



**At Woodside Preschool we love getting out into Nature - both at the preschool and on our Bush/Beach Kindy Days.**

We believe that each child has a right to a learning environment that engages the heart mind, body and spirit.

We believe that we can support children to expand their thinking and enhance their desire to learn through play and exploration, spontaneity and risk taking.

We believe that children have a natural sense of wonder and curiosity and have the right to a vibrant and flexible learning environment which provides powerful resources and builds connections with the natural world.

Woodside Preschool Philosophy Statement



**Examples of Nature Play include- Bush Kindy excursions (4-5 times a year), Occasional Beach Kindy or Botanic Gardens excursions, walks around our local playgrounds and parks, all-weather outdoor play at kindy, outside only days/times, Mud Day Celebrations, Campfire Kindy days, our Heurto (Vegetable Garden) and caring for our chickens and watching them grow.**

**We firmly believe that play is learning made visible- through play children demonstrate persistence, mastery, and enquiry. They also demonstrate the ongoing development of Dispositions for Learning- attitudes we have to help our interactions with the world, the way we respond to people and situations.**

**We focus on the following dispositions that will help children as successful learners.**

**We support them to learn to be**

- \*curious**
- \*confident**
- \*a communicator**
- \*resourceful**
- \*cooperative**
- \*purposeful and persistent**



These skills help prepare children for life, not only for 'the more formalised structure of schooling'.

Too often these days risk-aversion prevents children from making accurate judgements and accurately assessing their capabilities. Through long periods of uninterrupted play children learn that they are trusted and trust themselves in their problem solving and decision-making abilities. When educators follow children's leads and children listen to each other's ideas, problems are solved and learning is optimised.

**Real learning occurs outdoors when the senses are ignited, curiosity is aroused and children explore nature.**

Developing a love of nature and a sense of belonging also promotes a desire to support a sustainable future.

'A sense of 'belonging' to the earth is the first step to 'being' at peace within it. With these in place we will be more able to solve what is to 'become' of our fragile planet into the future.

*With thanks to Ruth Garlic- 'Nurturing Nature' Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority*

### How do we manage Nature Play at Woodside Preschool?

We encourage and support all children to play outside in all weather conditions (unless heat or wind/storms make it unsafe).

- In Summer our Sun Protection Policy is followed by all adults and children and we set up play environments in shady areas.
- In winter children (and adults) are encouraged to wear warm hats, rubber boots and coats when outside.
- Staff *try* to ensure that all children are wearing rubber boots when involved in winter water play, and we have spare pairs of boots for children who have left theirs at home.
- If it is raining children will only be allowed outside if wearing raincoats with hoods (we have a Kindy set of these).
- Staff support children to locate and change into dry clothes as necessary.
- We will not be outside if there is a severe weather warning in place or staff assess the conditions as unsafe.



### How can parents support children's adventurous outdoor play at kindy?

- Send boots *every day* or leave them at Kindy throughout winter.
- Provide spare clothes, including socks, and **label all clothes** to help staff return items to their owners.
- Encourage your child to be independent in their dressing- start by encouraging them to dress themselves and to recognize their own clothes.
- Staff will always watch out for coughing/unwell children but if your child is suffering from a cold or recent asthma attack and should not be outside, it is safer to keep them at home. Children can become distressed if they are not allowed to play outside when their friends are out there and it can make for a very long kindy day.

