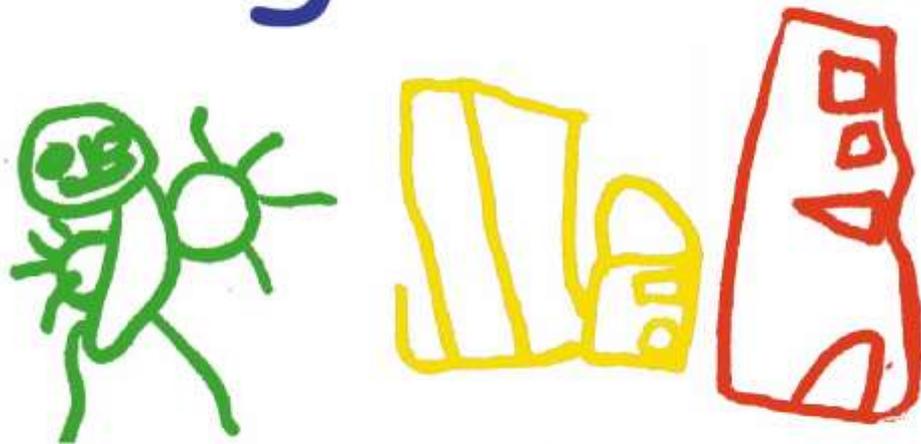


Parent Information Booklet

Ridgehaven



Preschool

479 Milne Road, Ridgehaven 5097

Telephone 8265 3140

Contents Page

Welcome to Ridgehaven Preschool	1
Parent Involvement	2
Preschool Session Times	3
Attendance Information	4
Ridgehaven Preschool programs	5
Transition to Reception	6
What to bring	7
Sun Protection and Hot Weather Policy	8
Behaviour Guidance Policy	9
Healthy Food and Nutrition Policy	10

Welcome to Ridgehaven Preschool

At Ridgehaven Preschool we believe in, and incorporate in our program, the Ridgehaven P-7 values of

- Honesty
- Caring
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Excellence

Ridgehaven Preschool is a positive, secure and caring learning environment where respectful relationships are formed through a child-directed play based curriculum using the five learning outcomes in the **EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK (EYLF)**.

When children feel safe and supported, they can confidently learn, explore and grow. **(IDENTITY)**

Ridgehaven Preschool educators are committed to working in partnership with families within the local community to serve their needs.

We support and recognise the importance and diversity of families, and acknowledge parents as the child's first and most influential educators.

All families are welcomed, and their ideas and contributions are valued and reflected in the program. **(CONNECTED TO OUR WORLD)**

Ridgehaven Preschool educators attend to children's wellbeing, both the physical (fine and gross motor skills) and psychological aspects by modelling healthy lifestyles, and supporting children in their understandings of emotional regulation and mediation with their peers.

Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing, and take responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing. **(WELLBEING)**

Ridgehaven Preschool's play-based context provides opportunities for challenge, discovery, creativity, high expectations and equity, to cater for the individual needs of children.

Children build their confidence and develop dispositions for learning and a range of skills. **(CONFIDENT LEARNER)**

Ridgehaven Preschool educators value positive attitudes and competencies in literacy and numeracy.

Children become successful learners when proficient in these important aspects of communication. **(COMMUNICATION)**

School Governing Council and Parent Fundraising Committee

The School Governing Council is the parent decision making body within the school.

Parent Fundraising Committee is a group which fundraises for the school.

Preschool parents are encouraged and welcome to become involved in either or both groups. Information can be obtained from the Principal by calling 8264 5277.

Parent Involvement

We encourage your involvement in our Preschool program here at Ridgehaven. You are always welcome to stay and spend time with your child, and other children, perhaps reading a story, making a junk construction or building with blocks – whatever is your thing! Perhaps you have a specific skill to share? Cooking? Computers? Gardening? Music? Please talk with a staff member if you would like to register your interest.



We also rely on parents' help to assist with the efficient running of our centre and keeping it attractive and safe for our little clients. It is an expectation that, in fairness to everyone, each family will take responsibility for one load of washing (the smocks and rugs – **NO IRONING NECESSARY!**) at least once in their child's year at Preschool.

There are also other ways you could contribute towards the general maintenance of the Preschool e.g. raking the sandpit or sweeping the cubby house, verandah and paths.



Other responsibilities could be for the following jobs–

- Incidental weeding/light pruning
- Naming new stock
- Taking small jobs home to do (e.g. preparing craft 'bits')
- End of term clean up

Watch for notices as the need arises.

We look forward to you volunteering your help, and making a small contribution to keeping Ridgehaven Preschool an attractive centre for all our families.

Ridgehaven Preschool Session Times

Ridgehaven Preschool provides:

Playgroup for 0-4 year olds - Friday 9:00-11:00am

Early Entry for 3½ year olds with additional needs e.g. speech or developmental delays

Preschool for 4-5 year olds and 3 year old Aboriginal children – 15 hours per week.

This will be in combination of full and half days. *Children are entitled to **four terms of Preschool** education prior to commencing reception.*

Session times are as follows:

Group 1

Mondays and Wednesdays 9:00am – 3:00pm

& 3 hours on a Tuesday or Thursday (To be decided at enrolment)

Group 2

Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00am – 3:00pm

& 3 hours on a Monday or Wednesday (To be decided at enrolment)

Transition to School Program is provided for children the term prior to commencing school at Ridgehaven School – **Term 4.**

Materials and Service Fees

The Government provides an operating grant for Preschools. However, parents' financial contributions are needed so the centre can provide a stimulating and enjoyable learning program. **Materials and Service Fees are \$90.00 per term.**

Parents will receive an account for the full year. **The School office is very happy to make arrangements for you to pay in instalments.** Small regular payments are always welcome. **Payments can also be made via the QKR app.** *See information handout.*

Emergency Contact Information

This is completed on enrolment and it is very important that detailed information is recorded e.g. food allergies etc. so that all precautions can be taken for your child's safety. **This information needs to be updated if conditions change i.e. child develops an allergy, change in medication or contact details.**

Attendance Information

Our Preschool is staffed on attendance figures, so regular attendance is important to maintain staffing levels. Coming to Preschool regularly is also at the best interests of your child and promotes good attendance habits for school.

Sickness

Please keep your child at home if he/she is ill as it is unfair to everyone if sick children come to Preschool. If your child contracts a contagious disease e.g. chicken pox, measles, mumps, head lice – please inform Preschool staff so that we may advise other parents. (This will be done without naming the child).

Communication

Our Preschool Newsletter is sent home regularly informing you of any upcoming events etc. Please watch for it, as well as the Ridgehaven School Newsletter, which informs parents of whole school events, policies and news. A separate notice will be sent home for any excursions, incursions, performances etc. which will require your signature.

These notes will be in your child's **Communication Pocket**. **Please check this pocket regularly.**

The **Skoolbag app** is also available to deliver school notices directly to your Smartphone. (See staff, and the provided handout for information on how to install).

Each child has a tray for their belongings or any work they may wish to take home. Please remind them to check their tray at the end of the session as their work is priceless!

Fruit Time

Please send a healthy snack e.g. fruits or vegetables for each fruit time and a named **WATER** bottle. As our centre has a '**Healthy Food Policy**', we ask parents to send suitable snacks, preferably fruit, alternatively cheese, dry biscuits, sandwiches, dry fruit and **NO NUT PRODUCTS** due to some students who suffer **ANAPHYLAXIS** (highly allergic reaction to nut products).

Ridgehaven Preschool Programs

Playgroup

- Meets on a regular weekly basis and caters for children from birth to four years of age
- Offers a variety of activities suitable for younger children (pasting, cutting, painting, playdough, puzzles, games etc.)
- Provides an opportunity for parents and children to meet and have fun together while children learn to socialise outside of the home environment.
- Playgroup is organised by parents and is held on **Fridays from 9:00am to 11:00am.**
- Playgroup contribution is **\$20 per child** per term.
- Payment can be made through Playgroup Leaders or through the **QKR app.**

Early Entry to Preschool

Children with additional needs e.g. Speech or developmental delays, are eligible to commence Early Entry **two terms prior to their Preschool Enrolment Date.**

Early Entry fee - \$15 per term for one session a week. \$25 per term for two sessions a week.

Preschool

Our program is activity based and is constantly reviewed, with a balance of free play and structured activities. While the activities are designed to develop the skills for life and learning, we aim for the children to have fun and to be successful.

Our curriculum follows the **Early Years Learning Framework for Australia – Belonging, Being and Becoming.**

Within this Framework there are five Learning Outcomes:

- Children have 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

We aim to encourage and further develop:

- A positive attitude to learning, risk taking and a willingness to complete a task.
- Self-confidence and consideration for others.
- Decision making and problem solving skills.
- The ability to work with others, whilst making an independent contribution.
- Pre reading, writing and mathematical skills.

Health Checks and Developmental Services

These are held at various times during the year. You will be advised when your child is eligible by newsletter/letter. If you have any concerns about your child's development please let the staff know as we may be able to make referrals to other DECD services such as speech pathologists or disability coordinators.

Transition to Reception

One term prior to commencing Reception at Ridgehaven School, children participate in our **Transition Program**. Children have the opportunity to visit the Reception class weekly for extending periods of time. Parents will be informed of the date Transition commences and a meeting with Leadership will be arranged at the beginning of the transition period.

Parents of children not attending Ridgehaven School will need to contact their chosen school to arrange a transition program for their child.

Arrival and Dismissal

Parents and Caregivers are requested to bring children inside the Centre when the session begins and ensure that one of the staff is aware of your child's arrival. You are encouraged to begin an activity with your child before leaving.

IF SOMEONE OTHER THAN A PARENT will be collecting your child, please advise one of the staff in the Centre and write details on the small white board provided. We ask that parents/caregivers **collect children before collecting other children from school**, as children may become distressed when parents or caregivers are late. If you are delayed, please notify the staff who will reassure your child.

At the end of sessions we often have group time. Please help us to create a quiet environment for this special learning time by observing the children quietly. Alternatively, please wait on the verandah or in the kitchen if you have toddlers or want to chat with other parents. Children are dismissed individually to parents.

What to bring...

- A named bag to keep Children's belongings in
- A healthy snack e.g. fruit, vegetables, cheese, sultanas. **WE ARE A NUT FREE CENTRE**, please avoid sending muesli bars, Nutella, peanut paste etc. No sweet biscuits, cakes, chocolates or lollies
- Please provide a named water bottle. Water is available to children at all times. Please do not send cordial as it often spills, attracting ants & staining carpets, etc.
- A named sun hat - broad rimmed to protect ears & back of neck.
- A change of clothes
- Please do not send your child in thongs as they are dangerous for climbing
- Dress your children appropriately, as sometimes kindy can get a bit messy. We do provide painting smocks.
- Please encourage your child to leave their toys at home as they may get lost or damaged, causing distress to your child.
- **PLEASE NAME ALL BELONGINGS!**

Helpful Hints for Settling Children into Preschool

- Prepare your child by explaining that you will be leaving for a short time.
- Always leave a distressed child in the care of a staff member.
- Reassure your child that you will return at their designated pickup time.
- Always say goodbye and never sneak away. Nothing is more frightening for a child, than to turn around to tell you something and to find that you have disappeared.
- Do not prolong the separation process. Leave once you have said goodbye and do not keep coming back, this only serves to upset your child more.
- In almost all situations, children do not remain upset for very long after the parent has left. Parents need to be understanding and make the separation process a positive experience. Lots of praise helps.

Feel free to phone Preschool to reassure yourself that your child has settled in happily.



RIDGEHAVEN PRESCHOOL

SUN PROTECTION AND HOT WEATHER POLICY

Sun Protection

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world. Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Sun exposure in the first ten years of life determines, to a substantial degree, the potential for skin damage, including skin cancer developing in later life. Outdoor activities are part of a child's day at preschool, so skin protection strategies must become a part of their daily routine.

At Ridgehaven Preschool staff and students use the following skin protection strategies:

- Staff and students wear sunsafe hats outside (legionnaire style or broad brimmed) all year round. We have a 'NO HAT, NO PLAY' policy, loan hats can be provided. However, during May to August UV radiation levels will be monitored daily by the Preschool and if the UV levels are under 3, hats may be removed at the discretion of the staff to give opportunity for sunlight to provide vitamin D – vital for the development and maintenance of strong, healthy bones.
- Staff and students wear tops that cover shoulders and preferably with collars to protect the neck and elbow-length sleeves and longer-style shorts/skirts to protect as much skin as possible(i.e. **no singlets or tank tops**). Spare t-shirts to be loaned to children who do not comply.
- From the 1st September to 30th April parents apply broad spectrum, water resistant SPF 30+ sunscreen to their child before coming to preschool, and supply a NAMED **Roll-On** 30+sunscreen for their child to reapply after lunch, or every 2 hours if outdoors, or on any day in May to August when the UV is 3 and above.
- Students are encouraged to avoid direct exposure in the sun between 10.00 am and 3.00pm (11.00 am to 4.00pm during daylight saving times) as UV radiation levels are strongest over these hours.
- Whenever possible, outdoor activities are in shaded areas such as under the covered deck and sandpit, verandah or in tree shade.
- On days when UV radiation levels are 3 or above, outside play is at the discretion of staff
- Staff incorporate sunsafe awareness into teaching activities. Sun protection information will be promoted to staff, families and visitors via newsletters, assemblies, website, flyers etc.

Hot Weather

Small children are at greater risk of suffering from heat illness than adults. This hot weather policy is implemented for their protection on days of extreme heat.

Shade - Activities conducted in hot weather are undertaken in shaded areas e.g. not on exposed slide or rubber play surface, to reduce burn injuries.

Drinks - Children are reminded to drink water frequently. Drink bottles are accessible to children at all times.

Clothing- Parents to dress children in clothing that minimises heat gain, in layers that can be easily removed during activity and a type that is sunsafe. Refer www.arpansa.gov.au/radiationprotection/factsheets/isUVProtection.cfm

Lunch - Parents are encouraged to pack food in insulated containers with a freezer block or frozen water. Staff will store lunch boxes in a cool place.

A copy of this policy is displayed in the centre at all times. The policy will apply to all users of the centre, including playgroups and volunteers. This policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly by staff and modified as required to ensure continued relevance to the centre.

This policy will work best when implemented by staff and parents together.

We look forward to your cooperation. Preschool Staff Team.

Endorsed by staff and Governing Council (18.5.17), to be reviewed in three years.

We believe that everyone has the right to feel safe all the time. Children learn best when they experience success and have positive self-esteem.

We accept that children feel angry, frustrated and upset at times, and need help to express these feelings appropriately.

Staff and families need to share responsibility, being consistent at all times, creating a safe, secure environment for children, and modelling appropriate behaviours.

As a staff team we promote positive behaviour and interactions by:

- valuing children as individuals
- ensuring that limits set are reasonable and understood by all children and adults
- using positive verbal and non-verbal guidance
- demonstrating empathy and sensitivity to each child
- acknowledging and modelling appropriate, and respectful behaviour
- intentional teaching of appropriate behaviour and play skills within the curriculum
- encouraging children to accept responsibility
- helping children to recognise and handle their feelings
- being consistent and follow through when managing behaviours
- encouraging open two way communication with families

We will respond to challenging behaviours by:

- supporting children to problem solve, negotiate, find resolutions and manage emotions appropriately
- using 'Restorative Justice' practices that support children to empathise with others and restore relationships
- communicating with and involving families when necessary
- planning, implementing, monitoring and reviewing individual behaviour plans in partnership with families and support services

Behaviour guidance strategies:

1. *remind children of expectations and limits*
2. *offer choice/ give warnings*

If the challenging behaviours continue:

3. *redirect the child to another activity*
after discussing the safe/ appropriate way to play

This policy will work best when implemented by staff and families together.

We look forward to your cooperation.

Preschool Staff Team

Endorsed by staff and Governing Council (16-5-16), to be reviewed in three years.

RIDGEHAVEN PRESCHOOL
HEALTHY FOOD & NUTRITION POLICY

This preschool promotes safe, healthy eating habits in line with the DECD wellbeing strategy. We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit the children in three ways:

1. Short term: maximises growth, development, activity levels and good health.
2. Long term: minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life.
3. Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in learning experiences.

Therefore:

- staff at this preschool model and encourage healthy eating behaviours
- food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive environment for all children
- families and caregivers are encouraged to supply healthy foods for their children at preschool

This food policy has been established after consultation with staff and parents within the preschool community.

Curriculum

Our preschool's food and nutrition curriculum:

- *is consistent with **Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia, and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating***
- includes activities that provide children with knowledge, attitudes and skills to make positive healthy eating choices and learn about the variety of foods available for good health
- includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food
- integrates nutrition across the curriculum where possible, relating to the Early Years Learning Framework Learning Outcome: '**Children have a strong sense of wellbeing**'

Learning Environment

Children at our preschool:

- have fresh, clean, filtered tap water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day
- bring their own named drink bottle of water
- eat routinely at scheduled break times
- eat in a positive, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours
- use the preschool garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods

Our preschool:

- provides rewards/encouragements that are not related to food or drink
- understands and promotes the importance of breakfast and regular meals for children
- teaches the importance of healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum
- is a breastfeeding friendly site

Food Supply

Our preschool:

- encourages **healthy food and drink choices** for children
- ensures healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive
- displays **nutrition information** and promotional materials about healthy eating
- has the following guidelines for families for **food brought from home** or provided by staff within preschool time:

Fruit Time:

Families and carers are encouraged to supply fruit and vegetables at fruit time to:

- provide children with important minerals and vitamins
- encourage a taste for healthy foods
- encourage chewing which promotes oral muscle development

Fresh fruit, vegetables, yogurt or a slice of cheese are recommended for fruit time.

We understand that at times families may run out of fruit. A healthy sandwich (multigrain or wholemeal bread), with savoury filling, or plain unsalted crackers (e.g. Vitawheat) are acceptable.

Lunch Time:

Families and carers are encouraged to **supply a sandwich, fruit, yoghurt, vegie sticks** etc.

Drinks and Food unsuitable for consumption at preschool include: cordial, soft drinks, fruit juice, packaged foods, cakes, biscuits, lollies, rollups and **ALL NUT and SESAME** products e.g. Nutella, sesame coated sliced bread and rolls. Please note we are an 'Allergy and Nut Aware' preschool. Please refer to the Ridgehaven Primary School 'Allergies and Nut Awareness' policy.

Birthday Celebrations and Special Occasions

- Birthdays will be celebrated at preschool with a pretend birthday cake, candles, the birthday song, claps, hurrahs, a certificate and sticker. We would appreciate it if sweet treats are not shared at preschool as they are not part of our Healthy Food and Nutrition Policy
- It is acknowledged that on some very special occasions e.g. Christmas parties, cultural and fundraising events, the school community will want food that does not adhere to this Healthy Food and Nutrition Policy.

Food Safety

Our preschool:

- has staff who have completed a 'Food Handling' professional development course
- promotes and teaches food safety to children as part of the curriculum during food learning/cooking activities
- provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff

Food-Related Health Support Planning

Our preschool:

- liaises with families to support children with health support plans that are related to food issues e.g. diabetics, coeliacs, food allergies.

Working with Families, Health Services and Industry

Our preschool:

- invites families and carers to be involved in the review of our site food and nutrition policy
- provides information to families and carers about healthy eating through a variety of ways including:
 - Newsletters
 - Policy development/review
 - Information on enrolment
 - Pamphlet/poster displays

This policy will work best when implemented by staff and families together.

We look forward to your cooperation. Preschool Staff Team.

Endorsed by staff and Governing Council (16-5-16), to be reviewed in three years.

"Children learning through play"

The Ridgehaven Preschool provides a positive,
safe and caring learning environment for the
early years.

We look forward to sharing this
experience with you and your child.

Ridgehaven



Preschool

2018