

Aspendale Gardens Preschool INFORMATION BOOKLET 2017

Welcome to 2017 at Aspendale Gardens Preschool. We hope that your child will have a happy and rewarding year with us and that you too are rewarded by your involvement in the Centre.

Preschool is the beginning of the structured educational experience which will continue through primary, secondary and perhaps tertiary levels. It is an extremely important time for your child as he/she forms the attitudes, skills and knowledge which children build through their education.

We would like to encourage all parents to become involved in our curriculum in any way possible and look forward to spending a very enjoyable and fulfilling year with both you and your child.

ASPENDALE GARDENS PRESCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

We believe in teachers, children, families and our community;

- Working together to foster, to nurture and extend children's voices;
- We work in partnerships and have high expectations for each child to build on prior learning and;
- Strengthening positive relationships within their learning context.

Preschool Staff

Natasha Byrne - Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader, 4 year old Bilbys Group Teacher	Kim Fulton Preschool Administration Assistant, Enrolment Officer, Occasional Care Co-Teacher
Mary Rohan - 4 year old Rosellas Group Teacher	Cassie Bills - 4 year old Wallabies Group Teacher
Catherine Gane - 3 year old Dolphins Group Teacher	Taya McCarthy - 3 year old Possums Group Teacher, Teacher for Occasional Care sessions
Mel Schofield -4 year old Bilbys Group Co-Teacher	Bec Butler - 4 year old Rosellas Group Co-Teacher
Sam Direen - 4 year old Wallabies Group Co-Teacher, Co-Teacher for Occasional Care sessions	Nicole McAleese - 3 year old Dolphins Group Co-Teacher and relief Teacher
Jasmyn Lurie 3 year old Possums Group Co-Teacher, Relief Teacher and Playgroup Leader	

Community Centre Office Staff

Meagan Henry - Centre Manager	Bronwen McKean - Community Development Co-ordinator
Rachel Morris - Accounts Administrator	Cathy Wilson - Administration Officer

Board of Management Members and Roles

Jono Whalan - President	Sheridan Willrath - Vice President & IT Officer
Nicole Dewar - Treasurer	Kim Ives - Secretary, Approved Provider
Veroshan Sripragasam - Youth Hub Officer and Social Media	Kirsten Newell - Staff Liaison
Arvind Kale - Grants Officer	Emma Harris - Working Bees
Rachael Short - Fundraising	

2017 TIMETABLE

BLUE GUM ROOM

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<i>Rosellas (4 yo)</i>	<i>Bilbys (4 yo)</i>	<i>Rosellas (4 yo)</i>	<i>Rosellas (4 yo)</i>	<i>Rosellas (4 yo)</i>
<i>8.30am - 1.30pm</i>	<i>8.30am - 4pm</i>	<i>8.30am - 1.30pm</i>	<i>8.30am - 4pm</i>	<i>8.30am - 1.30pm</i>

WATTLE ROOM

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
<i>Dolphins (3yo)</i>	<i>Possums (3yo)</i>	<i>Wallabies (4yo)</i>	<i>Occasional Care</i>	<i>Wallabies (4yo)</i>
<i>8.30am - 11.30am</i>	<i>8.30am - 11.30am</i>	<i>8.30am - 12.30pm</i>	<i>8.30am - 12.30pm</i>	<i>8.30am - 3pm</i>
<i>Occasional Care</i>	<i>Wallabies (4yo)</i>	<i>Dolphins (3 yo)</i>	<i>Possums(3 yo)</i>	
<i>12.15pm - 3.15pm</i>	<i>12.30pm- 5pm</i>	<i>1.15pm - 4.15pm</i>	<i>1.15pm - 4.15pm</i>	

Contact Details

Aspendale Gardens Preschool and Community Centre Address: 103-105 Kearney Drive, Aspendale Gardens, 3195	Email Address: enquiries@agcsinc.org.au Website: www.agcsinc.org.au
Community Centre phone number 9587 5955	Blue Gum Room phone number 9587 6060
Wattle Room phone number 9588 0677	Email: enquiries@agcsinc.org.au
Preschool Fees 2017	Building and Maintenance Fee of \$90.00 per annum refundable on attendance of 3 working bees or designated fundraising events per year
4 year old Preschool Group - \$455 per term	3 year old Preschool Group - \$375 per term
4 year old Incursion/Excursion Levy \$100 (due with First Term Fees)	3 year old Incursion Levy \$30 (due with First Term Fees)

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The policies and procedures are a set of statements about appropriate and expected behaviours as members of the Preschool and Community Centre. These policies and procedures are reviewed every year by the Board of Management. Families are also asked at the beginning of each year to review the policies and put forth ideas and suggestions. Hard copies of the policies and procedures are available for reading in the Blue Gum room, the Wattle room and Community Centre. The policies can also be accessed on the website.

This is a list of the policies and procedures:

Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisation Policy

Administration of First Aid Policy

Administration of Medication Policy

Anaphylaxis Policy

Asthma Policy

Child Protection Policy

Child Safe Environment Policy

Code of Conduct Policy

Complaints and Grievances Policy

Curriculum Development Policy

Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy

Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy

Delivery and Collection of Children Policy

Determining Responsible Person Policy

Diabetes Policy

Emergency and Evacuation Policy

Enrolment and Orientation Policy

Environmental Sustainability Policy

Epilepsy Policy

Excursions and Service Event Policy

Fee Policy

Food Safety Policy

Governance and Management of the Service Policy

Hygiene Policy

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy

Inclusion and Equity Policy

Information and Communication Technology Policy

Interactions with Children Policy

Nutrition and Active Play Policy

OHS Policy

Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy

Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Relaxation and Sleep Policy

Staffing Policy

Sun Protection Policy

Supervision of Children Policy

Water Safety Policy

ENROLMENTS

Enrolments for 4 year old Preschool can be collected at the Preschool and Community Centre and need to be sent to the City of Kingston by parents as Council processes these forms.

Enrolments are accepted at Council from the 1st of May the year before your child is to attend 4 year old Preschool. Letters of offer for a 4 year old position will be sent out to families in the last couple of weeks of July in the year before they begin. These will be sent to families by Council.

3 year old Preschool enrolment forms can be collected at the Preschool and Community Centre and are to be given directly to the Enrolment Officer or office staff at the Centre. 3 year old applications are also accepted from the 1st of May the year before your child is to attend 3 year old Preschool. Letters of offer for a 3 year old position will be sent out to families in the last weeks of July the year before they begin.

ENROLMENT FORM (Quality Area Seven)

It is a legislative requirement under the Children's Services Regulations 2011, Regulation 160-103, that an enrolment form is completed before your child starts at Preschool. It is important to make sure you complete ALL SECTIONS. If any information changes, it is your responsibility to notify your children's service immediately.

FUNDED FOUR YEAR OLD PRESCHOOL

Children are eligible for one year of funded Preschool in the year prior to starting school. In some circumstances, a second year of Preschool may be approved by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development after a professional assessment. If you are concerned about your child's development and learning you need to notify your child's teacher. Your child's teacher will organise a meeting with you to discuss your concerns and create a plan to work towards. This can be done via phone call or email to your child's teacher.

DEFERRAL OF PRESCHOOL PLACE

In some circumstances, parents may wish to defer their child's place in a funded Preschool curriculum. It is important to discuss your child's needs or your concerns with your child's Teacher. **Funding guidelines specify deferment within the first week of Term One.** Parents must complete a deferral application form and return this to the office and the City of Kingston in the first week of Term One and will be supported to consider other options.

THE PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM (Quality Area 1 Educational Program and Practice)

Children definitely enjoy Preschool!! There are so many things to do - messy things, wet things, quiet things and noisy things. They can choose to work alone or play with friends. They have time to stand and watch, time to think, time to relax and time to be very busy indeed. Your Teacher plans and prepares a variety of learning experiences, focusing on different areas and this is directly related to the children's current interests and developmental levels. The Teachers cater for individual children and their needs, recognising children learn in different ways and at different rates. As each Teacher is an individual, they deliver the curriculum differently for each group and individual child and family, always focused on achieving the learning outcomes in the Early Years Learning Framework. The Teachers are always available to discuss the curriculum and answer any questions. Often every year there are questions asked by families about the "teaching of the alphabet" for children going to school the following year. We work very closely with the local primary school teachers and facilitate a School Readiness Evening to support the reasons why Preschool is so important for the children to learn to play and socialise to ensure they begin the more formal learning process at school.

Teachers follow the new *Early Years Learning Framework for Australia Belonging, Being and Becoming*, as well as the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*. The *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* has five basic learning outcomes: Identity, Community, Wellbeing, Learning and Communication. *More information around the EYLF further along in the handbook.

The children learn as they play and interact within their Preschool environment. They have the opportunity to make friends and enjoy a whole new social world. They learn to care for themselves and others, to share, to take turns and develop self-esteem and resilience. They begin to understand the rights of other people, to respect the feelings of others and express their own feelings in appropriate ways. They learn to make individual decisions and develop their independence and self-confidence to explore their world with support.

Some of the learning activities include wonderful sensory experiences such as finger painting, mud and water play, clay, play dough and sand play. There are books to look at, puzzles to complete, construction sets to work with, block building, cutting and pasting, painting, threading, sorting and matching. There are also songs to sing, games to play, movement and dance, stories and poetry to listen to and musical instruments to play. Outside we offer lots of climbing equipment, tunnels, ball games, blocks and nature walks to the local wetlands... just to name a few of the activities that are covered at Preschool.

Both the indoor and outdoor curriculums are equally important and designed to stimulate the children's interest and provide valuable educational experiences.

Our curriculum is designed around each individual child's needs within the group. Staff are trained to observe all aspects of children's behaviour closely and from these observations extensive records are kept and goals set for each child to strengthen their development in the Five Learning Outcomes Area. The experiences provided in our curriculum will be based around our observations and subsequent objectives for each child. Our curriculum and general objectives are displayed on the curriculum notice board at the Centre's entrance. Staff are available to discuss these with you. The curriculum is implemented from two buildings. Building one is attached to the Community Centre and is called *Wattle Room*. Building two across the car park is called the *Blue Gum Room*. Staff and resources are shared between the two buildings.

"For a small child there is no division between playing and learning, between the things he or she does "just for fun" and the things that are "educational". The child learns while living and any part of living that is enjoyable is also play." Penelope Leach

"Children need the freedom and time to play. Play is not a luxury. It is a necessity." Kay Redfield Jamison

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS (Quality Area 6 Element 6.1 Respectful supportive relationships are developed and maintained)

It is very important that there be an open line of communication between the Centre and the child's parents/guardians. In the Preschool entrance, there is a notice board which is constantly updated with current information. We strongly advise you to check this board regularly. As well as the notice board, a newsletter/group journal will be emailed offering details of what has been happening in the Centre and information on upcoming events. Staff are available at various times to meet with parents/guardians to discuss any issues that may arise during the year, while also offering home visits. It is important to always approach your child's teacher to receive information about your child's day, if you are ever concerned.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES POLICY AND PROCEDURE (Quality Area 6 collaborative partnerships with families and communities)

Complaints or grievances may be received from anyone who comes in contact with Aspendale Gardens Community Services Inc. including parents/guardians, volunteers, students, members of the local community. In most cases, dealing with complaints and grievances will be the responsibility of the Approved Provider. All complaints need to be raised directly with the person involved, in an attempt to resolve the matter without recourse to the complaints and grievances procedures.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

- communicating (preferably in writing) any concerns relating to the management or operation of the service as soon as is practicable
- raising any unresolved issues or serious concerns directly with the Approved Provider, via the Nominated Supervisor/educator or through the Grievances Subcommittee
- maintaining complete confidentiality at all times
- cooperating with requests to meet with the Grievances Subcommittee and/or provide relevant information when requested in relation to complaints and grievances.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY - PHOTOGRAPHS

We all live in a very fast paced technological and social media world. We all need to be mindful and respectful of families and their beliefs and recognise other people's circumstances. All families are required to read and sign the form attached before beginning Preschool. Signing the form means that you understand that you acknowledge that you will not post photos of other children attending the Preschool other than your own child, it acknowledges that any information you need to know about your child and their time at the Preschool can be communicated with your child's teacher, acknowledge that information you require regarding Preschool will be communicated through person to person communication, group emails and hard copy notices. Please ensure that you complete the attachment.

Please see Attachment 1 : INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY FORM

SETTLING IN (Quality Area 6 - Collaborative Partnerships with families and communities Element 6.1.1. There is an effective enrolment and orientation process for families)

We believe strongly in creating and maintaining Collaborative partnerships with families, children and Teachers. We believe in creating respectful supportive relationships with families and these are developed and maintained through an effective enrolment and orientation process

Children who make a positive start to Preschool are more likely to feel excited and motivated to learn. The transition can be challenging for some children but the good news is there are lots you can do to help prepare your children for life at Preschool and more formalised learning in primary school. Children who have a positive start to Preschool are able to create good relationships with others, and develop a sense of belonging within the Preschool community. Starting Preschool is not just about the first day. It is a process that begins when children and families start to prepare in the year before, and continues as children experience their first days, weeks and months of Preschool. The central theme is one of change, as children and their families adjust to what happens at Preschool. Everyone reacts differently - some children can't wait to walk through the gates, while others will feel sad about leaving their family and familiar surroundings and worry about making new friends. Children may have been attending the Preschool setting already. It is the change of new Teachers and Co-Teachers, a number of new children to meet and learn to play and get along

with that is the challenge for some children. Although some families may feel that their child will be fine starting in a new environment with new Teachers, some common feelings that children have when starting something new is excitement, sadness, anger, anticipation, fear and anxiety. Teachers can help to support families and children through this period by creating an inviting learning environment that supports each individual child's needs.

We would like to emphasise the importance of Teachers establishing relationships with families and the sharing of information about each child in the interviews. The other emphasis is on the relationship built between Teachers and individual children in the first two sessions of the year when there is an opportunity to focus on each child and their abilities and become familiar with their strengths and needs.

We have a settling in timetable to help ensure that your child settles into Preschool at a comfortable pace. The timetable involves an initial interview where you and your child meet the staff, discuss information and address questions, as well as allowing your child to become familiar with the environment and encourage the above mentioned opportunities. The benefits of the settling in timetable are:

- the children can build up trust and friendship with staff members on a one-on-one basis,
- families can enjoy one-on-one experiences with their child and staff in their new learning environment with reduced distractions, crowds and noise which can be overwhelming,
- the children can become familiar with the room and experiences before they have to share the space with many peers,
- staff can observe children and determine needs and goals to assist in each individual child's development,
- staff can clarify rules and routines supporting children to cope with changes, separation and anxieties, and as the sessions are shortened, staff dedicate their time to preparing experiences and preparation for future events.

STRATEGIES FOR SETTLING IN YOUR CHILD (Quality Area 1 Educational Program and Practice Element 1.1.5 Every child is supported to participate in the program)

In your first few sessions, please plan to spend time with your child, enjoying his/her Preschool experience. Children take varying amounts of time to settle in. After the first few weeks, most children have settled into their regular session times. Please take the time to settle your child into Preschool - stay and read him/her a story, help with a puzzle or watch them do a painting. This will help your child to feel that Preschool is an enjoyable and fun place to be. When you do leave, always say goodbye to your child. If necessary, ask for a staff member to help with separation.

KEYPADS AND ENTRANCES TO THE PRESCHOOL ROOMS

We now have keypads in place at our entrances. In the Blue Gum room the keypad is at the entrance door to the room. The side gate to the Blue Gum room will be opened in the morning once the teaching staff have conducted the risk assessment checklist of the outdoor space. This gate will then be closed 15 minutes into the beginning of the session and anyone who needs to access the room after this will need to do so via the main entrance door and use the keypad. At the Wattle room, the side gate to the outdoor space has a keypad and the gate will be locked at the end of each day and opened in the morning once the teaching staff have completed the risk assessment of the outdoor space. On your first day, the teaching staff will ensure that you are made aware of the keypad code. Please only give this code to authorised nominees (close family and friends) who are able to drop off and collect your child from Preschool. The keypads have been put in place to support and maintain safety at the Centre for staff and children.

DELIVERY AND COLLECTION OF CHILDREN - ATTENDANCE BOOK - SIGNING IN AND OUT (Quality Area 7 Element 7.3 Records and information are stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality, are available from the service and are maintained in accordance with legislative requirements)

The adult transporting the child to the Centre must sign the attendance book (located near the Preschool Room entrance) with the correct time and signature, indicating that the child is then the responsibility of the Centre (staff and management). The adult's signature and the correct time must also be recorded on departure, releasing the Centre from responsibility. It is important that you do not sign your child out until they are actually leaving with you. If you come in 5 or 10 minutes early and wait for your child, you must not sign them out until you have them with you and you are leaving the building. This covers both us and you legally should anything happen. Please note that if you are a parent or guardian of twins or triplets, you must sign them in and out individually. Please note that a responsible adult to pick up or drop off a child (children) at the Preschool is defined as a person **over 18 years of age and must be suitable. Due to teacher's duty of care to a child and to ensure children's safety and wellbeing as part of our policies, in particular Delivery and Collection of Children Policy, teachers will not allow children to depart from Preschool with anyone they believe is drug or alcohol intoxicated.**

INJURY ON INTAKE FORM

One of our policy principles of our Child Protection Policy is to ensure the commitment to child protection is clear and shared by all entities caring for the child. In line with this principle the Centre has Injury on Intake Forms. This means if your child has had an accident at home and is attending Preschool, upon your arrival to Preschool parents/guardians will need to fill in the form and detail the incident. This is to ensure each child's safety and wellbeing. For example: If a child has fallen at home and hit their head, bumped their nose, has a black eye, or bruising and then attends Preschool, teaching staff need to be made aware of this to further monitor your child carefully as this can be potentially serious for days afterwards. Also if you have sought medical attention after a fall or injury, teaching staff need to know and a form will need to be completed. These forms are available to complete near the sign in area in each building and it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that this is completed when required.

Please see Attachment 2 INJURY ON INTAKE FORM.

INJURY/TRAUMA/ILLNESS/MEDICATION BOOK (Quality Area 7 Element 7.3 Records and information are stored appropriately to ensure confidentiality, are available from the service and are maintained in accordance with legislative requirements)

All accidents which occur while the child is the responsibility of the Centre are recorded in writing. After an accident, details such as what happened and the treatment required will be put in writing. If your child is involved in an accident, you will be notified by staff as soon as possible and required to read and sign the accident book to acknowledge that you have been made aware of the incident and its treatment.

Any illness a child may suffer while in the Centre will also be recorded in writing. Accurate records are kept which may help in the treatment of the child's illness, and may include observations of the child, their temperature (if necessary) and any actions staff took concerning the child's illness.

If your child needs to be given some form of medication while at the Centre, you will be required to fill in the details in the medication book. This is to ensure staff are fully aware of what they are to do. If you have questions or concerns about this, please don't hesitate to discuss them with staff. All medications must be given to staff at the beginning of the session (medication must not be stored in children's bags to ensure the safety of others) who will store it appropriately. **Children with asthma, anaphylaxis or mild to moderate reactions to allergens are required to supply the Preschool with the required medication in an insulated bag for the child at the beginning of the year. These will stay at Preschool all year.**

ANAPHYLAXIS & DEALING WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS POLICY (Quality Area 2 Element 2.1.1 Each child's health needs are supported.)

We have an Anaphylaxis Policy for our Preschool in line with the Department of Education and Early Childhood. This policy helps minimise the risk of exposure to known allergens within our Centre. If your child has Anaphylaxis or any other medical condition an ANAPHYLAXIS MANAGEMENT PLAN, ALLERGIC REACTION PLAN, ASTHMA PLAN, DIABETES PLAN ETC AND COMMUNICATION PLAN will need to be completed by the child's parents/guardians and Teachers and signed before your child can begin Preschool.

We ask that you adhere to the following guidelines:

- no boxes that have contained chocolate or nuts are brought into the Preschool for craft experiences;
- that parents use the wipes provided at the entrance of the Preschool to clean children's hands thoroughly before they attend each session at Preschool.

Please see Attachment 3 - ASTHMA ACTION PLAN

Please see Attachment 4 - ASTHMA RISK MINIMISATION PLAN

Please see Attachment 5 - ANAPHYLAXIS ACTION PLAN

Please see Attachment 6 - MILD TO MODERATE REACTIONS ACTION PLAN

Please see Attachment 7 - COMMUNICATION PLAN TO BE COMPLETED WITH PARENTS AND TEACHERS

HEALTH (Quality Area 2 Element 2.1.4 Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness in accordance with recommended guidelines)

The health of the child plays an important part in the child's ability to cope with a Preschool session. Parents are requested to keep a sick child home and inform the Preschool and your child's Teacher of any infectious illness as soon as possible. Unwell children that attend Preschool are a danger to themselves and others, and they are unable to access the activities or interact effectively when they are sick. Please keep your child at home if:

they are vomiting	they have a rash, lice (needs to be treated before returning to Preschool)
they have an eye infection	they have a sore throat or green runny nose
they are not feeling 100%	they have a temperature, fever

If a child becomes ill during the Preschool session, the Teacher will contact the parents/guardians or the emergency contact person. If contact cannot be made and the situation is urgent, the Teacher may decide to seek medical attention for the child.

SNACK BOXES, HEALTHY EATING POLICY (Quality Area 2 Children's health and Safety Element 2.2.1 Healthy eating is promoted and food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child)

We believe very strongly in the healthy food message at Preschool. Encouraging good nutrition at an early age is extremely important. Our "snack" policy states that children can bring fresh fruit and vegetables, and a simple sandwich, supporting our healthy eating values and philosophy. We will sustain a safe environment for all children that attend our Centre if the **NUTRITIAN AND ACTIVE PLAY HEALTHY EATING POLICY** is followed.

BIRTHDAY POLICY

In order to make birthdays special we will sing happy birthday with a pretend cake, provide stickers and cards, put up a happy birthday sign on our communication board and use a birthday hat (ie a fun way to celebrate birthdays that does not involve food.) You may like your child to bring in non-edible treats (eg bubbles, balloons) to share with their friends to the Preschool session.

BELONGINGS

Teaching staff will not be held responsible for toys brought to Preschool. It is suggested that these be left at home. However, on occasions, children and parents will be encouraged to bring along objects for our treasure bag curriculum and items that may seem important or relevant to current learning or themes within the Preschool curriculum. If this article is seen as valuable or has sentimental value, the teacher must be told and the article will remain in the teachers care until the end of the session.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING FOR PRESCHOOL

Articles of clothing which are likely to be removed must be clearly named or initialled - this includes cardigans, jumpers, coats, hats and bags, etc. The development of new skills requires experimenting with materials which may be a little messy, so please dress your child appropriately. This means dressing them in easily washed clothes and clothes that allow them to develop independence (eg belts need adult assistance for the child to go to the toilet and are therefore not suitable.)

Summer (Terms 1 & 4) - Please provide your child with a hat and sunscreen. Protective clothing such as long sleeves and pants are encouraged during the summer months as are sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard. Thongs are not allowed at Preschool as they are dangerous both whilst climbing and digging. Our "Sun smart" policy means hats are compulsory from September through till April. Children who do not have a hat for outdoor play in Terms 1 & 4 will be asked to play in shaded areas and this will restrict them from participating fully in the curriculum. We recommend legionnaire style or wide brimmed hats. Please apply sunscreen before your child comes to Preschool. A form will need to be completed if parents wish to give permission for the Teachers to reapply sunscreen during the sessions.

Winter (Terms 2 & 3) - As the children use the outdoor area during these terms, your child will require a coat or some other form of warm clothing to wear outdoors. Although we are fortunate to have some donated pairs of gumboots, we also recommend children bring gum boots to Preschool to help support their play in our digging patch and mud.

NATURE WALKS TO THE LOCAL WETLANDS AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITY

Providing opportunities for the children to connect with and contribute to their world around them is a vital part of the curriculum. This is incorporated into the activities through demonstration of care for the environment, planting, harvesting, watering the garden etc, as well as local walks to explore the natural environment. Within the 4 year old groups fortnightly, or three weekly Nature walks are included within the daily routine to encourage the children to connect with nature and provide them with challenges they would otherwise not normally experience. The children are encouraged to take calculated risks and to be mindful and caring of the environment. On these walk days the children will be required to wear clothing appropriate for the weather, eg; on a wet rainy day (the walk will continue as scheduled) The children will need to bring a water proof jacket, water proof overalls are recommended, gumboots and a change of clothes for the return to Preschool.

TERM FEES - EXCURSIONS AND INCURSIONS, VISITORS TO THE PRESCHOOL

Term Fees are due prior to the commencement of each term. These can be paid online or at the Community Centre Office. If you require a payment plan, please discuss this with Meagan Henry, finance manager and Centre Manager.

Excursions and visitors to the Centre are seen as an essential part of enriching the Preschool curriculum and will be organised after careful planning and preparation. The Board of Management will absorb some of the cost. As mentioned in the Fees section of this booklet, the incursions and excursion levy will be included in Term 1 fees. This will be kept as low as possible and will cover the costs throughout the year. Each excursion and incursion has a risk assessment plan created to recognise and create solutions for possible risks. Any feedback, permission forms etc can be returned to your child's teacher or into the letter box in each Preschool room. NO MONEY CAN BE PLACED IN THE LETTERBOX IN THE PRESCHOOL ROOM OR GIVEN TO TEACHERS. Any monies etc, need to be returned to the Community Centre Office.

FIRE DRILLS - EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS

Throughout the year the teachers and staff practise emergency evacuations to ensure the children are fairly familiar with the process if a real emergency was to occur. These fire drills can occur during your child's session or at the beginning or ending of the day or session. These drills randomly occur every two to three months. If these occur at the start or the end of the session we request all families to understand that this is part of our processes and procedures and is a requirement by the Department to regularly practise fire drills at different times of the day.

OPEN HOUSE POLICY

We have an Open House Policy which essentially means that you are always welcome in the Centre when your child is in attendance. You may want to stay for a few minutes or a few hours, it is up to you. It is important to inform your child's teacher if you will be attending your child's session to ensure it is suitable.

PARENTS/AUTHORISED NOMINEES MUST SIGN IN AND OUT OF THE VISITOR BOOK IF THEY ARE STAYING FOR A SHORT PERIOD

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT PRESCHOOL ROSTER (Quality Area 6 Element 6.2 Families are supported in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about child rearing are respected)

We have a Preschool involvement roster for families and friends to stay for the session to help in various ways. .

We welcome family involvement in our curriculum. By being part of our curriculum, you will become aware of the types of learning experiences being offered to the children and the benefits to the children, in particular to your child. We understand that your involvement will depend upon work and other family commitments. However, if you cannot be directly involved, we urge you to read and look out for the documentation displayed around the room, on the information notice boards, our website, via weekly or fortnightly emails from Teachers and any literature sent home.

Families are invited to Support the children within the sessions. There will be a “family participation” roster for each group within the rooms. This will enable you to spend time with your child, enjoy the Preschool environment, and help you to gain an insight for possible discussion with your child at home, possibly being able to support or connect the experience with a family outing or experience.

We strongly encourage spending some time with us as a “visiting family”. This can include parents, siblings, grandparents and extended family members and can be for a whole session, an hour, half an hour, whatever suits your time and family.

The prime expectation is for you to interact with your child and participate in the Preschool session. We view the children as capable, confident learners. Depending on the situation, we do not necessarily give the children the answer or directly do something for them. We encourage the children to problem solve, investigate, predict, experiment, plan, reflect and pose questions, as our objective is to develop the children into confident learners. *“Confident learners ask questions, are open to different perspectives and try new ideas and resources. With adult support and scaffolding, children learn to listen and co-operate with others. They listen to others’ explanations and ideas, often solve problems collaboratively, and negotiate and work towards shared goals”* (The Early Years Learning Framework: Building confident learners. Arthur).

While participating in a Preschool session you may also assist with tasks such as: sitting at tables and helping with a game, craft activity or reading stories, Wiping down tables and chairs before and after experiences/snack times, washing painting equipment, general room tidying, sweeping or vacuuming floor, moping up paint spills, preparing collage materials, helping to prepare new activities, etc.

SPECIAL SKILLS (Quality Area 6 Element 1.2 Families have opportunities to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions)

If you, grandparents, relatives or friends have any special skills you would like to share with us at the Preschool, let us know so that we can include it in our curriculum. Special skills could include cooking, playing a musical instrument, acting, a baby that you could bath, a craft, storytelling, etc.

We hope you enjoy your time spent with us, as much as your child will enjoy having you share their Preschool experience.

HOME VISITS

Home visits are valuable in bridging the gap between the home and the Preschool. By visiting the child’s home, the Teacher will learn more about the environment in which the child lives and therefore gain an additional insight into the child. Staff are available at various times for home visits. More information will be available during the year.

FOUR YEAR OLD PRESCHOOL ONLY - TRANSITION TO SCHOOL STATEMENTS

(Quality Area 1, Element 1.2.1 Each child’s learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation.)

“The Transition: A Positive Start to School” is a State Government initiative. It is designed to assist early childhood services and schools to improve experiences of children starting school by enhancing the development and delivery of transition curriculum and building a common approach to support children and their families at this important time. The Transition initiative also introduces a new tool for families and Teachers to share information about a child’s learning and development in the form of a “Transition Learning and Development Statement”. This is completed by your child’s Teacher and parents/guardians.

PARENT REPRESENTATIVE FOR EACH PRESCHOOL GROUP

Within each Preschool group we have a parent representative to help facilitate and support fundraising events, the teachers with any specific tasks, and organise group play dates during term breaks and whole group family gatherings. Information about these events can be sent via group email, or hardcopy notices.

If you think you are interested in being a part of the fundraising committee, helping to organise and prepare for fundraising events, or being a parent representative for your child’s group please see our Fundraising representatives on the Board of Management. **Attached to this information booklet is a form to complete.**

WORKING BEES

Working Bee's are held 3 times a year. Please take note of the Fee Policy which includes details of our Building and Maintenance fee and the conditions on which it is refundable. Please read the newsletters and notices, including those on the notice board, so that you will be kept up to date with the times and dates of the working bees, Bunnings BBQs and fundraising events.

DONATIONS

As we encourage lots of creative skills within the curriculum, we would love to receive donations of odds and ends you might have at home. The children will be inspired to create by using lots of different materials. We would love any: wood pieces, construction boxes (**items that did not contain nuts and chocolate**), corks, film containers, old pots and pans, dress up materials, assorted lids, children's chairs and tables.

PARENT LIBRARY

Our parent library is located at the end of the kitchen bench in the Blue Gum Building. We have an increasing range of books available for you to borrow with information including parental guidance on discipline, child development and activities for use with young children. The borrowing period is two weeks. If there is an issue you are particularly interested in, please discuss it with staff as they may have other books in their own libraries which may also assist.

AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND CARE QUALITY AUTHORITY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

National Quality Framework - (NQF)- What does it mean?

The National Quality Framework helps ensure your child is given the best possible start in life. The NQF has new quality standards to improve education and care. Families will benefit from the new framework as it incorporates;

- greater individual care and attention for children,
- better support for children's learning and development,
- Teachers with increased skills and qualifications
- improved Teacher to child ratios in most services
- a rating system of education and care services.

IN 2014 THE ASSESSMENT AND RATING VISIT WAS CONDUCTED AND THE CENTRE RECEIVED AN OVERALL RATING OF MEETING NATIONAL STANDARDS. THE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN WORKING DOCUMENT IS AVAILABLE FOR FAMILIES TO READ AT THE SIGN IN AREA TO EACH BUILDING.

This has been a worthwhile and rewarding process, recognising areas of strength and areas that need enhancement. Each early year's service across Australia will be assessed under the new rating system. There are seven quality areas and our Preschool Centre rating from the October 2014 assessment were:

- Educational Program and Practice - Exceeding National Quality Standards
- Children's Health and Safety - Meeting National Quality Standards
- Physical environment - Meeting National Quality Standards
- Staffing arrangements - Exceeding National Quality Standards
- Relationships with children - Exceeding National Quality Standards
- Partnerships with families and communities - Meeting National Quality Standards
- Leadership and service management - Meeting National Quality Standards

Please keep an eye out for information around the Centre in the form of posters regarding the assessment process and how you can help. To find out more about the NQF and how it affects you and your child, visit the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) website; www.acecqa.gov.au/families

FIVE OUTCOMES OF THE VICTORIAN EARLY YEARS

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK

IDENTITY - Children have a strong sense of identity

Children feel safe, secure and supported.

Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience, and sense of agency.

Children develop knowledge and confident self-identities.

Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.

COMMUNITY - Children are connected with and contribute to their world

Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active civic participation.

Children respond to diversity with respect.

Children become aware of fairness.

Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.

WELLBEING - Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

Children become strong in their social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing.

LEARNING - Children are confident and involved learners

Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, co-operation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity.

Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating.

Children transfer and adapt what they have learnt from one context to another.

Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, places, technologies and natural and processed materials.

COMMUNICATION - Children are effective communicators

Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes.

Children engage with a range of texts and get meaning from these texts.

Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media.

Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work.

Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking.

A VISION FOR CHILDREN'S LEARNING, BASED ON THE EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK FOR AUSTRALIA

Belonging

- Experiencing **belonging** - knowing where and with whom you **belong** - is integral to human existence.
- Children **belong** first to a family, a cultural group, a neighbourhood and a wider community.
- **Belonging** acknowledges children's interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities.
- In early childhood, and throughout life, relationships are crucial to a sense of **belonging**.
- **Belonging** is central to being and becoming in that it shapes who children are and who they can **become**.

Being

- Childhood is a time to be, to seek and make meaning of the world.
- **Being** recognises the significance of the here and now in children's lives.
- It is about the present and children knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life's joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life.
- The early childhood years are about children's experience of the present and not solely preparation for the future.

Becoming

- Children's identities, knowledge, understandings, capacities, skills and relationships change during childhood.
- They are shaped by many different events and circumstances.
- **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.

National Quality Framework Summary

Quality area 1: Educational program and practice. This quality area focuses on ensuring that the educational program and practice is stimulating and engaging and enhances the children's learning and development.

Standard 1.1	An approved learning framework informs the development of a curriculum that enhances each child's learning and development.	
	Element 1.1.1	Curriculum decision making contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.
	Element 1.1.2	Each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
	Element 1.1.3	The program, including routines, is organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning.
	Element 1.1.4	The documentation about each child's program and progress is available to families.
	Element 1.1.5	Every child is supported to participate in the program.
	Element 1.1.6	Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions and to influence events and their world.

Standard 1.2	Teachers and co-ordinators are focused, active and reflective in designing and delivering the program for each child.	
	Element 1.2.1	Each child's learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation.
	Element 1.2.2	Teachers respond to children's ideas and play and use intention teaching to scaffold and extend each child's learning.
	Element 1.2.3	Critical reflection on children's learning and development, both as individuals and in groups, is regularly used to implement the program.

Quality area 2: Children's health and safety. This quality area focuses on safeguarding and promoting children's health and safety.

Standard 2.1	Each child's health is promoted.	
	Element 2.1.1	Each child's health needs are supported.
	Element 2.1.2	Each child's comfort is provided for and there are appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
	Element 2.1.3	Effective hygiene practices are prompted and implemented.
Element 2.1.4	Steps are taken to control the spread of infectious diseases and to manage injuries and illness, in accordance with recognised guidelines.	

Standard 2.2	Healthy eating and physical activity are embedded in the program for children.	
	Element 2.2.1	Healthy eating is promoted and food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child.
	Element 2.2.2	Physical activity is promoted through planned and spontaneous experiences and is appropriate for each child.

Standard 2.3	Each child is protected.	
	Element 2.3.1	Children are adequately supervised at all times
	Element 2.3.2	Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.
	Element 2.3.3	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.
Element 2.3.4	Teachers, co-ordinators and staff members are aware of their roles and responsibilities to respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.	

Quality area 3: Physical environment. This quality area focuses on the physical environment and ensuring that it is safe, suitable and provides a rich and diverse range of experiences that promote children's learning and development.

Standard 3.1	The design and location of the premises is appropriate for the operation of a service.	
	Element 3.1.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces, building, furniture, equipment, facilities and resources are suitable for their purpose.
	Element 3.1.2	Premises, furniture and equipment are safe, clean and well maintained.
Element 3.1.3	Facilities are designed or adapted to ensure access and participation by every child in the service and to allow flexible use, and interaction between indoor and outdoor space.	

Standard 3.2	The environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play.	
	Element 3.2.1	Outdoor and indoor spaces are designed and organised to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments.
	Element 3.2.2	Resources, materials and equipment are sufficient in number, organised in ways that ensure appropriate and effective implementation of the program and allow for multiple uses.

The service takes an active role in caring for its environment and contributes to a sustainable future.

Standard 3.3	Element 3.3.1	Sustainable practise are embedded in service operations.
	Element 3.3.2	Children are supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment.
Quality area 4: Staffing arrangements. This quality area focuses on the provision of qualified and experienced Teachers, co-ordinators and nominated supervisors who are able to develop warm, respectful relationships with children, create safe and predictable environments and encourage children's active engagement in the learning program.		
Standard 4.1	Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning and development and ensure their safety and wellbeing.	
	Element 4.1.1	Teacher-to-child ratios and qualification requirements are maintained at all times.
Standard 4.2	Teachers, co-ordinators and staff members are respectful and ethical.	
	Element 4.2.1	Professional standards guide practice, interactions and relationships.
	Element 4.2.2	Teachers, co-ordinators and staff members work collaboratively and affirm, challenge, support and learn from each other to further develop their skills and to improve practice and relationships.
	Element 4.2.3	Interactions convey mutual respect, equity and recognition of each other's strengths.
Quality area 5: Relationships with children. This quality area focuses on relationships with children being responsive and respectful and promoting children's sense of security and belonging. Relationships of this kind free children to explore the environment and engage in play and learning.		
Standard 5.1	Respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child.	
	Element 5.1.1	Interactions with each child are warm and responsive and build trusting relationships.
	Element 5.1.2	Every child is able to engage with Teachers in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning.
	Element 5.1.3	Each child is supported to feel secure, confident and included.
Standard 5.2	Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults.	
	Element 5.2.1	Each child is supported to work with, learn from and help others through collaborative learning opportunities.
	Element 5.2.2	Each child is supported to manage their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.
	Element 5.2.3	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained at all times.
Quality area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities. This quality area focuses on collaborative relationships with families that are fundamental to achieving quality outcomes for children and community partnerships that are based on active communication, consultation and collaboration.		
Standard 6.1	Respectful and supportive relationships with families are developed and maintained	
	Element 6.1.1	There is an effective enrolment and orientation process for families.
	Element 6.1.2	Families have opportunities to be involved in the service and contribute to service decisions.
	Element 6.1.3	Current information about the service is available to families.
Standard 6.2	Families are supported in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about childrearing are respected.	
	Element 6.2.1	The expertise of families is recognised and they share in decision making about their child's learning and wellbeing.
	Element 6.2.2	Current information is available to families about community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
Standard 6.3	The service collaborates with other organisations and service providers to enhance children's learning and wellbeing.	
	Element 6.3.1	Links with relevant community and support agencies are established and maintained.
	Element 6.3.2	Continuity of learning and transitions for each child are supported by sharing relevant information and clarifying responsibilities.
	Element 6.3.3	Access to inclusion and support assistance is facilitated.
	Element 6.3.4	The service builds relationships and engages with the local community.
Quality area 7: Leadership and service management. This quality area focuses on effective leadership and management of the service that contributes to quality environments for children's learning and development. Well-documented policies and procedures, well-maintained records, shared values, clear direction and reflective practices enable the service to function as a learning community. An ongoing cycle of planning and review, including engagement with families, creates the climate for continuous improvement.		
Standard 7.1	Effective leadership promotes a positive organisational culture and builds a professional learning community.	
	Element 7.1.1	Appropriate governance arrangements are in place to manage the service.
	Element 7.1.2	The induction of Teachers, co-ordinators and staff members, including relief Teachers, is comprehensive.
	Element 7.1.3	Every effort is made to promote continuity of Teachers and co-ordinators at the service.

	Element 7.1.4	Provision is made to ensure a suitable qualified and experienced Teacher or co-ordinator leads the development of the curriculum and ensures the establishment of clear goals and expectations for teaching and learning.
	Element 7.1.5	Adults working with children and those engaged in management of the service or residing on the premises are fit and proper.
Standard 7.2	There is commitment to continuous improvement.	
	Element 7.2.1	A statement of philosophy is developed and guides all aspects of the service's operations.
	Element 7.2.2	The performance of Teachers, co-ordinators and staff members is evaluated and individual development plans are in place to support performance improvement.
	Element 7.2.3	An effective self-assessment and quality improvement process is in place.

Notes