



**Rationale:**

The objectives of the schools Playgroup initiative is to:

- \* Promote improved health, development and wellbeing outcomes for children.
- \* Build parents' confidence and capacity and support the establishment of social networks.
- \* Model and support developmentally appropriate play experiences and parenting practices.
- \* Promote and support participation in the maternal and child health service and kindergarten programs and link families to other services and supports.

**Target Group:**

This initiative aims to engage families from the local community who may potentially come to our school in the future. However, all members of the community are invited to come along to this group. Playgroup welcomes babies (from birth) and children up to 5 years of age. A parent or caregiver must stay with their child during session time. (Mums, Dads, Grandparents etc or other carers are always welcome.) Playgroup is also implemented to engage vulnerable and disadvantaged families who may, for a range of reasons, under-utilise or have difficulties accessing universal early childhood services and supports, including playgroups and parent groups.

Playgroup is a place to have fun and make new friends. It provides the opportunity for children to interact with others and take part in group activities. It also gives parents / caregivers the chance to socialise and share their experiences, ideas or concerns with other people.

There are four population groups that are specifically targeted under this initiative. They are:

- \* Indigenous children and families.
- \* Culturally and linguistically diverse children and their families, with a particular focus on recently arrived families.
- \* Children and families affected by disability.
- \* Disadvantaged families with complex needs.

**Implementation:**

Playgroup is held once a fortnight in the Multi Purpose Room at Tallygaroopna PS. Currently, this is on every second Thursday from 9am until 11am. At our playgroup the parent or caregiver needs to supervise their children at all times and be nearby to assist the child when necessary. Students from the school are rostered on to interact with the playgroup children and they are monitored by a member of staff. All members are expected to be involved in the day to day running of our playgroup, including set up, cleaning, organising activities and pack up. A snack for the children to share at morning tea is encouraged. A drink is provided, although you may like to bring your own if you wish.

- Also due to NO HAT NO PLAY policy at kindergartens and schools, playgroup is a good time to get your child accustomed to wearing a hat during outside play.

At Tallygaroopna Primary School we pride ourselves in having a well-equipped playgroup. The kitchen has cutlery, crockery, cooking utensils, fridge, stove, microwave and kettle for making tea, coffee and hot chocolate, which is also provided. Our craft cupboard is well stocked and there is a wide range of indoor toys, books, jigsaw puzzles, play dough and a large blackboard / magnet board. There is a fully stocked first aid kit and sunscreen available in the school if needed. The premises are air conditioned and heated.

Our playgroup is a non-profit organisation. There are no term fees at present but donations can go towards craft, kitchen and cleaning supplies, new toys and equipment and building maintenance.

**Staffing:**

This is discussed annually and is the responsibility of the Principal. Options may involve staff or parents running this group depending on the logistics involved. Supervising staff will have appropriate qualifications, an understanding of the needs of the particular target group and preferably, in the case of supported playgroup facilitators, an approved Children's Services qualification. All personnel involved in supported playgroups and parent groups (including Coordinators, supported playgroup facilitators and volunteers) are required to have a current Working with Children Check.

**Evaluation:**

- \* This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.
- \* This policy was last ratified by School Council on Wed 6<sup>th</sup> May 2015.