them know if you don't have one.

Bus Travel

All West Wimmera Shire Council Kindergartens are fortunate to have access to school buses for rural children travelling to and from kindergarten.

- **Who can use the bus?**

In line with Public Transport Victoria guidelines, only children aged **4 years and over** may travel on school buses. **Bus travel is not available for childcare enrolments or 3-year-old kindergarten children at Edenhope.**

- **How the service is managed**

Local schools are responsible for administering the school bus service. Families can collect the required forms and information about bus routes directly from the school.

- **Cost and availability**

At present, bus travel is free of charge. However, it is only available to kindergarten children if there is enough space on the bus.

- **Forms and policies**

Families wishing to use the bus must complete and sign the required forms and follow all bus traveller policies and procedures. Please speak with your child's kindergarten teacher, who will assist you in completing the mandatory authorisation form and risk management plan and ensure all school and kindergarten documentation is in place.

- **Communication of absences**

It is essential that parents inform both educators and bus drivers if their child will not be attending kindergarten or travelling on the bus.

- Please notify the kindergarten via the **kindergarten mobile phone (preferably by text message)**.
- If texting is not possible, a message may be left on the answering machine, which is checked regularly.

Failure to notify us of an absence may trigger the "**missing bus child procedure**", which involves contacting families, the school, and the bus company, and may lead to a search being conducted. For this reason, timely communication is vital to ensure children's safety.

Communication

Newsletters and notices will come out regularly to alert you to special events, changes, or news from the kindergarten. These will generally come via Xap alerts but may be placed in your child's note-pocket or tub. Please check this each time you come to kindergarten so that you don't miss out on important information.

Other information and updates from the kindergarten can be seen on the West Wimmera Shire Council's Facebook page. Please note West Wimmera Shire does not operate individual kindergarten Facebook pages.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are an exciting time, and many families choose to celebrate these with a cake. If you would like to, you are welcome to bring a cake to kindergarten for your child to share with their friends.

For the safety of children with allergies, we request that you please bring in the ingredients label from shop-bought cakes, or the ingredients list for home-made cakes.

We respectfully ask that you do not bring lolly bags or party games to kindergarten.

If you do not wish for your child to participate in birthday celebrations, please let the educators know.

Parent Advisory Group

Each service has a voluntary Parent Advisory Group (PAG). The PAG is an opportunity for you to become involved in organising fundraising and assisting with additional equipment purchases and service improvements. The PAG meets regularly, and all parents and guardians are invited to attend and contribute to the discussions. This is a great opportunity to meet new people in your area.

Respecting your Privacy

To provide families with the highest standard of service, and to meet legal requirements, we are required to collect personal information from you about your child and parents/guardians before and during the course of a child's enrolment in our kindergartens. We are committed to protecting your privacy and we abide by the Australian Privacy Principles contained within the Privacy Act.

Feedback and Complaints

West Wimmera Shire and our educators welcome family involvement and feedback. If you have any concerns about the kindergarten or your child's experience, please speak with an educator as soon as possible. For complaints, contact the Early Years Coordinator or Manager Community Support and Wellbeing on 13 99 72. If your concern remains unresolved, you can contact the Department of Education – Grampians Quality Assessment and Regulation Division on 4334 0589.

Our full Complaints Policy is available from educators or on our website.



We are SunSmart - a note for families

Too much of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer.

UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life. Skin cancer is the most common cancer in Australia. It is also one of the most preventable cancers.

You can't see or feel the sun's UV. Whatever the weather, if the UV levels are three or more, it's important to *Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek and Slide!*

Sun protection times

Don't just wait for hot and sunny days to use sun protection. Check the sun protection times each day so your family can be protected when they need to be.



Daily local sun protection times and weather details are available from the SunSmart widget on our website, in the weather section of the newspaper, on the SunSmart website at sunsmart.com.au and as a free SunSmart app. Sun protection times can also be found at the Bureau of Meteorology website and live UV levels are available from ARPANSA.

SunSmart membership

Our service is a registered member of Cancer Council Victoria's SunSmart Program. We aim to protect children and staff from too much UV.

Sun protection and skin cancer prevention is a shared responsibility. Please help support our SunSmart membership and sun protection efforts by ensuring your child follows the SunSmart measures encouraged by educators at the service and when at home.

During the daily local sun protection times (usually from mid-August to the end of April), **use these 5 SunSmart steps – even if it's cool and cloudy.**

1. **SLIP** on covering clothing

Dress your child in clothing that covers as much skin as possible (e.g. elbow length tops with a higher neckline or collar and longer style shorts or skirts). Densely woven fabrics are best.



2. **SLOP** on SPF 30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen

Apply a generous amount of sunscreen at the start of the day and provide permission for sunscreen to be reapplied to your child before they go outdoors. This should be applied every two hours. From 3 years of age, under supervision, please help your child apply their own sunscreen so they can start to learn independent skills.

3. **SLAP** on a hat that protects the face, neck and ears

Choose a wide-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hat. Peak caps and visors do not offer enough UV protection. Hats that can be adjusted at the crown or can be tied at the front to help secure it on a child's head are best. If the hat is secured with a long strap and toggle, ensure it has a safety snap, place the strap at the back of their head or trim the length so it doesn't become a choking hazard. Please help your child remember to bring and wear their approved **sun hat**. Please keep this at service so they will always be ready for outdoor activities and play during the day. For the walk to and from the service and weekends, please have an extra **home hat** to help keep children protected at home.

4. **SEEK** shade

Choose shady spots for play whenever possible.

5. **SLIDE** on wrap-around AS1067 sunglasses

When appropriate and practical, help protect the eyes with sunglasses.

Need information in another language?

Call 13 14 50 and ask to be connected to Cancer Council Victoria in your language

sunsmart.com.au



We understand that you are likely to have lots of questions regarding your child commencing kindergarten and we are more than happy to answer them. If you have any concerns, questions, ideas, or feedback, please talk to educators at drop off or pick up times. Alternatively, you can call or email the service and arrange a time to talk.

We look forward to working together with all of our families to ensure your child's experience at our services is a positive one.



COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Child Safe Organisation

West Wimmera Shire Council is committed to the safety of all children and has a zero tolerance of child abuse.



Acknowledgment of Country

The municipal area of West Wimmera lies within the traditional lands of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Nations. Council respects and acknowledges the unique Aboriginal cultural heritage and acknowledges and pays respect to their ancestors.



West Wimmera Shire Council are committed to providing child safe environments where children's wellbeing, learning and growth is holistically nurtured in a safe, inclusive and supportive community.

Get in touch with Council

13 99 72

Email us: council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au