

Preschool Handbook

2020



Philosophy

At Australia Street Infants School Preschool we acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, the Gadigal clan, of the Eora Nation.

Relationships are central to everything we do and create a sense of belonging that is inclusive for all. We value relationships between educators, children, families and community, that are based on mutual respect and understanding.

We view each child as a capable learner, confident to direct their own learning. We understand children must be loved, nurtured and challenged in a way that builds a strong self-image and engenders positive self-esteem. By creating a curriculum that focuses on exploration, discovery and exciting 'adventures' children are inspired to learn as they learn best.

We believe that play is essential in the lives of young children. Our environment is flexible, stimulating, inviting and purposefully arranged to capture children's interests, ideas and to cater for individual needs. We believe in learning based on collaboration and that education is a shared journey of self- discovery and change.

In providing a stimulating and responsive environment where positive reinforcement and encouragement make learning possible we are creating a foundation that will ensure that our children are prepared to thrive as confident, intelligent and socially aware members of the community. In building these ideals we are building a community that enables children to develop a readiness for transition to school and ultimately a readiness for a lifelong learning journey.

Our programs are guided by the principles and practices of the Early Years Learning Framework. As educators our role is that of facilitator, encouraging, promoting and reinforcing a child's attempts, questions, skill development and discoveries. We believe that each child's learning is enhanced through teacher quality. Therefore, we maintain a commitment towards ongoing professional learning and continuous improvement. We work collaboratively as a team to challenge, question and evaluate our practice so that each child has the best opportunity to access the educational program and reach their full potential.

The Early Years Learning Framework

The Early Years Learning Framework draws on evidence that early childhood is a vital period in children's learning and development. It has a specific emphasis on play-based learning and recognises the importance of communication and

language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development. Fundamental to this Framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by **belonging**, **being** and **becoming**.

Belonging in the sense that experiencing *belonging* i.e. knowing where and with whom you belong – is integral to human existence. *Belonging* acknowledges children's interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. **Being** recognises the significance of the here and now in children's lives. That childhood is a time to be, to seek and make meaning of the world. **Becoming** reflects this process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years as young children learn and grow. It emphasises learning to participate fully and actively in society.

The Framework puts children's learning at the core and comprises three inter-related elements:

Principles

The following are five principles that reflect contemporary theories and research evidence concerning children's learning and early childhood pedagogy.

1. Secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships.
2. Partnerships
3. High expectations and equity
4. Respect for diversity
5. Ongoing learning and reflective practice.

Practice

Educators draw on a rich repertoire of pedagogical practices to promote children's learning by:

- Adopting holistic approaches
- Being responsive to children
- Planning and implementing learning through play
- Intentional teaching
- Creating physical and social learning environments that impact positively on children's learning
- Valuing cultural and social contexts of children and families
- Providing for continuity in experiences and facilitating successful transitions
- Assessing and monitoring learning to inform provision and support children achieving learning outcomes.

Learning Outcomes

There are five Learning Outcomes designed to capture all facets of children's learning and development from birth to five. The outcomes are:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity
2. Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
3. Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
4. Children are confident and involved learners
5. Children are effective communicators

Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Council for the Australian Government (2009) 'Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Learning Years Framework for Australia'.



Assessment

In order to gain a full understanding of each child's development and learning the educators make observations. From these observations, they will program accordingly to suit the needs, strengths and interests of each child to further extend their development and learning.

Throughout the year, observations, work samples and photographs from every child, will be collated into a learning journal. These are stored in the preschool for you to browse at any time. This enables families to see a progression of their child's development and learning through their year at preschool.

Mid-way through the year, families will be provided with a written summary of their child's participation and learning. In addition, parent/teacher meetings are held at the end of Term Two. During this time teachers and families can discuss the journals and any concerns that they may have. At the end of Term Four, the completed journals will be sent home for the families to keep.

If needed, you can make an appointment with your child's preschool teacher at any time throughout the year.

Behaviour Guidance

The Preschool educators work towards the children monitoring and regulating their own behaviour with less reliance on adult assistance.

This can be achieved by the educators working with the children to:

- Establish positive expectations of behaviour appropriate for preschool and society in general. This will assist them to distinguish between acceptable behaviour and unacceptable behaviour.
- Discuss alternative ways of dealing with problems and providing skills to help solve their conflicts as they arise, such as using words rather than actions or seeking adult assistance.
- Discuss the natural consequences that may occur if the preschool expectations are not followed.
- Provide them with prompting, modelling and reinforcement of appropriate behaviour and strategies to make amends when things go wrong. Staff will always focus on the positive expectation.
- If an unacceptable behaviour continues, and re-direction to another activity or play area is not successful, a discussion will be held with the child's parents and the teacher to discuss appropriate ways of dealing with the behaviour in preschool and at home.

Management of our service

Our service is operated by the *NSW Department of Education* and is part of a preschool-year two Public School. Our Principal assumes the roles of;

- Nominated Supervisor
- Educational Leader
- Responsible person in charge

If our principal is off-site, the nominated executive staff member replacing him/her automatically assumes these roles.

License and Rating

Our preschool is licensed to care for a maximum of 20 children, between 9.00 and 3.00 daily, with a ratio of one adult for each 10 children.

- *Approved Provider:* NSW Department of Education PR-00005345
- *Service approval number:* SE- 00006488
- *Service assessment and rating:* Rated as Exceeding in 2018

Our preschool is guided by the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*; <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/maintop/view/inforce/subordleg+653+2011+cd+0+N>

The relevant hard copy laws, regulations and our local procedures are available for you to access in a folder in the entrance of our preschool. Please ask a staff member for assistance, if required.

Complaints

If you have a concern, it is best to discuss it with your child's teacher first. Please make an appropriate time to meet with her to do this.

If you are not happy with the result, or if you do not feel it is appropriate to talk to her, phone and make an appointment to discuss your concerns with the School Principal.

Complaints will be dealt with confidentially and professionally, as per the NSW Education and Communities Complaints Handling Policy, 2017.

Child Protection

If you, as a member of the public, have concerns about a child's welfare you should call the *Child Protection Hotline* on 132111. More information is available online; <http://www.community.nsw.gov.au/home>

All our school staff are *mandatory reporters*, this means they are legally obliged to report any suspected child abuse. They would do this through the school principal and the Department's *Child Wellbeing Unit*.



Attendance

The Preschool is open from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday to Friday. A Group will attend Monday, Tuesday and every second Wednesday. B Group will attend every second Wednesday and Thursday, Friday. As the Preschool program starts at 9.00am we ask that your child arrives on time to ensure that they do not miss out on any valuable learning time. Please wait in the outdoor play area until the second bell rings at 9.00am.

If your child is going to be absent please ring or email and inform the Preschool staff. If you find

you are running late in the afternoon please ring and inform the Preschool staff so they can reassure and cater for your child.

Term Breaks

The preschoolers have the same holidays as the children in Kindergarten to Year 2, and our preschool is closed in the NSW Department of Education term holidays.

Timetable

The preschool timetable aims to provide a balance of adult-directed and free play experiences. Our timetable allows for flexibility to follow specific interests, spontaneous experiences and link in with K-2 programs running in the School.

What to bring everyday

- Healthy low- to-no-package lunch
- Healthy low-to-no-package morning tea
- Drink bottle filled with water
- A hat
- A complete change of clothes.

Meals

Meal times are a social and enjoyable time and aid in the promotion of self help skills. We ask that the children bring nutritious low package food for consumption during the day. No lollies, nuts or chocolates are to be brought in lunchboxes. Please provide a water bottle (no juice or cordial) for your child to access during the day.

In the case that a child at risk of anaphylaxis enrolls at our preschool, you will be notified of their trigger foods through a notice at our entrance.

What to wear

To aid in the enjoyment of preschool we suggest that clothing should be:

- Easily washable...preschool is not the place for 'good clothes'.
- Manageable...suitable for promoting independence. Pants easily pulled down, shirts and dresses easy to undo, velcro shoes that children can manage independently.
- Safe...avoid clothes that may hinder climbing, jumping and running.
- Sun safe... with shoulders covered
- Identifiable... please label your child's clothing.

Sun Protection

Australia Street is now an Australian Cancer Council Sunsmart School. Whilst outdoors, children must wear a hat and will have access to sunscreen. In the warmer months we ask that you apply sunscreen prior to or on arrival at preschool. When necessary we will assist your child to reapply this during the day.

Fees

The preschool fees are set by the Department of Education and in 2020 the fees will be \$47 per day.

The fees should be paid weekly, fortnightly or alternatively you may elect to pay for the term in advance. You may pay in person at the school office, or online via the make a payment link on the school website.

Any account four (4) weeks overdue may result in the loss of your child's place in the preschool.

Sign in and Sign out

Please ensure that your child is signed in and out, as well as stating the time of arrival and departure. This assists educators with supervision and in the case of an emergency.

Collection Procedure

The children's well-being and safety is of up-most importance and we need to ensure that they are always in caring and safe hands, even when they are leaving school. Therefore, we ask that you nominate authorised adults to collect your child from Preschool. Only authorised people will be allowed to collect your child.

The procedure will be as follows:
When an *authorised person*, who is unfamiliar to the staff, arrives at the school to collect your child they must introduce themselves to the teacher and present their driver's license as proof of identity before your child can leave with them.

We understand that on occasions you may need an unauthorised person to collect your child, however please ensure that you provide verbal permission by informing preschool staff and, if known in advance, write the details in the sign-in and out book in the comments column.

If your child is ill

Regular attendance is important. However, if your child is feeling unwell, keep him/her at home, both for the child's sake and to eliminate the risk of cross infection to other children. We ask that you keep your child at home if he/she has had a

temperature, diarrhoea or vomiting in the previous 24 hours.

Please notify the Preschool staff by phone or email if your child is going to be absent for any reason.

Medication

If your child is taking any prescribed medication it must be given to the preschool teacher in its original packaging with the directions of use. You will need to sign a consent form giving permission for it to be administered.

Accident Policy

Occasionally children have accidents whilst at preschool. First Aid and comfort will be given to the child by a staff member. Details of all accidents are recorded in the accident folder and parents will be asked to sign the form upon collection of their child. In the event of a serious accident the parent or carer will be contacted by phone.

Family Involvement

Australia Street Preschool views families as being in partnership with the school in the education of the children. Therefore, we welcome and encourage families to be involved in the Preschool program. This may be through excursions, sharing skills at group time, working bees, fundraising, family days, or just being a part of the morning play time. We highly value your thoughts on all aspects of our program and encourage written and verbal feedback.

Communication with Families

The Preschool will communicate with families in a variety of ways including:

Daily verbal/written communication:

Teachers will ensure that there will be informal verbal interaction with families at the beginning and end of each day in order to keep consistency of care between home and school life.

In the sign in/out book there is a comments column which can be used for both teachers and families as a way of communicating.

Fortnightly Newsletter

A fortnightly preschool newsletter will be emailed to parents. This will include current interests and upcoming events. We welcome email or verbal responses to our newsletters.

School Newsletters

Please log onto school e news (via the school website) to register to receive your copy of the weekly Australia Street School newsletter.

Excursions

During the year, the children may have opportunities to attend incursions (inside the school grounds) and excursions that support the teaching and learning program being implemented in the Preschool.

In advance, families will be sent out a permission slip explaining the excursion in detail and the cost (which will vary depending on the nature of the excursions). It is necessary that the school receives a signed permission slip and payment for the excursion in advance in order for the child to attend that excursion.

Immunisation

All children enrolling in NSW Department of Education schools and preschools must show proof of immunisation with an *AIR Immunisation History Statement* or *AIR Immunisation History Statement Form*.

According to the *Public Health Act 2010*, children who are unimmunised due to "conscientious objection" are not able to enrol in our preschool.

If your child turns 4 after enrolling, we will give you a letter reminding you to provide their updated immunisation details to our school office as soon as practical.

No Toys

We ask that the children do not bring any toys to school as lost or broken toys generally result in a lot of heartache.

Quiet time

It is an important part of the Preschool program for the children to have a period of quiet time to relax their bodies. During this period, they will have a choice of quiet, restful activities. Please speak to one of our educators if your child requires a sleep during this time.

Quiet time will continue depending on the needs of the children. However, it will finish by term four to assist children with their transition to school.

Before and After School Care

Out of school hours care (OSHC) is provided in Lennox House from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. in the morning and from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the afternoon.

At present this service is available for our preschool children (once they have turned four years old). OSHC is run by the Australia Street

Infants School P & C. The phone number for OSHC is 9516 3756.

Birthdays

Birthdays are an important time to celebrate with your friends. Please feel free (and not pressured) to bring in a cake or individual cupcakes to share amongst with the children. In the past, some families have found ice blocks to be an enjoyable and easier option. Please ensure that the cakes/cupcakes **do not contain any traces of nuts**.

Library/Music

Preschool children will attend Australia Street School library weekly for a library and music session. Please bring a library bag if you would like your child to borrow a book. You may purchase an Australia Street library bag or bring another bag suitable for book protection.

Educators

Georgia Kelly: Preschool teacher
Bachelor of Teaching Early Childhood

Cynthia Lau
Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care



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