

EDEN HILLS



Kindergarten

Information for Parents

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Eden Hills 5050

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Welcome to Eden Hills Kindergarten.

Our core business is in providing a caring, safe, stimulating and educational environment for four-year-old children, which is centred on building self-esteem and is based on learning through play.

Staff Team:

| | |
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| Director: | Sarah Quihampton |
| Teachers: | Deanna Cuteri Sally Baker |
| Support Workers/ Early Childhood Workers: | Janice Samm, Tracey Ann Rankin, Tracey Tessitore, Karen Wilson |
| Finance Officer: | Janice Samm |

HOURS OF OPERATION:

The Kindergarten Program operates Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings and Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons.

Morning Session times: 8:30am to 11:30am

Afternoon Session times: 12:00pm to 3.00pm

Full day sessions are offered on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Lunchtime care is offered at \$6 per day and between 11:30am and 12:00pm.

A parent run Playgroup operates Friday afternoons, 12.30 - 2.30pm.

TERM DATES 2017

30 January-13 April

1 May-7 July

24 July-29 September

16 October-15 December

CURRICULUM

...Our image of the child is rich in potential, strong, powerful, competent and, most of all connected to adults and other children.

Loris Malaguzzi in Dahlberg, Moss and Pence 1999, pp 48

Children enter kindergarten with a diverse range of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and dispositions that reflect the diversity of their backgrounds and experiences.

The role of early childhood education and care is to connect with and build upon children's home and community learnings as well as opening up new and multiple possibilities.

Children of this age learn most effectively when their physical and emotional needs are met and they are able to feel safe and secure in a climate of consistency, stability, support and high expectation.

Children develop at different rates and in different ways: emotionally, intellectually, morally, socially, physically and spiritually. All aspects are important and interrelated. When these differences are respected and honoured children build a sense of trust and confidence, a willingness to take risks and thus make new discoveries and connections.

Parents sometimes wonder what learning at Kindy consists of. Unlike schools, where formalised lessons, assessment and reporting are obvious, Kindergartens' curriculums can be hard to define. Sometimes it seems that children "just play" at Kindy, whereas important learning is taking place all the time. While children often won't produce a tangible product to take home; they are learning new skills, procedures and concepts which are vital for getting along in the world.

According to the national Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) curriculum means '*all the interactions, experiences, activities, routines and events, planned and unplanned, that occur in an environment designed to foster children's learning and development*'.

All the activities you see at Kindy are carefully devised to help children develop vital skills and understandings, in line with the EYLF **3Bs**:

- **Belonging** is the basis for living a fulfilling life. Children feel they *belong* because of the relationships they have with their family, community, culture and place.
- **Being** is about living here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just 'be'—time to play, try new things and have fun.

- **Becoming** is about the learning and development that young children experience. Children start to form their sense of identity from an early age, which shapes the type of adult they will become.

These **3Bs** are explored through the following 5 learning goals. Kindy staff will help your child develop:

- *a strong sense of their identity*
- *connections with their world*
- *a strong sense of wellbeing*
- *confidence and involvement in their learning*
- *effective communication skills*

On the parent noticeboard in the main room there is further information about the **3Bs** and how Kindergarten activities address them.

Learning through play

The EYLF has a specific emphasis on play-based learning and recognises the importance of communication (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development. Play provides opportunities for children to learn as they discover, create, improvise and imagine. When children play they create social groups, test out ideas, challenge each other's thinking and build new understandings. Play can expand children's thinking and enhance their desire to know and to learn. In these ways play can promote a positive outlook towards learning.

Teaching at Kindy

Kindy provides a supportive environment where children can ask questions, solve problems and engage in critical thinking. Rather than front-of-classroom "chalk and talk" type teaching, the Kindy educators use varied strategies to develop learning, they:

- share conversations with children to extend their thinking,
- provide a balance between child led, child initiated and teacher supported learning,
- create environments that encourage children to explore, solve problems, create and construct,
- make the most of spontaneous teachable moments as they occur,
- promote and model positive ways to relate to others and solve problems,
- support the inclusion of all children in play, helping children to recognise when play is unfair, and
- offer constructive ways to build a caring, fair and inclusive learning community.

Whilst doing all these things, Kindy educators also constantly monitor child safety and well-being, dealing with the everyday mishaps, conflicts and problems that arise in any group of four year-olds!

How Kindy experiences enhance learning

Here are some examples of how our everyday Kindergarten experiences help children to develop new understandings and skills:

- *Outdoor playground:* gross motor skills (balance, coordination, strength, agility), social skills (cooperation, taking turns), risk taking, understanding that physical activity is healthy and fun, connecting with nature (weather, plants and animals and non-living features).
- *Sandpit:* gross and fine motor skills, creativity, construction, role-playing (to develop understanding of others' role in society as well as communication), exploration of scientific concepts (eg. gravity, solids & liquids).
- *Playdough:* fine motor skills (essential for learning to write), creativity, self-expression, role-play.
- *Construction sets:* cooperation, mathematical concepts (size, shape, order), problem solving and lateral thinking.
- *Jigsaws and other puzzles:* fine motor skills, cooperation, lateral thinking, mathematical concepts (recognising colours, patterns, order and positions).
- *Dramatic Play:* communication skills, imagination, role play, cooperation, understanding roles in family and community.

Whilst participating in these activities, Kindy educators enhance the learning experience by

- modelling and demonstrating
- open questioning
- speculating and explaining
- engaging in shared thinking and problem solving

Each term, Kindy has a curriculum overview. Information about the curriculum is communicated via the Newsletter or Curriculum noticeboard in the main room.

Educators use mat time activities (songs, games, shared stories), small group story time and related puzzles, art and learning activities to explore the topic and further develop understanding.

Kindy at home

Take advantage of the resources available to extend Kindy learning activities into your home.

- *Library*: a range of fiction and non-fiction books. Fill in a borrowing card to borrow 2 at a time.
- *Literacy Kits*: books with related toys and activity suggestions to explore texts.
- *Maths Monster*: offers numeracy-related activities to explore and complete together in a fun way.
- *Science Kits*: explore scientific concepts together in a fun way.
- *Persona Dolls*: develop literacy skills by working on stories together to write down in the book for sharing.
- *Ukulele*: explore music and sound as forms of expression and entertainment.

All children attending Kindy full-time are welcome to borrow these resources.

Exploring kits is a great way to spend time together learning in a positive, enjoyable way. It's invaluable for your children see that you value learning and are excited about - and involved in - their learning. Check with educators about how to borrow these items.

At home, learning is more about the journey than the result. There is plenty of time for serious study when your child starts school; so if learning activities become a chore for you or your child, it's time to stop.

Parents have a unique knowledge and understanding of their child. In order to maximise each child's learning potential, it is beneficial that parents and staff work towards fostering an effective partnership.

Finding out more

There are several ways to get information about Kindy's curriculum:

- ❖ Newsletter (sent electronically with hard copies by the white board)
- ❖ Input into the Planning for Learning document for your child.
- ❖ Notice board in the main room
- ❖ Annual General Meeting & Governing Council meetings
- ❖ Volunteering time at Kindy

At the AGM, learning priorities for the year are mapped out and parents are encouraged to contribute ideas. You are welcome to attend Governing Council meetings at any time without obligation to join.

By building a community of learners that includes children, families and educators, opportunities exist for developing a lifelong interest in, and enjoyment of, learning.

FEES:

At the beginning of each term, each family will receive an envelope. This will show your child's name, fees due and a return by date. Please return the envelope to kindy via the secure box on the lockers. A receipt will be issued via your child's pocket.

Children attending two or more sessions per week pay \$120 per term. This covers regular running costs, e.g. electricity and helps towards new equipment. Orientation visits in Term 4 are available. Please see one of us for the cost of this program. Should there be any difficulty paying, please see the Director so that arrangements can be made.

EXTENDED CARE:

An afternoon session or full day at Kindergarten can be combined with an afternoon at Eden Hills or Bellevue Heights Primary Out of School Hours Care Program (OSHC) to provide an extended day.

This service operates from 3.15 - 6.15 (Subject to availability). Kindergarten or OSHC staff take children to OSHC. See Kindy educators or OSHC staff for more information.

STARTING KINDERGARTEN:

When children start kindergarten for the first time or transfer from another centre, be prepared for them to be a little apprehensive or anxious. Some children take longer than others to settle, and however much your child may be looking forward to going to kindergarten, it is a new experience.

Perhaps

- The need to share an adult with other children
 - A larger group of children
 - A room larger than the child is used to
 - Unfamiliar materials
- ...maybe unsettling your child.

Your child may begin happily but have anxious moments for a few days later or even after several weeks. This is normal too.

This separation from a parent or caregiver is a major step in your child's life. Rest assured that we are committed to making it as smooth as possible.

Give lots of hugs and cuddles before and after kindergarten to show your child your love, and be prepared to stay at kindergarten to help him/her to settle in. We believe your child is special and we will do all that we can to build their self-esteem.

Never leave without telling your child you are going. Your child needs to know that he/she can trust you. We will support an unsettled child as you leave.

You are welcome to discuss with educators your child's progress or any concerns you have. Please tell us of significant events at home that may affect your child's behaviour and feel free to ask for privacy if matters are confidential. Our aim is to work together for the happiness and growth of your child. If you have any queries or suggestions, please approach us.

LEAVING AND COLLECTING CHILDREN:

Please collect children promptly after their session as children get upset when adults are late, additionally staff need time to clean up and prepare for the next session. Also please try not to arrive early for your session, as we need this time for preparation.

If someone else is collecting your child, please let an educator know and record it in the diary, which is kept on the kitchen bench, with details. Also, always be sure that there is an educator on duty when you leave your child at kindergarten.

Please note that children will not be released into the care of persons unknown to staff without prior notice from parents or guardians. Friends and family members can be added to the 'authority to collect' section of the enrolment form at any time.

WHAT CHILDREN NEED TO BRING:

- Clothes in which your child can toilet independently
- A hat to be worn outside when the Ultra Violet rating is 3 or more and sunscreen applied prior to or on arrival
- Comfortable clothes your child can move freely in and that will wash easily (please label all clothing, including footwear)
- A bag for your child's belongings
- A change of clothes
- A named water bottle
- A snack, such as a piece of fruit, cheese, savoury biscuits. A healthy diet is modelled and encouraged by staff. Please do not send along sweet or high salt foods, e.g. muesli bars, potato chips, custards, yoghurts etc.

WE ARE A NUT AWARE CENTRE SO PLEASE BE CAREFUL ABOUT SNACKS WITH NUTS. We have children with a life-threatening allergy.

SPECIAL SERVICES:

Children with special needs can access assistance through the kindergarten. Referrals can be made for help from the Speech Pathologist, Psychologist, Social Worker, Bilingual Assistant or Special Educator. This is a free service.

KINDERGARTEN LIBRARY:

The kindergarten has a children's library service, where children are able to borrow books and literacy kits. We invite you to choose library items with your child and to record the details on the relevant card. Your child will be supplied with a library bag for their use at kindergarten. Please report any damage to books or kits to staff. Please help us to teach your child to care for books.

CAYHS SCREENING:

When children reach approximately 4 years and 3 months, Child and Youth Health offers a general development screening check. Specially trained nurses assess intellectual and physical development, hearing, vision and speech. Screenings are held at Child Health Services Centre at Eden Hills Kindergarten, 3 to 4 times a year. Parents are responsible for taking their child to the appointment.

DENTAL TREATMENT:

Children may enrol with the School Dental Service. This is service provided by the Government at minimal cost and based at the new GP plus at Marion. Please contact the Dental Clinic directly on 8222 8222 to make an appointment.

BIRTHDAYS:

To celebrate your child's birthday, we make a play dough cake, add the appropriate number of candles, sing Happy Birthday and acknowledge the day with a birthday sticker. The Birthday child sits at the front and chooses a special crown to wear. A photo is taken which your child may add to their journal.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT:

Parent involvement is always appreciated. Not only do children benefit from the contact with a greater number of adults, but also parents often find it enlightening and rewarding to observe their child learning in the kindergarten setting.

Specific Ideas:

- *Cooking* with a small group of children
- *Music* - come in and share your skills - singing, dancing or instrumental - with the children
- *Creativity* - you may like to impart particular skills you have with children and educators
- *Maintenance* - you may have a trade or you may just be handy. Please let us know if you have skills to share on a paid or volunteer basis.
- *Library* - maintaining the library is ongoing with cataloguing and covering new books, returning borrowed items to the shelves, mending and stock taking. You may like to take responsibility for this area of the kindergarten's program.
- *Governing Council* - there is plenty of opportunity for interested parents to serve in this way whether skilled or unskilled. There is plenty of scope for

people with ideas and enthusiasm to help with the decision making for the centre and the organising of function and fundraisers.

This list is not comprehensive and leaves room for your skills or interests to be shared or expressed within the program. The kindergarten is a community facility, which operates to meet the needs of families with pre-schoolers within the district. Please give some thought as to how you can contribute. If every family helped once a month, we would always have an extra pair of hands.

END OF SESSION HELP:

We would appreciate a parent volunteer for the **last half hour** of every session to help with the cleaning up. A list of specific duties can be found on the kitchen fridge. If you can come back early occasionally, your help would be much appreciated.

OUR MAKING BOX:

Our making box is in constant need of boxes and bits and pieces. Please think of the kindy before you throw anything away. We do not have room, nor is it safe to store large quantities of recyclables so at times we may say "enough". Please speak to kindergarten staff if you come by anything, especially interesting or rare. We would like first right of refusal.

GOVERNING COUNCIL:

The kindergarten is required to work within D.E.C.D. policies and guidelines and our Governing Council is responsible for assisting the Director and educators in following these guidelines and to develop policies and practices for the Eden Hills community. This includes fundraising, allocating funds for new equipment and improvements, setting priorities and maintaining a safe & inviting environment for adults and children. It is an opportunity to work with other parents for common goals and you may like to help in this way. Please let us know if you are interested.

NO SMOKING:

Please remember that Eden Hills Kindergarten is a smoke free environment.

PARKING AND SAFETY:

Please be considerate when parking in the car park, so that parking spaces are maximised. Please remember to make sure the kindergarten front gate is closed and ensure that only children you are responsible for go through the gate with you.

LOST PROPERTY:

It is helpful if any items of clothing that are likely to be removed at kindergarten are named. There is a lost property box near the front gate. Please check it regularly. Named items will be returned via your child's notice pocket.

SICK CHILDREN:

Please do not send sick children to kindergarten. If your child vomits or has diarrhoea in the morning before kindergarten or the previous night, please keep him/her home for 24 hours, even if s/he wants to come. This is not a decision for children to make, and it is unfair to other families to send a sick child to kindergarten. Also, we do not have the staff or facilities to give sick children the attention they need.

WRITING - MODERN CURSIVE:

All D.E.C.D. schools are now teaching children modern cursive. One of the main features of this writing style is the slope rather than the upright letters. Individual letters have also changed. Later the children will link the letters to form linked script.

This printing is used by kindergarten staff to name children's work. If your child shows an interest in learning to write, for general writing please encourage the use of 'little' or lower case letters rather than capital letters. If kindergarten, home and school all use the same script we will be complementing and reinforcing each other.

a b c d e f g h i j
k l m n o p q r s
t u v w x y z
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0
A B C D E F G H I J
K L M N O P Q R S
T U V W X Y Z

We hope your child and family enjoy their kindergarten year at Eden Hills Kindergarten. Please discuss any concerns with educators