

PROGRAM BOOKLET

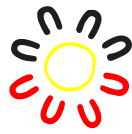
# KOALA ROOM



**GUM NUT**  
PRESCHOOL AND CHILD CARE



*We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land where we learn and play, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation. We pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.*



## Welcome to **KOALA ROOM**

Welcome to the Koala Room at Gum Nut Preschool and Childcare! We are delighted to have your child join our vibrant community of learners. In this booklet, you will find essential information about our Koala Room, ensuring you feel confident and informed about your child's experience with us.

The Koala Room is designed for children aged 2.4 to 3 years old, a crucial stage in their development. Our skilled and caring educators create a balance between structured activities and free play, fostering a love for learning and social interaction.



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# Key Features

01

## Independence and Autonomy

Our space is designed to encourage independence, allowing children to explore and make choices within a safe and supportive environment.

02

## Interaction with Older Children

The Koala Room is strategically located to provide opportunities for interaction with older children, fostering a sense of community and mentorship.

03

## Preparation for the 3-Year-Old Room

We incorporate activities that prepare children for the transition to the 3-year-old room, focusing on cognitive and social development milestones.

04

## Self-Help Skills

Emphasis is placed on developing self-help skills, including dressing themselves, feeding, and tidying up after play.

05

## Toilet Training

Our experienced caregivers work closely with parents to initiate and support toilet training when the child shows signs of readiness. We follow a consistent and positive approach to make this transition smooth and comfortable.

06

## Experienced and Caring Staff

Our team of educators are experienced and passionate about early childhood development, ensuring your child receives the best care and attention.

07

## Outdoor Exploration

We emphasise the importance of outdoor play and exploration, providing opportunities for physical activity and a connection with the natural world.

08

### Play-Based Learning

We believe in the power of play as a fundamental tool for learning. Play-based learning is an approach where children engage in activities that are enjoyable and meaningful, fostering creativity, curiosity, and a love for exploration.

What is Play-Based Learning?

Play-based learning involves activities that are child-directed, allowing them to explore, experiment, and discover at their own pace. It includes both structured and unstructured play, incorporating elements like imaginative play, sensory experiences, and problem-solving.

The Importance of Play-Based Learning:

- *Cognitive Development:*  
Play stimulates brain development, enhancing memory, language skills, and cognitive abilities.
- *Social and Emotional Growth:*  
Through play, children learn to share, cooperate, and navigate social relationships, fostering emotional intelligence.
- *Motor Skills:*  
Activities like stacking blocks or crawling contribute to the development of fine and gross motor skills.
- *Curiosity and Creativity:*  
Play encourages curiosity, imagination, and creativity, laying the foundation for a love of learning.

09

### Teaching Respect and Values

Our curriculum includes lessons on respect, kindness, and values to instill positive behaviour and social skills in every child.

- *Respecting People*  
In the Koala Room, we introduce age-appropriate concepts of respect towards peers, educators, and the broader community. Through activities like sharing, taking turns, and group play, children learn to understand and appreciate the feelings and perspectives of others.
- *Respecting the Environment*  
We instill a sense of environmental responsibility in our little ones by incorporating activities that teach them about caring for the world around them. Simple tasks, such as picking up toys and recycling, are introduced to promote a sense of responsibility towards the environment.
- *Respecting Aboriginal Land of Australia*  
We acknowledge and respect the rich cultural heritage of Australia's Aboriginal people. Age-appropriate discussions and activities are woven into our curriculum to introduce children to the traditional custodianship of the land. This includes learning about native animals, plants, and engaging in art activities inspired by Aboriginal culture.
- *Linking to Sustainability*  
Even at this young age, children can begin to understand the importance of sustainability. Through play-based activities like planting seeds, watering plants, and sorting recyclables, we foster a connection to nature and teach the basics of caring for the planet. Our focus is on instilling values that will contribute to a sustainable future.

# Meet The Team



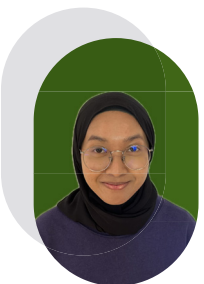
***Rasika***

Room Leader

Hello and welcome to the Koala Room. I am Rasika Suraweera, a seasoned and nurturing educator holding a Diploma in Early Childhood Education. Celebrating a decade at Gum Nut, I am proud to be in my second year as the Room Leader in the Koala Room. My role is immensely fulfilling as I work with young and curious minds, guiding them toward a future of learning and growth. Witnessing their daily developmental progress, gaining confidence, and becoming their unique selves is truly rewarding. My commitment lies in providing quality care, fostering positive connections with children, and building enduring relationships with both children and families. I am deeply passionate about supporting children's development and learning. Through my tenure, I aim to create a space where children not only feel a sense of belonging but are also stimulated to grow and develop skills to prepare for preschool.

I have an amazing team working together in the Koala Room. Each educator in the room brings a unique passion and skill that is incorporated into the program, allowing for learning to come from more authentic experiences. Our educators' passions range from gardening to music and martial arts, bringing these into the program to foster children's love for nature, introduce the importance of sustainability, extend their love for literacy, and develop their self-confidence. This also makes learning much more fun, as there is a wide range of experiences for the children.

Our dedicated and experienced staff ensure individualised attention and support for each child. Our goal as a team is to offer a variety of rich experiences and activities that foster their curiosity for learning and get them excited to begin their preschool journey.



***Athirah, Niaz, Narmada, Dilumini*** (L to R) ***& Laura*** (Not Pictured)

Educators

# Our Planning

In the Koala room, we create intentional and engaging learning environments. We purposely and thoughtfully set up learning experiences under these key learning areas;

- Dramatic play
- Sensory
- Construction
- Art/collage
- Reading area
- Nature/Sustainability/Outdoor

Importantly: at this age we are following each individual's routine from home and encourage their developing motor skills and support their emotional development.

When planning, educators set specific goals related to your child's age and stage of development. With this knowledge, educators plan intentional teaching moments to scaffold your child's learning.

At the end of each term, an individual observation planning record will be emailed to you with your child's individual goals under one or more of the following areas:

- Community (Social)
- Identity (Emotional)
- Learning (Cognitive)
- Communication (Language)
- Wellbeing (Physical)

Under each area/s, educators will document what they have observed, the goal they want your child to achieve, the intent and strategies the educators will put in place to assist your child to achieve this goal and a reflection of how your child is progressing with the goal.

Remember everyone learns and develops at different stages, your child might not achieve their goal in the first term and that is ok. Our planning enables children to learn and develop at their own pace.

If there is anything you would like your child to learn or focus on, please feel free to speak to staff in the room.

# Our Routine

Our routine is very flexible, as it is based around each child's individual routines and rituals.

- 7:30 am Centre Opens - family grouping commences in the Wombat Room
- 8:15 am Kinder House transition to their rooms/or big garden.
- 8:45 am Group Time - Children sit down for a story, sing songs etc.
- 9:15 am Morning Tea - Children wash their hands and prepare for morning tea.
- 9:30 am Indoor or Outdoor play – morning program.
- 10:00 am Toileting / Nappy changes start.
- 10:30 am Outdoor play
- 11:00am Lunch time - Children wash their hands and prepare for lunch.
- 11:45 am Sleep/Rest Time - While children are sleeping, room is cleaned and set up for afternoon play indoors.
- 01:00 pm Indoor play continues – staff assist children in getting dressed. Nappy changes start and beds are cleaned and packed away.
- 2:30 pm Children assist with packing away toys, then sit down for a group time.
- 03:00 pm Afternoon Tea - Children wash their hands and prepare for afternoon tea.
- 03:15 pm Outdoor play in the big garden
- 04:00pm Outdoor play continues - Nappy changes start.
- 04:30 pm Indoor/Outdoor play – Family Grouping has starts.
- 05:30 pm Kinder house children join family grouping at Wombat Deck.
- 06:00 pm Centre Closed.



# General Housekeeping

## Sign In and Out

Please remember to sign your child in and out each day (via iPad)

## Clothing

Please ensure your child is dressed for fun and exploration in the environment. Please do not send your child in clothes you don't want them to get paint or dirt on. Please pack SPARE clothes (pants, t-shirt, underwear, socks) in case of messy play or toileting accidents. Please remember cool clothes and a hat for summer and a jacket and beanie for winter (gumboots too if you have them). All clothing items should be clearly labelled.

## Footwear

At Gum Nut we love to climb and run so please ensure closed footwear or sandals that cover toes – it is our preference you do not send child in flip flops or crocs as they can lose grip and are not appropriate for outdoor activities.

## Nappies

Please ensure your child has a minimum of 5 nappies or pull-ups on the days your child attends Gum Nut. If your child is toilet training but they still required a nappy or pull-up for sleep time, please ensure there are some in your child's bag.

## Meals

Morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea are provided by Gum Nut. It is our preference children are eating lunch from Gum Nut only, unless for a particular dietary reason you have to supply your own foods.

## Anaphylaxis/Allergies/Asthma

All medication must be left at Gum Nut with appropriate action plan from a doctor. Please see educators if this applies to you. Your child cannot and will not be accepted without the proper medications, plans etc.

## Hats

Please ensure your child has an appropriate sun hat (wide brim or legionnaires) from September - April clearly labelled with their name. No Hat - No Outdoor Play

## Sunscreen

Please ensure you have applied sunscreen on your child prior to attending the centre. The Koala educators will apply more sunscreen throughout the day with our centre's sunscreen, unless due to allergies or personal choice you supply your own.

## Drink Bottles

Must be clearly labelled and brought to Gum Nut on the days your child attends, then taken home at the end of the day to be washed and returned. At least 600ml size bottles please.

**Comforter and Home Toys**

We acknowledge that children may find comfort in bringing personal items such as toys or blankets to Gum Nut. Once they have acclimated to their environment, the personal item securely stored in their child's bag until the end of the day. While we understand the significance of comfort items from home, we would like to emphasise that our program is designed to provide a rich and engaging experience for all children. To optimise your child's participation, we aim to minimise distractions. It is important to note that our educators cannot assume responsibility for any lost or damaged personal items. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in creating a conducive learning environment for all.

**Lost Property**

Please check our lost property tub regularly. Unlabelled items in the tub will be donated to a charity bin at the end of each month.

**Parent Communication**

We communicate weekly updates on your child's activities and upcoming plans through our private Facebook group. Additionally, room and center events will be shared via both Facebook and email. For daily activities, a dedicated board in the room will keep you informed.

**Emails**

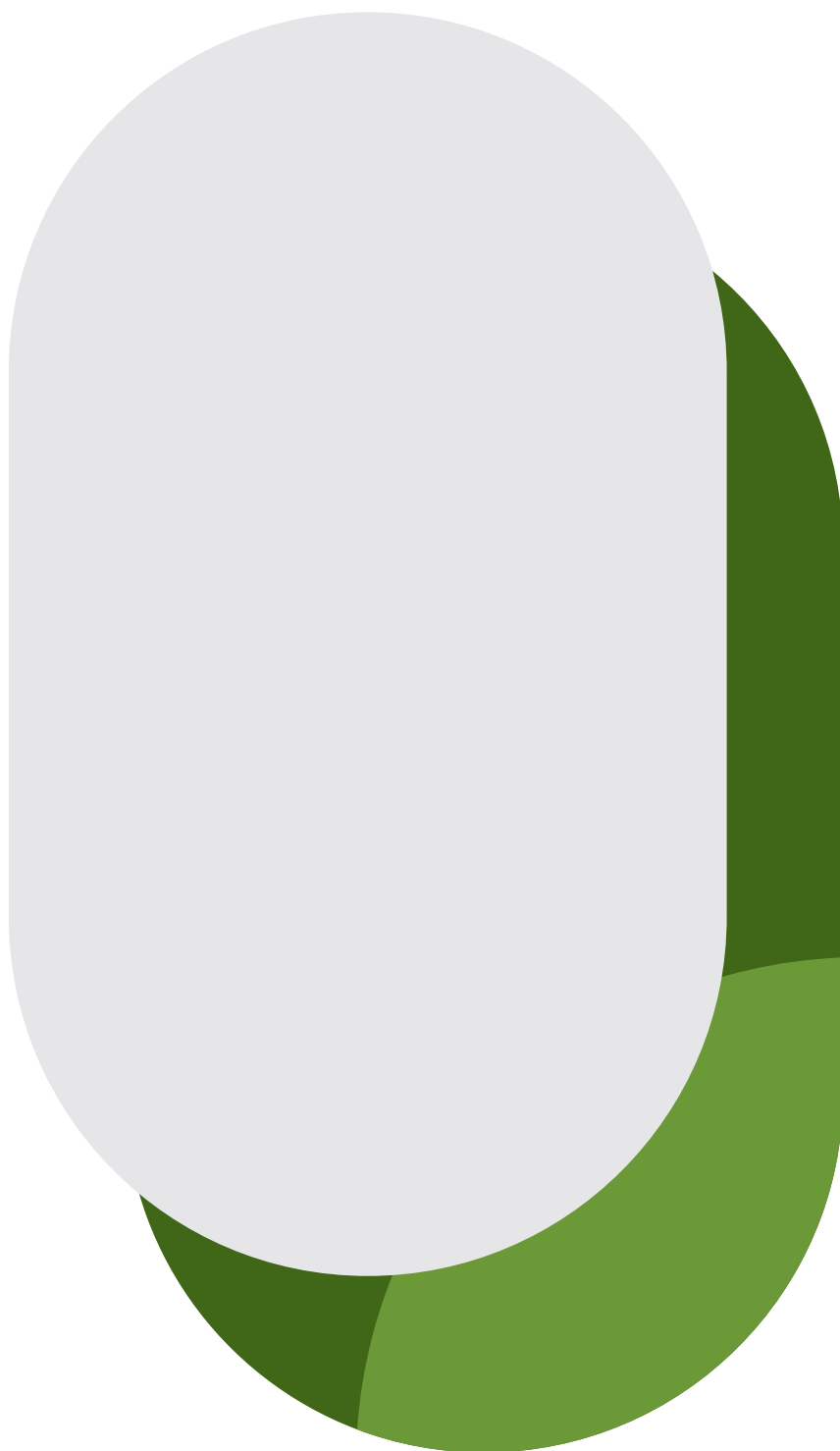
Please check this often and keep us informed of email changes. Koala email address is for planning purposes only, any other information (e.g. change of days, illnesses etc must be emailed to Office)

Koala Email: [koalaroom\\_gumnut@outlook.com](mailto:koalaroom_gumnut@outlook.com)

**Contact Details**

Office Phone: 9499 4410

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