The Preschool year is a very important year for the children as it provides them with a safe environment which stimulates, engages and enhances their development and learning as well as being one that encourages them to learn from one another as well as the staff.

As children travel at a different pace according to their individual development, background, experience and needs, the Preschool program nurtures the continuing development of the children’s knowledge of themselves and the world around them.

The principle objective of Preschool is the education of young children through developmental programs which are planned to meet the individual needs of the children and which fosters their growth and learning.

In accordance with the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), the preschool program enables each child’s learning in the five outcomes:

- Children have a strong sense of identity
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
- Children are confident and involved learners
- Children are effective communicators

The program takes into account the children’s strengths, capabilities, culture, interests and experiences.

The program promotes language, cognitive, physical and emotional development.
The children are encouraged in the areas of independence, self-awareness and a feeling of self-worth. As we recognize and value the unique differences that make up each individual in the Preschool, we believe it is important to promote self-esteem.

The program helps build confidence and social skills. The children have many opportunities to develop caring relationships with other adults and friendships with their peers. We encourage inclusive play, mutual responsibility, co-operation and self-respect as building blocks for important first friendships outside the children’s family relationships.

We encourage problem-solving that keeps the group safe, active and co-operative.

The program is all play-based which is the most important way a child learns. Children learn through their ability to touch, explore and experiment as well as being actively involved with materials, new ideas and interactions with others. Play is the way children come to know themselves, others and the world around them. The “learning through play” activities are child-centred, child-initiated and are totally rewarding and meaningful experiences.
PRESCHOOL ENROLMENT POLICY
Children who turn four before the 30th June are eligible to begin Preschool at the start of the school year. The enrolment policy states that children are offered a position on an age-basis for their preschool year. For example, children turning 5 in July will be accepted first.

Children who reside in the feeder area or have a family member enrolled at Larrakeyah Primary will be given preference for Preschool.

Children entering preschool must be toilet trained and able to manage themselves independently in the toilet.

Proof of date of birth, immunisation history and residential address is required on enrolment.

Please make sure the Preschool has your current address and phone number.

PRESCHOOL TO TRANSITION POLICY
When entering Primary School from Preschool, children will be enrolled in Transition. To be eligible for Transition children must turn 5 by the 30 of June in that year.

GENERAL INFORMATION
The Preschool has two sessions.

The morning group (the Turtles) is from 8.00am until 11.00am, Monday to Friday. The afternoon group (the Dolphins) is from 12 noon until 3.00pm, Monday to Thursday. The Dolphins group attends Friday mornings as well with the Turtles from 8 – 11am where the children integrate with the Transition classes. “Fun Friday” play provides an opportunity for children to play with different children with a range of ages therefore providing the older children with leadership opportunities and the younger children to gain peer support. The children participate in a variety of activities that cover, and enhance, all learning areas of the EYLF and provides the pre-schoolers with the opportunity to feel comfortable in the school environment.

Children need to be brought to the preschool and collected at the end of the session by an authorized person over 16 years.

Punctuality on arrival, and departure, is appreciated as often we have meetings to attend or preparation to do immediately after the session.
We are all friends at Preschool

Children are asked to provide 3 pieces of fruit at the start of each week. Whilst at preschool the children will share morning or afternoon tea. Alternatives to fruit can include cheese, crackers, dried fruit, boiled eggs, vegetable sticks or cabana.

On Fridays, the children are asked to bring their own healthy morning tea in a named lunch box and a water bottle with water in it.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT
Parents are a very important part of the preschool family. As stated in the EYLF, “Learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when early childhood educators work in partnership with families. Educators recognize that families are children’s first and most influential teachers.”

Parents are always welcome to help us for a session or part of the session. We have a roster on the door where you are all welcome to write your name down or just turn up to help for the day, to see what your child does at preschool. When your child is the Focus Child for the week, we send home a questionnaire so you have an input into the programming for your child. If you have any special talents that you would like to share with us, like music, cooking, puppetry, storytelling, for example, please let us know as we appreciate any help. Also, if you are arriving at preschool a bit early for a session, feel free to come in and spend time with your child doing a puzzle or looking at a book or having a play outside in the yard, before the sessions start at 8am or 12noon. (Remember though, you must stay with your child until the session actually starts as we will be still preparing for the session.)

The preschool also has a representative on the Larrakeyah Primary School Council who attends each monthly meeting. If you are interested in doing this role, please let us know.

Monthly newsletter will also be sent home with your child to keep you well informed of what is happening at preschool.
PARENT CONTRIBUTIONS, FUND RAISING
The preschool's current voluntary contribution is $60 per term per child. This money goes towards necessary stationery equipment and other supplies to support programs. Prompt payment is much appreciated.
We run our own small raffles and fund raiser activities to raise funds for the preschool so we can purchase new resources and to replace old ones that need replacing. We try to hold one big special fundraising event each year in the Dry Season so keep reading your newsletters as all the information will be in them.

YOUR CHILD WILL NEED:

A good size school bag (named) to hold their art work, named spare clothes in case of toileting accident, their library bag etc.

The Territory Government has allocated a $150 voucher for each pre-schooler to use at the start of the year. Included in our package is one preschool t-shirt (more can be purchased at $15 each), a preschool hat (as wide-brimmed hats are compulsory at preschool in accordance to our Sun-Smart Policy) and a preschool library bag. These will be issued at the end of Week 1, 2014. More information about the rest of the voucher will be revealed at the start of the year.

Your child can wear a preschool shirt, if preferred. Remember, your child needs to wear clothes that can get dirty and are practical for a session at Preschool.

All children need to wear runners, boots or sandals. Thongs and fashion sandals (eg CROCS) are dangerous and not suited for the Preschool program.

COMMUNICATION
Larrakeyah Preschool has an open door policy where parents are welcome into the preschool at any time to observe your child's learning or to assist in daily activities.

There is also a Communication Book near the entry (one for each group) where all parents are encouraged to write short notes to the staff if there are changes in who is collecting your child; if you would like to make an appointment to see the staff; or even if you'd like the staff to call you at a time when we can talk privately. We check this daily.
ILLNESS/HEALTH

Please inform us about your child’s absence by phone or email. This is important so we know if there is a sickness spreading within the preschool. You can email us to mary.boeck@ntschools.net or ring us directly. If you ring and we aren’t answering, it generally means we are outside and cannot hear the phone so you can ring again later or go through the school on 89813211.

If your child is unwell, please keep them home because they may spread the illness. But most importantly, they will just want to stay at home and rest. Please check our exclusion chart for certain illnesses on our notice board.

Thank you. If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to come and ask us.