

Welcome to Binnowee

We are looking forward to having you and your child as part of our preschool community. The information in this handbook will hopefully answer most of your questions. However, if there is something you wish to discuss further please do not hesitate to ask. We will be more than happy to assist you where we can.

Organisation

Binnowee Kindergarten in a community based, not for profit preschool, set up as a parent co-operative. The preschool is managed by a parent Board of Management. The Board is responsible for the financial management of the preschool, employment of staff, policy decisions and works in conjunction with the Director to ensure the smooth running of the preschool. The Annual General meeting is held in March each year. We appreciate and rely on the support and involvement of parents. The Board encourages and welcomes the participation of parents at its meetings and social functions. The Board meets once a month, usually on the third Tuesday of the month at 7.30 pm.

Binnowee Kindergarten is licensed by the Department of Education, Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate. The preschool must adhere to the children's services laws and regulations in order to receive funding from the Department of Education. We rely on three sources of income to operate; state funding, fees and minimal fundraising.

History of Binnowee

Binnowee, which is an Aboriginal word meaning "a green place" or "a place of many birds" has been operating as a preschool since 1935. Miss Winifred Macourt began the preschool and operated it first from the home of Mr. S Oxley, near Thompson's corner.

The land at 6 New Line Road was purchased in 1956 and the buildings officially opened in 1957. In 1972 extensions to the preschool were completed bringing it to its present size.

Binnowee Philosophy

At Binnowee our vision is to create a nurturing environment that partners with families and the community and holds value in children and their learning. We aim to provide a quality preschool where children, families and staff feel a sense of belonging and value in a collaborative and inclusive environment. As the welfare and wellbeing of each child is paramount, Binnowee aims to prioritise children's safety and instil a child safe culture at our preschool by implementing the Child Safe Standards.

We believe that each child is unique and a capable learner.

We recognise each child as an individual who is valued and treated with acceptance, respect, consideration and care. We acknowledge that each child brings a diverse range of experiences, perspectives, knowledge, skills and interests to the preschool which contribute to their learning. We see children as strong, capable, resourceful and resilient learners and encourage them to be active participants in their own learning. At Binnowee we respect children as capable learners by including their contributions in the program and encouraging children to make choices and follow through on their own learning and interests.

We believe that children deserve quality education and care.

We aim to provide children with a quality educational program that supports play-based learning. We believe in creating a stimulating environment that develops and extends on children's interests, strengths, abilities and fosters a curiosity about their world. We aim to provide children with a balanced educational program that includes play-based

learning, spontaneous experiences and intentional teaching that is age appropriate, child focused and open ended. At Binnowee we believe play provides opportunities for children to learn about their world as they discover, create, investigate and imagine. Children guide the pedagogical program and are encouraged and supported to make independent choices in their explorations and play. We aim to provide a flexible routine where children have time to engage in learning and play, explore their interests and develop and master skills at their own pace.

We believe in fostering positive relationships with children.

As educators we support children in developing a strong sense of wellbeing through nurturing and trusting relationships. We believe that through the development of secure and supportive relationships, children develop confidence and feel respected and valued. By fostering positive relationships, children are assisted to develop the skills and understandings they need to interact positively with others. At Binnowee we aim to create a culture of inclusion and belonging where children practice and master a variety of skills and extend the boundaries of their world with the support of their educators.

We believe in fostering mutual, respectful partnerships with families.

We believe that quality early childhood education is enhanced by the successful partnership between families and staff where there is understanding of each other's expectations and values. At Binnowee we partner with families to provide a quality preschool that is collaborative and where everyone has a sense of community and belonging. We believe that parents are children's primary educators and carers, and that family is the most important influence in a child's growing years. We respect and honour the histories, cultures, languages, traditions, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families. We believe a successful partnership is built on trust, open communication, shared insights and shared decision-making. We encourage each family to participate in the preschool community and we support and welcome their interest, contributions and involvement.

We believe in supporting children to have respect for the environment and the world around us.

The natural environment at Binnowee offers open ended learning opportunities and we believe this green place needs to be nurtured and respected to ensure long term environmental sustainability. We embed sustainable practices into all aspects of our preschool and believe that involving children in the care, maintenance and sustainability of the natural environment instils value and respect for our world.

We believe in a sense of belonging to the local and wider community.

At Binnowee we hold value in recognising the traditional custodians of the land, the Dharug people. Binnowee is named from the Aboriginal word meaning "a green place". We aim to ensure that children at Binnowee have the opportunity to gain an understanding of the significance and importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage. We believe that pronouncing an Acknowledgement of Country is a way of showing awareness of and respect for the traditional custodians of the land.

We believe that the wider community plays an important part in children's lives and we aim to collaborate with people, services and agencies to support children and families at Binnowee. We believe that fostering relationships and community connections leads to enhancing positive outcomes for everyone at Binnowee.

We believe that dedicated educators provide quality early childhood environments.

We acknowledge that staff are professionals who are committed to providing excellence in early education. The staff bring diverse experiences, strengths, cultural backgrounds, knowledge, talents and interests to create a stimulating work environment that is based on a culture of encouragement, support and respect. We have a commitment to continuous improvement and ongoing professional learning as we believe this enhances outcomes for children and families. At Binnowee we engage in reflective practice and professional development to build on our knowledge of the profession and to support continuous improvement. Our preschool environment is a place of collaboration, trust, respect, honesty and professionalism and we value the strong culture of belonging and positivity we foster.

The staff team

A maximum of 40 children attend the preschool each day. The children are divided into two classes with twenty children per class. The classrooms are known as the Frontroom and the Backroom. We share the indoor and outdoor spaces and all forty children can play in the outdoor areas simultaneously. Each classroom has an Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) along with two Diploma qualified educators. There is an additional Early Childhood trained teacher who works 9am – 3.30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. This teacher works specifically to provide inclusion for the children with additional needs, as

well as satisfying other teaching requirements. An additional educator is employed from 10am – 2pm each day to cover for programming time and lunch breaks.

The preschool also employs a finance administrator who works two days per week and an office administrator who works two days per week.

The Director works four days per week and is also the lead teacher in the Frontroom on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

The majority of the staff have been with Binnowee for many years and we have an experienced and committed team.

Frontroom educators:

Sara Andersson: Director and ECT; Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Works in the office on Thursday.

Kerrie Brice: ECT and Additional Needs coordinator; Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Grace Samuel: Diploma qualified; Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Debbie Lucas: ECT: Thursday and Friday. Educational Leader and has time for EL duties on Wednesdays. Kelly Freer: Diploma qualified: programming relief on Monday and Tuesday. Frontroom on Thursday and

Nicole Freer: Diploma Qualified; Thursday and Friday.

Gagan Jagpal: Certificate III qualified; regular casual staff member. Deb Hordern: Office administrator on Monday and Wednesday.

Backroom educators:

Kath Blyth: ECT: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Kathy Simpson: Diploma qualified; full time. Donna Bissett: Diploma qualified, Monday-Friday.

Julie Watts: ECT: Thursday and Friday

Archie Rokadia: Certificate III qualified; programming relief on Thursday and Friday.

Lynda Donaldson: Finance administrator; Monday and Wednesday.

The staff all have current first aid and CPR qualifications, along with child protection qualifications. The staff are all mandatory reporters under the child protection legislation and you will find more information about this in the preschool Child protection policy. The staff all attend and engage with regular professional development and learning throughout each year. All of our early childhood trained teachers are registered with NESA for teacher accreditation.

Self Assessment and the Quality Improvement Plan

The preschool's Quality Improvement Plan and self assessment document is on the Self Assessment Padlet and a copy is emailed out to parents on a regular basis as it is updated throughout the year. This plan contains our goals for improvements and the areas we feel we excel in. Please see the director for further information regarding the Quality Improvement Plan and the self assessment process.

Hours and Days of Operation

Binnowee is open between 8.30am and 4pm Monday to Friday during state school terms and is closed on all Public Holidays. We are a two unit preschool with 20 children in each class. Binnowee offers 2 or 3 day programs for four year old children and a 2 day program for 3 three year olds. The 2 day programs are Thurs/Fri. Our 3 day programs are Mon/Tues/Wed.

Fees

Fees are set by the Board of Management to cover the running costs of the preschool and are payable in advance. Fee Statements are emailed out. Term 1 fees are due by the second week of term. Fees for terms 2, 3 and 4 are due in the first week of each term.

Fees are to be paid by direct deposit via the internet. Internet payment details will be included on your fee statement. Your child's name should be included to identify your payment when paying by direct deposit.

If parents are having difficulty paying fees we encourage them to discuss this with the director or the Clerical Assistant. Failure to pay fees will be referred to the Board of Management and may result in the child's position at preschool being revoked.

Early removal: If a child commences at Binnowee but leaves before the end of the year the fees for the rest of that term are payable.

Temporary Absence: If a child is absent due to illness or holidays full fees are still payable. If a parent wishes a position to be held vacant for their child in this situation then full fees are to be paid for the whole of the absence. It is not the policy of the preschool to fill vacancies arising from such events with a temporary/casual enrolment.

Fees are not charged for school holidays when the preschool is closed.

Financial Assistance: Please see the director for further details if required.

Preschool Philosophy and Practice

The early childhood years are crucial in terms of overall development of a person. What takes place during these formative years plays an important part in determining the way a person feels about themselves, the way a person relates to other people, a person's development of language, their problem solving capacity, their gross motor development, fine motor development and the way a person thinks.

At Binnowee Kindergarten we recognise the significance of these early childhood years, the subsequent importance of early childhood education and our role as educators in assisting and fostering the development of children. The preschool program plays an important part in not only preparing a child for school, but also for life. We endeavour to help each child fulfil their maximum potential and to provide the building blocks for future learning and development.

Our preschool program is based on the Early Years Learning Framework. The Framework's vision is for all children to experience play based learning that is engaging and builds success for life. We use this framework to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities.

The Early Years Learning Framework describes childhood as a time of belonging, being and becoming. Through the Framework we work to promote each child's:

- 1. Sense of identity
- 2. Connections with their world
- 3. Sense of well-being
- 4. Confidence and involvement in their learning
- 5. Communication skills

Children develop at different rates and this development is dependent on many factors including life experiences, learning styles, personality, attitudes, levels of readiness and maturity.

We promote the attitude that learning is fun. The basis of our philosophy is that children learn through play. We structure the learning environment so that children enjoy what they are doing and are successful in what they do. We try to build a close and supportive relationship with each child where they feel secure, valued and respected.

In this environment they will be ready to explore, make mistakes, take appropriate risks and experiment with many new experiences. They can practice and master a variety of skills and extend the boundaries of their world.

We promote self-respect and respect for the rights of others together with taking responsibility for one's actions. These goals are accomplished over time.

Our learning environment supports the development of children who can make choices, think independently, take challenges, explore ideas, ask questions, feel nurtured, safe and well cared for within a social play based context. While there is a rhythm to the day, we endeavour to be flexible and responsive to

the children's own rhythm and to their interests, ideas and contributions.

We want to do the best we can for your child. It is important to us that your child enjoys and learns from their preschool experience. We encourage you to speak with us about any concerns you may have or if you would like any information regarding your child's development. Throughout the year we monitor each child's development and welcome the opportunity to discuss your child's progress with you.

A Day at Binnowee

Our day usually begins with outside play although this can change to suit weather conditions. We run a mostly indoor/outdoor program throughout the day. A variety of experiences are programmed for each day, such as gross motor & movement challenges, construction activities, dramatic play, sand play, books, drawing and puzzles. We encourage physical activity as it is so important for children's health and development.

In planning our programs we try and cater for the interests and needs of all the children. The programs are flexible and may change depending on how the day is going. We welcome your feedback.

We post regular Padlet posts to share the children's learning. Information on the Reflections Padlet will be sared at the orientation evening and in orientation emails. If you would like more information about what has happened during your child's day we encourage you to chat with one of your child's teachers.

Arrival and Departure

On arrival and departure you need to complete the sign in/out book located in the hallway outside your child's classroom or on one of the outdoor tables.

Children need to be collected by 4.00 pm. If a child is not collected by 4pm a late fee may be payable. For your child's safety, children will not be released into the care of people who are unknown to staff members. Staff need to be informed if someone other than yourself is to collect your child. The person collecting your child will be required to show photo ID (e.g. driver's licence). Please email or phone the preschool during the day to let us know who is collecting your child. Also please ensure your child knows who will be collecting them

What to bring each day

- A bag your child can open and which is also big enough to contain craft items made during the day as well as all their belongings.
- A spare set of clothing and underwear. Wet weather gear as appropriate.
- A hand towel to hang in the locker.
- A water bottle in a refillable plastic container.
- Morning tea in a labelled container, separate from their lunch.
- Lunch in a labelled container which is easy for your child to open and handle.
- If your child usually sleeps during the day please speak with your child's teacher about accommodating this.

The children's morning tea and lunch must be stored in the refrigerator at preschool. Morning tea can be placed in the door or drawer of the fridge and lunch on one of the shelves in the fridge. The children will unpack their bags independently under the guidance of an educator to begin with.

If you are providing home baked foods or processed foods that have no labelling you need to let us know the ingredients list.

Please do not include cakes, chips, lollies, sweet biscuits, fizzy drinks or chocolate anything as we try to promote healthy eating habits for the children in partnership with you.

Please label everything, even shoes.

Binnowee is an allergy aware preschool and we enrol children with anaphylaxis.

We may have children enrolled who are anaphylactic to various foods, especially nuts. If your child has peanut butter before coming to preschool please ensure that their face and hands are washed before coming to Binnowee. Sticky mouths or fingers easily spread peanut butter. Its presence on a surface such as a toy can be enough to trigger a dangerous reaction in a child who has an allergy to nuts.

Birthdays

Birthdays are of course very special occasions and you are welcome to send cupcakes or something appropriate to your culture for your child to share with the other children in their class on their birthday if you wish. Please remember to not include nuts in these treats.

Reducing waste and sustainable practices

We endeavour to encourage our children to develop and extend an appreciation for the natural environment. Environmental sustainability is an important part of the Binnowee program and we ask parents to consider reducing the amount of plastic and pre-packaged foods sent to preschool. For example, cheese can be cut from a block and placed in a reusable container. Yoghurt can be bought in a big tub and sent in a reusable container. Fresh fruit and vegies need no packaging and are a healthier option than processed foods.

We are also encouraging the children to be environmentally responsible by talking about turning lights and the air conditioner off when we are no longer in the room. We compost fruit and vegie scraps and we welcome recyclable materials for reuse as art and craft materials.

What to Wear

We suggest children wear casual play clothes suitable for messy activities that are easy to undo for going to the toilet. Children are encouraged to be toilet trained before attending Binnowee.

We encourage sun safety awareness and ask that children's clothing provide adequate protection from the sun. We also ask that you apply sunscreen to your child's skin before coming to preschool each day.

Children also need to wear shoes they can safely run and climb in. Please do not allow them to wear shoes that easily fall off their feet whilst they are moving about.

Performances/incursions/excursions

Special performances and incursions at Binnowee are part of our preschool program. We find this is a wonderful addition to our rich and engaging preschool program. The cost of each performance will be added to the term's fees.

We also go out on regular excursions. We visit the green space across the road at St. Matthew's Church once per fortnight and we visit West Pennant Hills Public School each year. We also visit the local shops from time to time and we welcome parents and grandparent helpers for these events.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of a fire or other emergency which requires evacuation of the preschool the children will be taken to St Matthew's Church (across the road) or West Pennant Hills Public School oval as a secondary destination if needed, and supervised until they are collected by their parents. This is a safety precaution which thankfully we have never yet had to implement.

Immunisation

Under the NSW Public Health Act 2010 parents are required to provide a copy of an Australian Childhood

Immunisation Register (ACIR) History Statement that shows their child's immunisation is up to date **or** an Immunisation History form IMMU13 that shows their child is on a catch-up schedule. A child can not commence at Binnowee until this information is provided. We request that parents advise the preschool of future immunisations as they occur.

Medical

If your child requires medication at preschool please see your child's teacher. An individual medication record will be maintained in the medication folder for this situation. Only medication prescribed by a doctor for your child will be administered. Should there be any difficulty please discuss the matter with the director. If your child requires asthma, anaphylaxis or diabetes medication, an action plan along with a medical conditions risk minimisation and communications plan will need to be completed. Please see the director for further information.

In the case of accidents or emergencies where the parent cannot be contacted staff will consult a doctor and/or dentist and/or call an ambulance if required. Details of accidents will be entered into the accident form and should be signed by the child's parent as soon as practicable.

Please do not send your child to preschool if they seem unwell. It is difficult for them to enjoy their day if they are sick and they may infect other children and staff. If your child has symptoms of an infectious disease or appears unwell they will be sent home.

We continue to monitor for potential COVID-19 symptoms.

Your child should not come to preschool if they:

- have a temperature over 38°
- have had an episode of diarrhoea or vomiting within the previous 48 hrs
- have a rash you cannot identify
- are coughing continuously
- have a runny nose they are unable to manage independently or associated with other symptoms such as cough, headaches and pains
- have head lice (until treated)
- have impetigo
- have been prescribed antibiotics in the last 24 hours
- have been given paracetamol, ibuprofen, cough mixture etc. in the morning before preschool.

Parent Participation

Open Mornings Open Mornings are usually held once each term. On Open Mornings we invite you to spend some time with your child and have a glimpse of your child's preschool day at Binnowee. Grandparents and children's significant people are welcome to attend. Open Morning commences after drop-off and finishes about 10.30am. However there is no obligation to stay until 10.30am – just stay as long as you like.

Washing roster This consists of washing craft aprons, towels, mats, tea towels, dress-up clothes etc. A bag of washing is taken home on Wednesday and Friday afternoon and returned after laundering the next day your child is at preschool. Each family is allocated at least one washing load per year. Parents will also be asked to assist in taking toys home to wash from time to time.

Communication

We welcome and encourage all parents to talk with your child's teacher about any aspect of your child's learning and development. If there are concerns you would like to discuss in detail, please speak with your

child's teacher to arrange an appointment. We also have a prescheduled parent meeting week during term two, along with an informal catch up opportunity in early term four, in which parents are invited to meet with their child's teacher at a mutually agreeable time. We value information about your family; special traditions, celebrations, customs or current circumstances. Information of this type assists us in caring for your child.

We also welcome suggestions and feedback about the preschool program. Please speak with your child's teacher or the director if you have any questions, ideas or concerns with regards to the day to day experiences at preschool.

A comprehensive newsletter is emailed to all families once per term. Feel free to suggest topics you may like to see addressed in the newsletter.

Amongst our parent community we have a large array of talent, skills and experience. We are always pleased to hear from parents who are willing to share their expertise or talents with us. We welcome parents who may like to talk to children about their work – artists, musicians, cooks, etc. Please come and share your talents and knowledge with the children. New babies are always in demand as babies are endlessly fascinating to many children. We always appreciate IT help and gardening advice and assistance with translating into relevant community languages is always helpful.

Lastly

Attending a new preschool for the first time can be exciting and for some children (and parents) a little overwhelming. The educators at Binnowee Kindergarten recognise and appreciate that each child is an individual and that each child may respond in a different way to the preschool program. We will endeavour to ensure that the transition process from home to preschool is as smooth and happy as possible. We will do this by providing and environment that is secure, engaging, stimulating and fun.

Throughout the year staff will plan a program of experiences that reflects and meets the changing needs of children. This is done through a process of observation, interacting with children, documenting our experiences (through photos, displays of artwork or construction work, written observations) and through collaborating with parents. An individually and developmentally appropriate play based program fosters lifelong skills in children, preparing them for the rest of their life.

If you have any further questions please speak with your child's teacher and /or the director. If you have any grievances or issues which need further attention please speak with the staff and/or the director. We find that most issues are quickly resolved with reciprocal communication and awareness. Any matter of concern to our families is important to us. We look forward to a happy year ahead, getting to know you and your child during this exciting time of growth and development.

Term Dates 2023

Term 1	Monday 30 January	Friday 7 April	
Term 2	Monday 24 April	Friday 30 June	
Term 3	Monday 17 July	Friday 22 September	
Term 4	Monday 9 October	Monday 18 December	

Privacy collection statement

Binnowee Kindergarten is committed to maintaining all personal information provided by its children, families, staff, management, volunteers, students and community in accordance with our Privacy policy and the Australian Privacy Principles.

Each family, staff, volunteers and student and committee member is provided with a privacy collection statement upon enrolment or commencement of employment.

This statement outlines the type of personal information collected by this preschool and how information is acquired, used and shared. We will not sell personal information to any third parties. See our full Privacy and Confidentiality policy for detailed information.

What is personal information/ How is it collected and why?

What information is collected?	How we collect information?	Why we collect this?
Medical information, health and immunisation	 Enrolment form Employment record Immunisation history statement Health care cards – Medicare and health fund information Accident, Illness and Injury forms 	To ensure the health and safety of every child and as a requirement under Family Assistance Law and the NSW Public Health Act 2010.
Income and financial details, including banking information	 Enrolment form Employment record Fee payment and purchases 	For the provision of the education and care service and as required under Family Assistance legislation and as per Funding Agreements with the NSW Department of Education.
Contact details of family and emergency contact information	 Enrolment form Employment record Updated details form Medicare Number Private Health Insurance 	Required under the Education and Care Services Regulation.
Children's developmental records	 Observations Assessment of children's learning Programming documents Communications with families 	Required under the Education and Care Services Regulation and to provide a high quality education and care service.
Family Assistance information	Enrolment formEmployment record	Required under the Family Assistance legislation and under employment legislation under Income Tax legislation.

Legal information	Enrolment form Regu	Required under the	
		cation and Care Services	
	Court orders or AVOs	ılation.	
Employment, marital status and nationality	Employment record legis acce	uired under employment lation and to provide priority of ss under commonwealth and elegislation.	
Qualifications	 Employment record Certified copies of documents Requ Eduction	uired under the cation and Care Services	
WWCC, criminal history checks	Originals of documents Educ	uired under the cation and Care Services Ilation.	
Staff entitlements	Payroll recordsTax File Number	ision of entitlements	
Any information required to be recorded under the National Law and Regulations, the Family Assistance Law other relevant information collected to support the enrolment of a child	 Enrolment form Employment record Complaints records Required 	uired under appropriate lation.	

Personal information is information that personally identifies an individual, such as a name, residential or email address and includes information relevant to the enrolment process, credit card information, billing records, documentation of a child's learning and development, and recorded information regarding complaints.

Publicly available information, such as information on a public website profile is not considered personal information.

Binnowee Kindergarten only collects personal information when individuals specifically and knowingly elect to provide this, such as when individuals enrol a child in the preschool, pay fees or subscriptions, and provide health or family information to support the inclusion of a child.

Direct communications

Binnowee Kindergarten uses individual's personal information to send information by post, email or telephone. Individuals are provided with an opportunity to elect not to receive such information upon enrolment or through written notification to the preschool.

If individuals do not wish to receive direct communications, contact our service directly on: (02) 9484 3430 or 0421 520 495 or binkindy@bigpond.net.au

Binnowee Kindergarten will strive to let individuals know how any personal information will be used at the time of collection. Individuals will be asked if personal information can be used to establish contact with them regarding other aspects of organisational business. Binnowee Kindergarten will not sell or trade individuals' personal information to other third parties.

Binnowee Kindergarten collects and uses personal information generally to provide individuals with the information and the services they request, to provide appropriate and relevant information pertaining to the education and care of a child/ren, and to continue to improve service quality.

Where is personal information stored?

Personal information is stored in a safe and secure manner, using locked filing cabinets or a password protected database and computer. Information is backed up electronically and securely stored. Data will not be altered or destroyed except in extraordinary circumstances.

Hard copy information is stored at the preschool, which is secured to prevent entry by unauthorised people. Any personal information not actively being used may be archived, in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Personal information will remain on the preschool database indefinitely until personally advised by a customer that information is to be removed, unless information has been archived or destroyed at an earlier date in accordance with privacy law and regulatory requirements.

Access and updating personal information

Individuals may ask to access, update or delete personal information held about them at any time. Reasonable steps will be taken to verify an individual's identity before granting access, making any corrections to, or deleting information. If a customer wishes to make a complaint, please refer to the Complaints and feedback policy.

Individuals requiring access to, or wanting to update personal information, can contact the service on (02) 9484 3430 or 0421 520 495 binkindy@bigpond.net.au