



Gum Nut Preschool & Childcare

Possum Room Information Booklet



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.



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WELCOME TO THE POSSUM ROOM

Welcome to Possum Room! Thank you for choosing us to be a part of your child's early development journey.

In our dedicated baby room where we provide a nurturing and stimulating environment for children aged 6-18 months. Our initial focus is to settle the children into the room by building each child's trust and confidence within the Possum environment; we do this through families sharing information and knowledge about their child from the very first orientation until they transition to the Wombat Room. Our Possum team develop an exciting, fun program based on each possum's individual needs and interests, in this room it varies due to differences in age and stage of development.

KEY FEATURES

01

A Home Away from Home

We understand the importance of creating a nurturing environment that feels like an extension of your home. Comfortable cots, cozy reading corners, and familiar routines contribute to a sense of security.

02

Safe and Comfortable Environment

Our room is thoughtfully designed to feel like an extension of your child's home, creating a warm and secure atmosphere.

03

Experienced and Caring Staff

Our team consists of qualified and experienced educators who are passionate about providing the best care for your child.

04

Developmentally Appropriate Activities

We offer a range of age-appropriate activities to stimulate cognitive, motor, and social development through play-based learning.

05

Outdoor Exploration

Weather permitting, we provide outdoor time for your child to explore and enjoy fresh air.

06

Daily Communication

Stay informed about your child's day with daily updates, including feeding, napping, and playtime activities. We note daily reflections on the board and weekly reflection's on Facebook ensuring you are informed about your child's experiences and milestones.

07

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.

08

Teaching Respect and Values:

We instil a foundation of respect and values in our youngest learners.

- **Respecting People:** We foster a culture of inclusivity, teaching children to appreciate diversity in their interactions with educators and peers.
- **Respecting the Environment:** Even our littlest ones are introduced to caring for the environment through simple practices like recycling and engaging with natural materials in play.
- **Acknowledging Aboriginal Land:** We recognise the traditional custodians of the land, incorporating age-appropriate activities that introduce the rich cultural heritage of Australia's Indigenous peoples.
- **Sustainability Practices:** Children learn basic sustainability concepts through activities like caring for a small garden and exploring eco-friendly materials in play. By integrating these values into our daily activities, we aim to cultivate a sense of respect for people, the environment, and Australia's cultural heritage in our youngest learners.

OUR PLANNING

In the Possum room, we create intentional and engaging 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	Family Grouping commences in the Wombat Room (Breakfast served until 8:00 am)
8:30 am	Possums transitioned – Indoor/outdoor activities
9:00 am	Morning Tea (Fruits and Yoghurt) Milk (children have their bottles at their individual times)
09:30am	Prepare children for morning sleep, indoor/ outdoor program
10:00 am	Outdoor play (weather permitting). Nappy changes.
11:00 am	Transition to lunch time
11:30 am	Prepare children for sleep time. Continue lunch, as children wake from morning sleep and continue indoor program activities
01:30pm	Bottles, nappy changes, indoor/outdoor play
02:30 pm	Prepare children for afternoon sleep Continue indoor/outdoor program activities
03:00 pm	Afternoon tea (varying: sandwiches/crackers/ scones/fresh fruit etc) Prepare children for outdoor play (unless already outdoors)
04:00 pm	Outdoor play (possum garden or wombat decking) or indoor wet weather program. Nappy changes.
04:45 pm	Transition to Wombat Room/garden (Family Grouping)
06:00 pm	Centre Closes.

GENERAL INFORMATION

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 when at Gum Nut. We recommend you 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, socks) in case of messy play or nappy accidents. Remember cool clothes for summer and a jacket & beanie for winter. All clothing items should be clearly labelled. (Appropriate shoes for outdoor play).

We are trying to be more sustainable in our room so we would appreciate if families could provide a reusable wash bag for their child's soiled/wet clothes to reduce our usage of plastic bags.

Nappies

Please ensure your child has a minimum of 6 nappies on the days your child attends Gum Nut. You are welcome to bring a bulk bag of nappies and educators will communicate via email when this needs restocking.

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 Possum educators will apply more sunscreen throughout the day with our centre's sunscreen, unless due to allergies or personal choice you supply your own.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Water & Milk Bottles/Sipper Cups

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. (If they are being brought in pre-made, or breast milk they need to be in an insulated bag.)

Please bring formula daily, in separate dispenser or already made up. Canned formula is not usable after 4 weeks upon opening, it is preferred you follow our procedure. When your child is drinking cow's/alternative milk from the centre, please be advised because of health and cross contamination, we would like it if you could provide your own bottle/sipper cup.

Parent Communication

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

We would appreciate regular updates on your child's milestones, changes of routines and any emerging interests that you have noticed at home. You are welcome to approach any of our educators to pass on any information about your child for that day (e.g. how they slept last night), however we do ask that for more important updates you speak with the room leader. We would also appreciate you sending an email regarding any significant changes to your child's routine/home life so that this can be communicated to all educators properly.

Lost Property

If your child has lost any of their belongings, please check the locker area as we often place named items there to return them when your child attends again. If you are unable to locate a specific item, please speak to an educator so that we can keep an eye out for it. Unnamed items will be posted on our Facebook group so please check this regularly if you are missing any of your child's belongings

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. Possum email address is for planning purposes only, any other information (e.g. change of days, illnesses etc must be emailed to Office)

Possum Email: possumroom_gumnut@outlook.com