

O'Connor Cooperative School Handbook



*Together we learn,
Together we grow*

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Welcome to O'Connor Cooperative School

O'Connor Cooperative School is a small community-based school located in the inner north of Canberra. As an early childhood school, we cater for students from preschool to year 2.

O'Connor Cooperative School has a long history of providing innovative, high quality early childhood education. We believe that all children are unique beings, bringing with them a wealth of knowledge and beliefs about the world and their place in it. We believe that children are capable, confident and creative learners with unlimited potential. We learn and grow together to create sustainable and cultural connections with each other and our environment. We foster creative, social, emotional, physical, language and cognitive identities and skills.

CONTACT DETAILS

Education Directorate Contact Details

- 13 2281
- www.education.act.gov.au

Meet our team



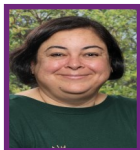
Principal
Deborah Lowrey



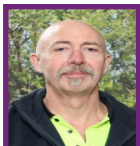
School Leader
Lorenza Van Der Kley



Business Manager
Kirsten Sharman



Administrative Officer
Dianne Spandler



Building Service Officer
Shane Butterworth



Teacher
Yasmine O'Brien



Teacher
Rose Patrick



Teacher
Christie Rankin



Teacher
Rhylee Taylor



Teacher
Ella Webster



Educator
Nathan Young



Preschool Educator
Bree Pardoe

School Contact Details

School Phone number: 02 6142 0345

School Email: info_coop@ed.act.edu.au



Principal's Message

Yuma, – hello, and welcome to O'Connor Cooperative School,

I am honoured and delighted to be the principal of O'Connor Cooperative School. Our unique Early Childhood school (Preschool to year 2) is committed to excellence in Early Childhood education.

At O'Connor Cooperative School you will see a thriving school community where staff and families openly contribute as partners in their children's learning.

We are committed to providing a safe, inclusive setting with flexible environments where wonder and curiosity are nurtured. The strengths, identity and cultures of all members of our community are recognised and valued through daily positive community partnerships.

We learn and grow as a Professional Learning Community (PLC). Our leaders and educators work collaboratively as a PLC providing teachers with evidence-based opportunities for continuous improvement and life-long learning. Our school caters for individual student strengths and needs through differentiated learning and support. This begins in our preschool where the teachers work with the Early Years Learning framework to provide a welcoming place of learning, nurturing and inquiry. Our staff are committed to flexible teaching and learning through Inquiry and Play-based approaches optimising our delightful indoor and outdoor environments, while meeting the achievements standards of the Australian Curriculum.

O'Connor Cooperative School follows a whole school approach to Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL) where children, staff and families have the responsibility and the right to be safe and respectful citizens.

If you have any questions or would like a tour of our divine school and indoor and outdoor learning spaces, please call the front office and we will happily book a time to chat and make arrangements for you to visit.

We look forward to working together with you, our community, to provide the very best learning and wellbeing opportunities for all our children.

Debbie Lowrey

Principal
O'Connor Cooperative School



School Purpose and Vision

Purpose

At O'Connor Cooperative School we work together with our community to develop every child to become a successful lifelong learner. We facilitate and support the development of each child to become a confident and cooperative learner who achieves their full potential. We provide quality care and education for children from Preschool to Year 2 through early childhood pedagogy practices aligning with the Early Years Learning Framework, National Quality Framework and the Australian Curriculum.

Vision

At our school, you will see:

- A thriving collaborative school community where staff and families openly interact and contribute as partners in children's learning.
- A safe, inclusive setting with flexible environments where wonder and curiosity are nurtured.
- Strengths, identity and cultures of all members of our community recognised, respected and valued through positive community partnerships.
- Healthy and sustainable learning practices.
- Staff as educational leaders committed to flexible teaching and learning through Inquiry and Play-based approaches.
- A whole school community approach to Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL) where children, staff and families have the right and responsibility to be a safe and respectful citizen.



Enrolment Procedures

Children seeking to enter school at the Preschool entry point should be four years of age on or before 30 April in that year.

Applications for enrolment for Preschool are available online from the first day of term 2 each year. Enrolment is available online at <https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/enrolling-in-a-public-school>

Early enrolment for children under compulsory education age is also available to children eligible for English as an Additional Language/Dialect programs, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and Gifted and Talented programs.

Further information is available on the Directorate's website at <https://www.education.act.gov.au/home>



Hours of Operation

At O'Connor Cooperative School, we provide 15 hours of Preschool per week and 30 hours of education for children in Kindergarten to Year 2. School starts promptly at 9am. Children accessing programs from 9am – 3pm may initially find the days a bit tiring. We offer a flexible approach during the long, hot days of summer if parents wish to take their children home early. Alternatively, you may like to stay with your child and play, complete a puzzle together or share a book in the library.

Preschool Sessions

Monday to Wednesday : 9:00am until 1:00pm
 Thursday : 9:00am until 12:00pm

Kindergarten to Year 2

Monday to Friday : 9:00am until 3:00pm
Morning Session : 9:00am until 11:00am
Recess : 11:00am until 11:30am
Middle Session : 11:30am until 1:00pm
Lunch : 1:00pm until 1:40pm
Afternoon Session : 1:40pm until 3:00pm

Children and families are welcome to arrive at school before 9:00am. Families are required to wait with their children until the school day commences at 9:00am. If your child arrives after 9:00am, they will need to be signed in at the front office.

When the children arrive each morning, you are welcome to go with them into their rooms at 9am while they hang their bags and settle. Occasionally, children may be a little upset during the first few days, but within a few minutes of your departure they usually calmed down. It is often more upsetting for parents and carers – you are welcome to contact us for reassurance that your child is participating happily.

The educators like to establish a routine for school each day, so it is important that children are at school on time. Sometimes if the child is late it can be a little unsettling for them and/or their peers.

Should parents not be collecting their child at the end of the school day, please communicate the arrangements for collecting your child with your child's teacher. Please also confirm your contact information with our front office.

Parking

There is limited parking available for families on Macpherson Street, Peel Street and Busby Street. When parking in these streets, please be mindful of our neighbours and ensure you do not park across their driveway access. Please note that the parking facilities at the carpark at the front of the school on Macpherson Street are for staff only.



Changes to Details

Please keep the front office informed of any changes to address, home/work/mobile phone numbers, email addresses, care arrangements, medical information and emergency contact phone numbers. Please report any changes to the front office team in case we need you.

Curriculum

Programs for Preschool, Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 include units of inquiry and investigations based on the Early Years Learning Framework and the Australian Curriculum. In addition, all areas of the Australian National Curriculum (ACARA) are explicitly and intentionally taught through a play based and inquiry approach. Any learning considered specific to and worthwhile for the cohort of children at this school is offered through a range of indoor and outdoor activities throughout the year.

Inquiry Approach

Inquiry learning is grounded in the work of Dewey (1938), Bruner (1966) and Vygotsky (1978). These theorists claim it is the student who needs to do the 'heavy cognitive lifting'. We therefore view children as capable and confident learners.

Inquiry is the dynamic process of being open to wonder and puzzlement and coming to know and understand the world through various perspectives and using a range of life skills and developing dispositions such as: being a communicator, a thinker, a researcher, a self manager, and a collaborator.

When we move to the heart of inquiry, it is about engagement, lighting a fire within students so they *want* to investigate and find out more. Students are involved in their learning, create essential questions, investigate widely and then build new understandings, meanings and knowledge. That knowledge is new to the children and may be used to answer their essential question, to develop a solution, or to support a position or point of view. The knowledge is usually presented to others in some type of a public manner and may result in some sort of action.

Play Based Investigations

Investigations is a core part of the teaching and learning program at the O'Connor Cooperative School. Investigations provides children with developmentally appropriate opportunities to link their passions and interests with curriculum. It is a time where staff link explicit teaching into children's curiosities.

A variety of sources have been used as a basis to our Investigative learning, including the research, theories and Developmental Curriculum work done by Kathy Walker as well as the curriculum work carried out by Kath Murdoch.

Investigations is an authentic, play based learning session allowing for student choice, exploration, cooperation, language development and inquiry learning. Investigations emphasises that children are more highly motivated to learn and sustain their own learning when their opportunities are realistic, and their interests are valued. Staff focus on the



development of the whole child's wellbeing, giving children the opportunity to work as a part of a community which promotes self-initiated learning, recognises learning is richer when we learn together, develops strong work habits and builds skills to become a self-assessing learner.

It is also a great opportunity for parents and community to be involved. For example, having a 'parent expert' in to share with the class, parents helping with construction or research.

Literacy Beliefs and Practices

We believe that effective teaching and learning of literacy is:

- Literacy learning happening through play and inquiry learning
- Literacy learning is meaningful, purposeful and relevant to children's lives, interests and prior knowledge
- Family partnerships being integral to the learning of Literacy
- Oral language is the foundation for all literacy skills - 'reading and writing floats on a sea of talk'
- Differentiation of literacy learning for students
- Igniting a passion for reading and writing and literacy skills
- Explicitly and intentionally taught and we release responsibility and provide a sense of agency in students as they develop their independence and confidence.

In our school you will see:

- Teachers and children sharing quality literature, noticing what experts do
- Children having time to practise their literacy skills daily
- Children having both personal and directed choice in their reading and writing learning
- Children having time to write, a purpose to write, an audience to write for and a response to their writing
- Class libraries comprised of quality fiction and non-fiction books and resources selected by children and teachers for independent, shared and modelled literacy learning
- Visuals to build vocabulary and literacy skills
- Teachers planning reading and writing workshops ensuring elements of teacher modelling, mini-lessons, small group guided lessons, independent reading and writing, and conferencing
- Children conferencing daily with teachers, receiving targeted feedback aligned with each child's reading and writing goals
- Explicit teaching of all aspects of oral language, reading and writing and spelling processes connected to purposeful reading and writing experiences
- Teachers documenting what they learn about students and using formative assessment



strategies

- Teachers listening, asking questions and promoting higher order thinking to stimulate and extend children's talk and thinking
- Children's interests being reflected in the classroom
- Happy and engaged learners of literacy

So that...

- Children become confident and critical thinkers, communicators, readers and writers.
- Children develop a sense of agency to evoke feelings, convey information, form ideas, facilitate interactions with others, entertain and persuade.

Numeracy Beliefs and Practices

We believe that effective teaching and learning of numeracy is:

- Fun and hands on learning experiences
- Related to real world problems and learning
- Explicit teaching of prerequisite skills to avoid misconceptions, following the Early Years Learning Framework and the Australian Curriculum Learning Progressions as part of ACARA
- The teaching of mathematical vocabulary and consistent use of mathematical language
- A planned balanced numeracy session (incorporating a warm up, explicit focus, differentiated exploratory activities and time for cognitive closure)
- Open ended and inquiry based learning experiences
- Using timely and appropriate assessments and resources that are targeted to identify and address specific children's strengths and needs
- Catering for all learning styles and abilities
- Using a range of quality and purposeful assessment: conversations, observations, BASE, SENA, and PAT Maths).

In our school you will see:

- Children having an opportunity to practise numeracy skills and apply them to real world situations
- The explicit teaching of a variety of strategies to solve a problem
- Children explaining their thinking and how they reached their strategies and answers
- Children engaging in collaborative learning with each other
- The explicit teaching and reflection of problem solving and meta cognitive skills
- Whole class, small group and individual open-ended and inquiry learning activities
- The use of both mixed ability groups and ability groups



- The use of quality open ended hands on maths games
- The use of resources that are targeted to specific children's needs
- Explanations and visible displays of mathematical language and learning
- Mathematical word walls using purposeful and relevant language
- Posters and displays used for children's learning
- Consistent use of mathematical language between both educators and children
- Self-directed opportunities to perform numeracy activities
- Teachers engaged in collaborative data discussions as part of our Professional learning teams
- The use of diagnostic, formative and summative assessments
- A whole school approach and purposeful assessment schedule

So that ...

- Children become confident and critical thinkers, communicators, and numerate citizens.
- Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, confidence, problem solving, inquiry, hypothesising and experimentation.
- Children make meaning and transfer their knowledge from concepts to real world contexts.

Preschool

The Early Years Learning Framework has been developed to ensure your child receives quality education programs in their early childhood setting. The Framework's vision is for all children to experience play-based learning that is engaging and builds success for life. <https://www.dese.gov.au/child-care-package/resources/belonging-being-becoming-early-years-learning-framework-australia-information-families>

It is a guide for early childhood educators who work with children from birth to five years. They use the Framework in partnership with families, children's first and most influential educators, to develop learning programs responsive to children's ideas, interests, strengths and abilities, and recognise that children learn through their play.

The Early Years Learning Framework describes childhood as a time of *belonging*, *being* and *becoming*.

Belonging is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they *belong* because of the relationships they have with their family, community, culture and place.

Being is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just 'be' - time to play, try new things and have fun.



Becoming is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.

The Framework and supporting documentation can be found at <https://www.education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework>

Social and Emotional Wellbeing

Child and Family Centre Drop-In Parenting Support

Parents and carers are invited to visit their local Child and Family Centre to chat with a trained professional about parenting, ask question and to get information. This can lead to ongoing, one-to-one support with Child and Family Workers.

Staff are available to speak with parents and service providers – Monday to Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm, either in person or by phoning your local Centre – about a range of issues including:

- general parenting
- adjusting to being a parent
- family relationship issues
- your child's behaviour

This service is free of charge and available without an appointment:

Where	Gungahlin, Tuggeranong and West Belconnen
When	9:00am to 5:00pm—Monday to Friday
Who	Parents and carers of young children
How	Drop-in or call your local centre

<https://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/ocys/children/childandfamilycentres>

Additional websites that you may find useful:

Be You - <https://beyou.edu.au/> aims to transform Australia's approach to supporting children's and young people's mental health in early learning services and schools, from early years to 18.

Parentlink - www.parentlink.act.gov.au is a website which parents can use to access information such as Parents guides, a directory of local parenting services, upcoming community events and parenting courses, further readings in relation to the parent guides and links to other useful websites.

Raising Children - <https://raisingchildren.net.au/> A free, reliable, up-to-date and independent information to help your family grow and thrive together. Funded by the Australian Government, reviewed by experts and non-commercial.

Access Canberra - <https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/> is your access point to local government services.



Communities Online - <http://communitiesonline.org.au/> is a website outlining local community events.

Communication Avenues with Staff

Our School recognises the importance of positive family and staff relationships.

We encourage:

- Sharing knowledge to enhance the growth and development of your child.
- Developing positive relationships with families that are based on mutual trust and open communication.
- Developing a sense of belonging to the children, families and staff.

Newsletters are produced every fortnight on the even weeks, with information about what is happening in the school and learning stories. You can access up to date information on the O'Connor Cooperative School website or Facebook page. We use email as our primary form of communication. Please let Kirsten or Di know if you require an alternative method of communication. Most notes sent home are also available for downloading on our website.

School community assemblies are held fortnightly on Fridays between 2:15pm and 3:00pm. Here, classes share their learning and achievements with our school community.

Google Classroom is a platform which your child's teacher will add to throughout each term.

Educators appreciate the opportunity to talk with families as this ensures valuable insights, and understandings can be appreciated about and into a child's individual developmental journey. Family meetings are held as the need arises for your input and feedback. Educators like to give their complete attention to children at the start of the day in order to settle the children quickly. You may leave a message with Reception, or send an email for the teacher to contact you at a convenient time.

Getting to Know You Family conversations are held at the commencement of the school year during Term 1 and following the end of Semester 1 during Term 3.

Communication avenues throughout the year include:

- Written progress reports; end of semester 1 and semester 2
- Gallery Walks in Term 3; each child invites their family to visit their class to share their learning and celebrate their achievements
- Investigation journals; a record of individual progress, reflecting their learning, wonderings and thoughts
- Family conversations at educator and family requests



Excursions

Excursions are an important hands on and active part of the educational program at O'Connor Cooperative School. On enrolment, parents/carers are asked to give permission for their child to go on incidental neighbourhood excursions e.g. walk to the wetlands or park.

If children use any form of transport, parents/carers will be advised in advance and asked to give permission, in writing, for the child to attend. The adult/child ratio for excursions will be noted on permission notes.



Library

Each class has a designated library time once a week. You will be informed of your child's library day at the commencement of the year. During this time children borrow two library books to take home for a week and participate in programs that develop children's literacy and research skills.

Each child is provided with a cloth library bag as part of the Stationery Pack in Preschool. Library books need to be returned before new books may be borrowed. If a book is lost or damaged, please inform Di or Kirsten at the front office.

Our School also has a comprehensive Parent Library. Please see the front office for borrowing.

Stationery Packs

The school purchases stationery supplies in bulk to ensure all students have the equipment required for their learning. We have made every effort to keep the prices as low as possible. All families will be sent book pack payment forms at the end of the year for the following year or upon commencement at our school.

Contribution to Decision Making

Families are welcome to contribute to the decision making procedures of the School through our School Board or the P&C.

School Board

Each government school in the ACT is administered by a School Board whose membership comprises the school principal, two elected staff members, three elected members of the parent body and a nominee of the Education Directorate. Elected members normally serve for a two-year period.

The Board is the policy-making body of the School. Its major functions are to:

- Determine the educational policies to be implemented at the School
- Assess, from time to time, the needs of the School in relation to the provision of buildings and facilities, equipment, funds, educators and other staff, and make recommendations to the Director General (of the Education Directorate) with respect to the meeting of those need
- Determine the purposes for which funds made available for the School are to be expended



- Make recommendations to the Director General in respect of the use of the buildings, facilities and equipment of the School for purposes other than school purposes
- Develop relationships between the School and the community and between the School and community organisations
- Make recommendations to the Director General on matters relating to the School

Responsibility for the implementation of policies established by the Board rests with the Principal and staff. Please see the front office for contact details for the School Board Chair.

Parents and Citizens Association

The P&C plays an important role within the School. Meetings are generally held twice a term and are advertised in the Newsletter and on the School's website. All parents are encouraged to attend the meetings. As well as its more official activities, the P&C provides an informal meeting ground for parents/carers and serves a vital fundraising function for the School. Please see the front office team for contact details for the P&C President.

Participation in School Activities

Families are welcome to share their special skills, interests and diverse family cultures with the school. Families are encouraged to participate in social activities to enable families to meet each other and form a sense of belonging to the school community. Families can help in the following ways:

- Sharing knowledge, and learning of craft, cooking, music, storytelling, job skills etc.
- Interacting with the daily program
- Listening to children read during our family reading time: 9:00am until 9:20am
- Cataloguing, covering or shelving books in the Library
- Assisting with laundry
- Working bees in the gardens, etc.
- Joining the O'Connor Cooperative School P&C Association

Transitions

Your child is a member of the O'Connor Cooperative School community. By enrolling your child, your child will automatically move on from Preschool to Year 2 in our School. As with all transitions the staff will ensure that familiarisation for children from Preschool through to Year 2 is successful. At the end of Year 2 all children need to transition to a primary school, usually within their Priority Enrolment Area (PEA); these include Turner School, Lyneham Primary School, Majura Primary School and The Ainslie School. We provide a transition program for children and families commencing in Term 2 of the preceding year, for example, attending Neighbourhood Primary School Athletics and Cross Country carnivals.

Child Protection Practices

All employees in schools are mandated to report any case of suspected child abuse. Failure to notify suspected physical and/or sexual abuse of children is a criminal offence. Staff will deliver lessons to children in protective behaviour and safe behaviours. Staff will also deliver



lessons to enhance social and emotional skills.

Attendance and Absences

Families are required to ensure their child/ren attend school each day. The class roll is marked each day at 9.15am. Arrival after 9.15am is recorded as a partial absence; children arriving after this time are required to be signed in at the front office. You will receive an absence notification via SMS if your child is not at school by 9.15am. Parents are responsible for notifying the school of their child's absence. All absences must be explained within a week of the absence occurring. The preferred method to notify the School is to reply to the SMS you receive regarding your child's absence.

Eating Times

O'Connor Cooperative School is a Fresh Taste School and therefore we encourage children to bring healthy, nutritious food to school each day. Parents/carers are urged to provide children with healthy snacks and lunch which will enable the staff to assist in the development of lifelong healthy eating habits. Please limit highly processed foods, those high in salt or sugar. All children will need their own drink bottle with water only. For further information please refer to the ACT Public School Food and Drink Policy which can be found at:

https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/School-and-Corporate-Policies/school-administration-and-management/food-and-drink/act-public-school-food-and-drink-policy/act-public-school-food-and-drink-policy

Please note: O'Connor Cooperative School is an allergy friendly and nut aware school due to the inclusion of children with life threatening anaphylactic allergic conditions. We ask that children do not bring nuts or foods containing traces of nuts to school e.g. peanut butter or Nutella sandwiches.

Preschool

Children have Munch and Crunch time starting at around 10am. Families are asked to provide a piece of fruit, vegetables or protein, such as cheese, in a labelled container. Please send these cut up and ready to eat in class. We find that Munch and Crunch helps children keep their energy levels consistent throughout the morning, aiding their concentration.

During the day children need frequent drinks but please do not send cans of soft drink, juice or drinks in glass bottles. We ask that children have a plastic drink bottle containing water, which they keep in their classroom.

Children need to bring a healthy lunch with them each day. Lunch time is around 11.00am, however these times do change as we are guided by the children.

Kindergarten to Year 2

All children have Munch and Crunch time at approximately 10am. Families are asked to provide a piece of fruit, vegetables or protein, such as cheese, for their child to eat in class. It would be greatly appreciated if this food could be prepared in advance e.g. the apples and oranges are peeled and cut as children find prepared food more appealing than a big apple! Munch and



Crunch helps children keep their energy levels consistent throughout the morning, aiding their concentration.

At our School we have two main breaks with morning tea at 11am until 11.30am with eating time from 11am until 11.10am. The second lunch time break is between 1.00pm – 1.40pm with eating time from 1:00pm until 1:10pm. Please teach your child which food is for morning tea, and which food is for their lunch. The educators aim to check, but it is helpful if the child has the food in two separate packages.



It is important to remember that children need nutritious food at school and that fruit is a much better alternative than junk food for a snack. Some children have too much food, which takes a long time to eat. If you ask your child to bring home uneaten food, you will be able to judge the amount needed.

During the day children need frequent drinks. We recommend that children have a plastic drink bottle containing water, which they are able to keep on a table in their room as well as an extra drink for break time. Lunch for the children in preschool will be eaten on their verandah, outside or in their rooms. As children in K-2 eat mostly their lunch and recess outside they need to bring food they can manage easily.

Food Allergies and Anaphalaxis

O'Connor Cooperative School is committed to providing an 'Anaphylaxis Friendly' environment, minimising exposure to particular foods such as peanuts and tree nuts, eggs, dairy, gluten and particular fruits. Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction which is potentially life threatening. Most cases of anaphylaxis occur after a person with a severe allergy is exposed to the allergen to which they are allergic, usually a food, insect sting or medication (ASCI guidelines for prevention of anaphylaxis in schools, pre-schools and childcare: 2012 update).

It is common for a child with a SEVERE anaphylaxis reaction caused by peanuts and tree nuts (including but not limited to almonds, cashews, macadamia nuts and pistachios) to be part of our School community.

To assist us in providing a safe environment for everyone, we ask that you avoid including foods that may contain peanuts or tree nuts in your child's lunch box. These may include:

- Peanut butter, Nutella or similar
- Baked goods /biscuits containing nuts
- Muesli bars
- Foods containing peanut oil
- Pesto

If you are unsure whether a food contains peanuts or tree nuts, please err on the side of caution and where possible, pack an alternative food in your child's lunchbox.



Food Safety Tips for Homemade Lunches & Snacks, Including Munch and Crunch

Healthy lunches and snacks are important for children and help with their concentration and learning. School lunches however are particularly susceptible to food poisoning, especially in the summer heat. Parents and carers are reminded of a few simple food safety rules to prepare safe and healthy school lunches and avoid the growth and contamination of food poisoning bacteria.

- Before handling food, wash hands with soap and warm running water and dry thoroughly. Lunch boxes and eating utensils should also be washed thoroughly before reuse. Children will also be encouraged to always wash their hands before eating.
- Foods that are prepared the night before, such as sandwiches, should be frozen overnight and then taken out for each day's school lunch. Suitable foods to freeze are bread, cooked meat, cheese, baked beans or vegemite.
- Food brought from home by the preschool children may be stored in refrigerators within the rooms. Please inform your child's educator if this is necessary. The K – 2 rooms do not have fridges. Because food is normally stored in a child's lunch box for several hours, the lunch box needs to be kept cool. This can be done by:
- Choosing an insulated lunch box or one with a freezer pack or include a wrapped frozen water bottle to keep the lunch box cool.
- Perishable foods such as dairy products, eggs and sliced meats should be kept cool, and eaten within about four hours of preparation. Do not pack these foods if just cooked, first cool in the refrigerator overnight.
- If including leftover meals such as meats, pasta and rice dishes, ensure you pack a frozen ice block into the lunch box
- Healthy drinks, such as water and milk can be frozen overnight and then stored in your child's lunchbox, helping to keep it cold.

School Clothing

O'Connor Cooperative School has a very appealing and comfortable selection of school clothes. The main colours are royal blue and purple. The colours have been specially selected as they are high visibility and different to all other schools – if the educators take the children on an excursion they definitely stand out. The clothes have also been designed to be comfortable and practical for play based learning. During summer, sandals are sensible footwear, but thongs, clogs or crocs are not permitted. It is very helpful if your child can tie up shoelaces and manage other items of clothing. We encourage children to carry a spare change of clothes in their bag in case of accidents or messy play. When the weather becomes colder children need a coat, or at least another layer of clothing, as they spend time outside during break-times. We are fortunate that our buildings are very warm in winter, so children frequently need to take off a layer of clothing.

All items of clothing are available at very competitive prices from our school; order forms are available at the front office and in our family pack.



Uniforms available include:

- Broad brimmed sun hats
- Warm beanies
- Short sleeved collared t-shirts in blue or orange
- Long sleeved collared t-shirts in blue or orange
- Warm polar fleece tops

Sun Protection

O'Connor Cooperative School is an accredited SunSmart School. Children and educators are required to wear a broad brimmed or legionnaires hat outside every day except in June and July when the UV levels remain low.

Caps are not acceptable as they can leave ears and necks exposed to sun damage. Broad brimmed hats are available through the School's front office for purchasing.

Please label hats so that they are easily identifiable.

Your child's hat will stay at school and will be washed regularly.

Labelling

Please name everything with permanent markers.

Staff will make every effort to locate lost items that are named. Ensure the child's name is clearly visible. Lunch boxes and drink bottles need to be named also. If the name washes off, please keep rewriting it.

School Bags

We strongly recommend that you buy a big enough bag for your child. It may look too big, but we can assure you that children have many things to carry in their bag including home reading bags and their coats in winter.

Educators also encourage children to put jumpers, lunch boxes and other belongings straight into their bags to avoid losing them, so their school bags need to be roomy.

Backpacks with a waist belt as well as shoulder straps are recommended for good back care.

Valuable Items at School

We ask that children not bring toys or other items to school, except by prior arrangement with your child's educator, in which case they must remain in school bags for safety. This prevents loss, damage and theft of much-loved toys and possessions.

A range of sporting equipment and other activities are available for children's use in the Outside Learning Environment.



Voluntary Contributions

During the year your child/ren will participate in a variety of learning experiences that require additional art and craft supplies, cooking ingredients and/or dramatic play props. A voluntary contribution will support us in covering the cost of many educational resources. These contributions made by families, each year, directly support children's inquiry and play based learning and the learning.

You can contribute at the start of the year or by instalments at any time throughout the year. Please note that the payment of this financial contribution is voluntary. The Education Act 2004 states that your child will not be approached or refused benefits or services if you choose not to contribute. Individual records of contributions are kept confidential.

Parent Support

Parentlink www.parentlink.act.gov.au is a website which parents / carers can use to access:

- Parents' guides, including electronic order forms
- A directory of local parenting services
- Upcoming community events and parenting courses
- Further readings in relation to the parent guides
- Links to other useful websites.

Concerns or Complaints

If you have a concern about your child's education and/or care please have a conversation with your child's educator. You are also welcome to make contact with our Principal Deb Lowrey or our School Leader Lorenza Van Der Kley.

Should the need arise the ACT Education Directorate has a policy for complaints resolution. It can be accessed at http://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/policy_a-z

Medical Condition Management

Immunisation

The ACT Health Directorate advises that all children attending school in the ACT should be immunised against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio, measles, mumps, rubella and HIB (Haemophilus influenzae type b). We would ask that you check your child's present immunisation status to see whether it is complete for his/her age. ACT Public Health regulations require schools to request proof of up to date immunisation when enrolling. Failure to provide this may result in your child being excluded from school should an outbreak of an infectious disease occur. A copy of exclusion periods for students with infectious diseases is included at the end of this handbook. Parents and carers are asked to adhere closely to these requirements unless medical advice to the contrary is provided in writing.

Illness and Accidents

It is important that sick children are kept at home for their own comfort as well as the comfort of other children and staff. If a child becomes ill or is injured at school appropriate First Aid will be given and if necessary, parents/carers will be notified and asked to take their child



home. If emergency treatment is required parents/carers will be notified immediately and the child will be transferred by ambulance to hospital. All children who have an ongoing condition (e.g. asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, anaphylaxis) must have a treatment plan completed by parents/carers and their GP and lodged at the school. Exclusion periods for infectious diseases such as Mumps, German Measles, Measles and Chicken Pox are provided at the end of this handbook. If a child is to take a prescription medicine while at school, written directions and medicine must be left with Reception staff. The permission form can be found on our website at:

https://www.coop.act.edu.au/our_school/school_notes

Hygiene Procedures

Staff, children and volunteers must adhere to the hand washing procedures. All children are required to wash their hands:

- On arrival
- Before eating or touching food
- Before coming into class after outdoor play times
- After toileting, and
- After blowing their nose and wiping tears and dribbles

All scratches and cuts must be covered.

Head lice are extremely contagious but easily eradicated. Children with either eggs or live lice will be excluded from school until treatment is undertaken and eggs and lice are removed from the child's hair. Please report any cases of head lice to the front office.

Emergency Management Procedures

The School has a policy on emergency evacuations and are required to practise evacuation procedures including lockdown and lockout. All staff and children participate. Parents are notified by email following these procedures.

Insurance and Ambulance Transport

The ACT Education Directorate does not provide any insurance cover for injury, disease or illness to students resulting from school activities or school-organised excursions. Claims for compensation are met where there is a legal liability to do so. Liability is not automatic and depends on the circumstances in which any injury, disease or illness was sustained.

As there is no automatic insurance cover for personal injury if your child is injured at school or during a school organised activity/excursion you should therefore consider whether taking out personal insurance cover for your child is warranted.

This insurance might cover contingencies including medical/hospital expenses, ambulance transport outside the ACT, and cancellation of transport/accommodation or loss of/damage to luggage. The ACT Ambulance Service provides free ambulance transport for students who are injured or suddenly become ill at school or during an approved school organised activity within the ACT.



Diseases—Outbreak Procedures and Exclusion Periods

Personal hygiene measures such as hand washing, covering the mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, covering weeping sores, not sharing food or drinks and not attending school when ill or suffering from diarrhoea are important means of limiting the transmission of a number of common infectious conditions.

The ACT Public Health Regulations 2000 require children with the following conditions, and children who have been in contact with the following conditions, to be excluded from school, preschool, childcare or family day care for the periods specified.

Condition	Exclusion period of person with condition	Exclusion of persons in contact with condition
Amoebiasis (entamoeba histolytica)	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*Campylobacteriosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Chicken pox (varicella and herpes zoster)	Exclude until the last blister has scabbed over. The child should not continue to be excluded by reason only of some remaining scabs.	Not excluded Any child with an immune deficiency (e.g. with leukaemia, or as a result of receiving chemotherapy) should be excluded for their own protection and seek urgent medical advice and varicella-zoster immunoglobulin (ZIG), if necessary.
Conjunctivitis (acute infectious)	Exclude until discharge from eyes ceases.	Not excluded
*Cryptosporidiosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Diarrhoea	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*#Diphtheria	Exclude until— at least 2 negative throat swabs have been taken (the first not less than 24 hours after cessation of antibiotic treatment and the second not less than 48 hours later), and a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Exclude family and household contacts until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer.
Giardiasis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*#Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib)	Exclude until a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded
Hand, Foot and Mouth disease	Exclude if— child is unwell, or child is drooling, and not all blisters have dried or an exposed weeping blister is not covered with a dressing.	Not excluded
*Hepatitis A	Exclude for at least 7 days after the onset of jaundice and a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded



Condition	Exclusion period of person with condition	Exclusion of persons in contact with condition
Herpes (cold sores)	Exclude young children unable to comply with good hygiene practices while the lesion is weeping. Lesion to be covered by a dressing in all cases, if possible.	Not excluded
Impetigo (school sores)	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced and sores on exposed surfaces are covered with a watertight dressing.	Not excluded
Influenza and influenzalike illnesses	Exclude until well	Not excluded
*Leprosy	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer.	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer.
*#Measles	Exclude for at least 4 days after the rash appears.	Immunised contacts not excluded. Exclude non-immunised contacts until 14 days after the first day of appearance of the rash in the index case. (b) Non-immunised contacts immunised with measles vaccine within 72 hours after their first contact with the index case are not excluded after being immunised. (d) Non-immunised contacts who are given normal human immunoglobulin (NHIG) within 7 days after their first contact with the index case are not excluded after being given NHIG.
Meningitis (bacterial)	Exclude until well	Not excluded
*Meningococcal infection	Exclude until adequate carrier eradication therapy has commenced.	Not excluded if receiving rifampicin or other antibiotic treatment recommended by the Chief Health Officer. Otherwise, excluded until 10 days after last contact with the index case.
*#Mumps	Exclude for 9 days after onset of symptoms, or until parotid swelling goes down (whichever is sooner).	Not excluded
*#Poliomyelitis	Exclude for at least 14 days after onset of symptoms and until a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	Not excluded
Ringworm, scabies, pediculosis (lice), trachoma	Exclude until effective treatment has commenced.	Not excluded
Rotavirus	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*#Rubella (German measles)	Exclude for 4 days after the appearance of the rash.	Not excluded Female staff of child-bearing age should ensure that their immune status against rubella is adequate.



Condition	Exclusion period of person with condition	Exclusion of persons in contact with condition
*Salmonellosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
*Shigellosis	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
Streptococcal infection (including scarlet fever)	Exclude until the person has recovered or has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours.	Not excluded
*Tuberculosis	Exclude until approval to return has been given by the Chief Health Officer.	Not excluded
*Typhoid and paratyphoid fever	Exclude until a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner recommending that the exclusion should cease.	(a) Not excluded unless the Chief Health Officer notifies the person in charge of the school. (a) If the Chief Health Officer gives notice, exclusion is subject to the conditions in the notice.
*#Whooping cough (pertussis)	Exclude for 21 days from start of cough, or for at least 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the Chief Health Officer	Exclude non-immunised household, home based child care and close child care contacts under 7 years old for 14 days after the last exposure to infection, or until 5 days after starting a course of antibiotics recommended by the Chief Health Officer (whichever is sooner).
Worms (intestinal)	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases	Not excluded
<p>A parent/carer of a child with a listed exclusion condition or a child who has been in contact with a listed exclusion condition must notify the school principal or principal carer as soon as possible.</p> <p>*These conditions must be notified by medical practitioners to the Chief Health Officer</p> <p>#These conditions must be notified by the school principal or principal carer to the Chief Health Officer</p>		

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