Information Booklet

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# INDEX

Welcome ........................................................................................................ 2

Our Kindergarten Philosophy ......................................................................... 3

Staff ................................................................................................................ 4

Fees and Payments .......................................................................................... 4

Programmes
- Sessional Kindergarten .................................................................................. 5
- Pre-Entry .......................................................................................................... 5
- Full Days ......................................................................................................... 5
- Lunch Time Care .............................................................................................. 6
- Occasional Emergency Care ........................................................................... 6
- Playgroup ......................................................................................................... 6
- Drop Off and Collection Times ...................................................................... 6

What Your Child Needs Each Day ................................................................. 7
- Logos ............................................................................................................... 8
- Toys From Home ............................................................................................. 8

Curriculum ...................................................................................................... 9

Sessional Timetable ..................................................................................... 10

Services
- School Transition Programme ...................................................................... 11
- Children’s Literacy Kits ................................................................................. 11
- Support Services ............................................................................................ 11
- Health Checks – Child & Youth Health ......................................................... 12
- Lost Property ................................................................................................ 12
- Parent Diary .................................................................................................. 12
- Communication ............................................................................................... 13
- Personal Data ................................................................................................ 13
- Named Pockets .............................................................................................. 13
- Safety .............................................................................................................. 13

An Important Note About Attendance ........................................................... 14

Child Absences ............................................................................................. 15

Illness At Kindergarten .................................................................................. 15

Parent Involvement ....................................................................................... 16
- Governing Council ......................................................................................... 16
- Some Other Ways in Which You Can Become Involved ................................ 17
- Some Ways In Which You Can Help During Sessions .................................. 17

Written Records And Feedback to Parents .................................................. 18

Programme ................................................................................................... 18

Child Protection & Behaviour ........................................................................ 19
- Child Protection Curriculum ......................................................................... 19
- Behaviour Policy ............................................................................................. 20
Welcome to

Oaklands Estate Kindergarten

We hope that the time your child and family spend with us will be mutually rewarding.

We believe that parents are the first and foremost teachers of their children, and that the most effective learning occurs when home and kindergarten co-operate and support each other.

As parents, teachers, and early childhood workers who will be working together we have one very important interest in common – YOUR CHILD! Please feel free to discuss any aspect of your child’s development with us.

We look forward to working with you and your child over their year with us. Together we can further develop your child’s interests, skills and social development, to ensure your child reaches their optimum potential.

Oaklands Estate Kindergarten is your kindergarten, and your family’s involvement is welcomed. There are numerous ways you may be able to contribute. Involvement means something different for each family so we look forward to your contribution.
OUR KINDERGARTEN PHILOSOPHY

Oaklands Estate Kindergarten’s goal is to provide a high quality programme which meets the needs of all families in the area with pre-school children.

We, the staff, believe that:

○ each child is an individual, has the potential to learn and has a unique way of learning.

○ every child and his/her family is important regardless of gender, cultural background, social status.

○ the staff and parents should be involved in the planning and delivery of responsible and equitable service with quality outcomes for children.

○ a quality programme is a flexible one and must be developed to meet the needs of each individual child.

○ to provide flexibility there needs to be a safe, secure, healthy and stimulating environment.

○ parents are the prime educators and have a unique knowledge and understanding of their child. It is essential that parents and staff work together in order to maximise each child’s learning potential.

○ children learn best through play, through concrete experiences and active involvement. Children are naturally curious and learn best through development of their own interests, while staff provide opportunities for extension of their interests and knowledge. We value both the process and the product. Play, discovery, experimentation, problem solving and decision making are acknowledged as the most appropriate way of learning.
STAFF

Director: Charmaine Griswood
Teacher: Toni Turci
ECW: Pamela Pilgrim

Other Staff

From time to time we have other staff at the centre to support specific programmes, ie

- Pre-School Support Workers
- Bilingual Support Workers

We may also have “students” from Magill & Flinders University (Teachers in Training) and TAFE (Child Care), High Schools, Work for the Dole or Volunteers.

FEES AND PAYMENTS

Pre-entry fees per term are $25.

Sessional Kindergarten fees are $60 per term.

Lunchcare fees are $5 per lunchtime

You will be issued with an invoice. Please put correct money in an envelope and place it in the letter box which is on the kitchen bench.

Please always bring the correct money as no change is kept on the premises.

If you encounter any difficulty with fee payment, please have a chat with the Director.
PROGRAMMES

SESSIONAL KINDERGARTEN

*Monday to Thursday – Mornings 9.00am to 11.45am*
*Monday to Thursday – Afternoons 12.45pm to 3.30pm*

For four terms prior to commencing school, children attend this group commencing in the term after their fourth birthday. If children have special needs, approval may be given for either early entry or an extension of time.

Please keep within session times. If you are early for some reason, the staff would appreciate your help with setting up activities and equipment.

As much as possible parents are given a choice as to which four sessions their child will attend for the term. This is in line with priority of access guidelines/attendance policy developed by the Governing Council and child/staff ratios.

PRE-ENTRY

Children attend this group during the term in which they turn four years old. (or prior to their fulltime year of kindergarten) This is a preparatory time for children to gain the independence and confidence separate from their parents in the kindergarten environment with the guidance of the kindergarten staff. The session your child will attend is flexible and is in discussion with parents, to suit parents work commitments etc., group sizes and child staff ratios.

FULL DAYS

*Full days are available Monday - Thursday*

Limited spaces are available on Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursdays for children to attend 2 full days as their 4 sessions/week entitlement.

Priority will be given to those children whose parents:

- Work Outside the Home
- Work in home based business
- Are Studying Full Time
- Have Transport Difficulties
- Other Special Circumstances

Staff will endeavour to meet all parents’ needs in accordance with group sizes and staff/child ratio.
PROGRAMMES cont...

LUNCH TIME CARE

Lunch care is arranged through staff, and the number of children attending depends upon child staff ratio. There is a charge each lunchtime. Children are supervised by paid staff members.

As well as morning and afternoon snacks (which remain in the children’s bag), your child will need lunch. Please pack lunch in a separate lunchbox. We ask that parents ensure they bring in the lunchbox and give it to a staff member, or place in the lunch crate in the kitchen.

It is preferred that the lunch does not require refrigeration due to lack of fridge space. If necessary, you may like to use an ice pack. (Consider that when at school, your child will not have access to a refrigerator!).

There is a cost of $5.00 per day for lunch care. This fee is payable whether your child attends on the booked session or not. It serves as a booking fee and holds your child’s place. The fee is used to pay someone to care for the children over the lunch break. Please pay in advance for the term. You will be invoiced for the fee.

OCCASIONAL EMERGENCY CARE

Care for children already attending kindergarten can be arranged for $4.00 per hour within session time and $5.00 over the lunch time period or part thereof, providing that our staff ratio on the day permits this.

PLAYGROUP

Fridays 11.00am to 12.30pm

Families are very welcome. Cost is $2.00 per week per family (plus Playgroup Insurance of $24.00 per year – if you wish to take this offer up). Playgroup is run by parents and operates during term times only.

DROP OFF AND COLLECTION TIMES

It is important that your child be dropped off and collected on time. Before and after session times, staff are busy with preparing activities and environments for the children, administration or having a much needed and well deserved lunch break. You must stay with your child until the beginning of the session to ensure that your child is adequately supervised. If you have an unavoidable need to leave your child before the start of the session or pick them up late, please let the staff know in advance so they can try to accommodate this need. A fee is payable for care before and after usual session times.
WHAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS EACH DAY

BAG
A named bag which is easy to open and close.

SNACK
Fruit or a snack such as cheese, celery, sultanas etc. For dental health and nutritional reasons NO muesli bars, wraps, cakes, biscuits, chips, cordial etc please.

Please send healthy options for snack. We strongly recommend raw fruit or vegetables rather than processed food.

This is very important for health and nutrition reasons, to encourage a healthy lifestyle for our next generation.

A benefit of eating raw and crunchy foods is that it is good for developing the mouth and tongue muscles around the mouth, which is good for the jaws, gums, and ESPECIALLY for speech development.

This kindergarten has a NUT FREE POLICY. It is important that no nuts or products containing nuts be brought to the centre because there is no guarantee that children will not share snacks or inadvertently have contact with crumbs etc.

Foods that are NOT ALLOWED in the centre include nuts (all types), muesli bars, peanut butter, Nutella and foods cooked with nut oils. Please check the labels on any packaged products and ensure that any homemade produce does not contain any nut products. We strongly encourage parents and carers to supply fruit for snack times.

HAT
A named hat.

The centre's sun safety policy requires that children wear a hat at all times for outdoor play. Please ensure that your child has a named hat with them every day – including winter months. Broad brimmed or legionnaire style hats are encouraged as they provide the best protection.

If children do not have a hat, they will be required to play indoors or under the verandah. It is important that you put sunscreen on your child before coming to kindy, as it takes 20 minutes for sunscreen to be effective.
WHAT YOUR CHILD NEEDS EACH DAY cont..

DRINKING BOTTLE
Please supply a named bottle, which can be kept in your child’s bag and used as needed. Spare cups are available if children forget theirs. Remember – water only please, not juice or cordial.

You do not need to send drinks as children may help themselves to the water container at any time, or fill from the filter tap.

CLOTHING
Practical comfortable clothing suitable for active (and sometimes messy) play. Clothes need to be easily laundered as well as easy for the child to manage for toileting. Please name all clothing.

Please send a spare set of clothes in your child’s kindy bag just in case of accidents. Children may sometimes get wet, from the sandpit or washing hands. We have a limited supply of spare clothes at the centre.

LOGOS
Are you tired of the fight about what to wear to kindergarten? Then here is your solution! Wear a “kindy uniform” – the children love to be like their siblings and wear their “uniform”. It’s easy, just use our logos.

Have you seen our iron-on Logos? They look great when all the children wear them, are cheap to put on a bought t-shirt/windcheater, and they are excellent for excursions etc, as it is easier to spot straying children. Only $2.50 each and they come in navy or white.

Buy 1, 2 or 3 today! See staff to purchase.

TOYS FROM HOME
We discourage children from bringing small or precious toys that may be lost or damaged. We encourage the children to be observant and welcome items from nature or any object that may pertain to our programme.
CURRICULUM

Our curriculum encompasses all of the interactions, experiences and routines that are a part of each child’s play. We use an integrated approach to learning rather than a more subject-orientated curriculum.

Our curriculum is based on a knowledge and understanding of children’s growth and development, play as a process through which young children learn, the sequencing of knowledge and skills, the characteristics of the individual, the service and community, curriculum theory, development and evaluation, and our role in facilitating children’s growth and development.

We programme using the national Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) for Australia (Belonging, Being, Becoming)

The learning outcomes are:-

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

Summative Reports are written under these headings prior to starting school.
SESSIONAL TIMETABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MORNING SESSION</th>
<th>AFTERNOON SESSION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.00 – 10.00</td>
<td>Free Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.00 – 10.30</td>
<td>Group Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.30 – 11.15</td>
<td>Free Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.15 – 11.30</td>
<td>Pack Up</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.30 – 11.45</td>
<td>Group Time</td>
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<td>11.45</td>
<td>Farewell</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.45 – 1.45</td>
<td>Free Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.45 – 2.15</td>
<td>Group Time</td>
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<td>2.15 – 3.00</td>
<td>Free Play</td>
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<td>3.15 – 3.30</td>
<td>Group Time</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>Farewell</td>
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</tbody>
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**Fruit Time/Snack**
Fruit is eaten during free play times. The children eat when hungry, but must sit down at the table to eat. On some days we may all sit together to eat.

**Free Play**
During free play the children have access to activities in our programme, planned by staff. Children are encouraged to participate and practice their skills. Activities, equipment, books and puzzles are changed weekly, to ensure a balanced educational programme.

**Group Time**
Group time incorporates many and varied experiences such as:

- **Sharing Boxes** - Language, listening, sharing with a large group, guessing and deduction, and how to be a good group participant.

- **Kurlo** - A home/kindy experience involving the written word, scribing and reading.

- **Movement Experiences** - For gross and fine motor development, listening and following instructions.

- **Introduction of new topics** - Plans for the day, week or future plans. New activities and instructions on how to use activities (explicit teaching).

- **Stories** - Both fact and fiction books are read to the children.

- **Social Skills** - Analysis of our day – what we have done and learned, and an introduction of our social skills programme – words and behaviours.

- **Songs** - Introduction of new and singing favourite old songs, usually songs that add to or enhance our weekly programme.

- **Physical Wellbeing** – We use the “Straighten Up” programme designed by the Chiropractic Association to encourage spinal health – (and it’s fun too!), as well as various other physical activities designed to increase gross and fine motor skills.

This is just a few of our too many to list group activities!
SERVICES

SCHOOL TRANSITION PROGRAMME

During your child’s last term, orientation visits are usually arranged by the School with parents. Each School will contact you with details re visits, times etc.

CHILDREN’S LITERACY / NUMERACY KITS

All sessional kindergarten children are welcome to borrow from our library of kits. Parent/caregivers are responsible for helping children with their borrowing and recording.

As one part of our 3 year Site Learning Play we are focusing on Literacy & Numeracy, and to this end we have available to you, these marvellous kits – which we encourage you to borrow and share with your child.

Our literacy kits are available for borrowing for a maximum of one week. Please record your name in the borrowers’ book, and mark off when you return. If any pieces are missing please return the kit to staff so that replacements are put in the kit. We encourage you to use these kits with your child and actively promote Literacy in your child’s life.

SUPPORT SERVICES

We have access to DECS Support Services such as:

- Speech Pathologists
- Special Education
- Psychologists
- Social Workers, etc

Staff can arrange access. If you have any concerns about your child, please discuss these with the Director who may refer you to these FREE services.
SERVICES cont…

HEALTH CHECKS – CHILD & YOUTH HEALTH

All children will have a comprehensive examination during their kindergarten year. This is arranged with parents prior to their child starting school.

LOST PROPERTY

The lost property box is kept on the verandah. Please check it regularly.

*Please name everything your child brings to kindergarten including shoes.*

PARENT DIARY

Our parent diary is situated just inside the back door on the shelf. If someone else is picking your child up from kindergarten we request that parents place the name and relationship to the child along with contact details (just in case they forget! and we need to telephone them). This is to ensure that your child is kept in a safe environment.
SERVICES cont…

COMMUNICATION
Good communication is essential between parents, caregivers and staff. We hope you will feel comfortable approaching us with any areas of concern you may have.

If you have an issue that could require prolonged discussion, please make an appointment so staff are not taken out of the teaching environment for extended periods of time.

PERSONAL DATA
Please ensure that our information on your child is always up to date – ie newly discovered allergies, changes to your work or home telephone numbers etc.

NAMED POCKETS
All notices, newsletters, receipts, programmes etc will be placed in your child’s named pocket which is located on the bathroom wall above the children’s handbasins.

SAFETY
Please make sure your child greets a staff member when they arrive. Your child must always farewell a staff member when they leave, for security reasons as well as social reasons.

It is important that staff members know who will be collecting your child each day. If there is a break in routine, please write the details in the diary which is on the lockers in the bathroom foyer.

Please ensure the gate is closed and only allow your child through the gate with you.
AN IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT ATTENDANCE

Staffing levels at our kindergarten are based on the numbers of children attending on a daily basis (not on the number of children enrolled).

Each term, the actual attendances of children over a two-week period are collated and sent into the Department for Education and Children’s Services. This data is the used to determine the staffing allocation for our centre on a termly basis.

The data collection weeks for term one each year are weeks 2 and 3. For the other terms during the year, data collection occurs in weeks 1 and 2.

We understand there are circumstances that make it difficult for your child to attend sometimes, eg illness, however, please make every effort to ensure that your child attends their entitled session when possible.

To avoid losing staff, it is imperative your child attend. This is particularly important during data collection weeks.

Of course, there are many other reasons that your child will benefit from regular kindergarten attendance:

- Children will learn to value the role of Kindergarten and education in their lives
- They will also benefit by developing a regular pattern of attendance, which will likely follow through to school
- Children feel more secure when they have familiar routines
- Regular attendance helps children to develop and maintain relationships with other children and staff
- Research shows that when parents recognise the value of kindergarten and education in general, children are more likely to attain greater benefits and reach their full potential.

Thank you for your efforts to ensure that your child attends our service regularly.
CHILD ABSENCES

If your child will be absent for any reason, please phone the kindergarten, especially if he/she has something contagious about which other parents should be notified.

ILLNESS AT KINDERGARTEN

If children are unwell at kindergarten, they will be cared for until a parent or emergency contact person can collect them. We expect that children who are unwell will be kept at home especially if they have fresh colds or gastric illnesses. We know that children always say they “want to go to kindy”, but we do not have the facilities to care for sick children, nor is it fair to other parents to expose their children to these infections.

In these amazingly diverse weather conditions, we often have had a few children come to kindergarten obviously not well. We would appreciate it if you could keep your child home if they have fresh colds, green runny noses, gastric issues etc. This will help to stop these bugs from transferring across to others. For those who have already done this – we appreciate your consideration.
PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Fees paid by parents do not cover kindergarten running costs and consumables such as art materials, cleaning, telephone, maintenance, power and consumables. Fundraising is therefore necessary.

We rely on your support for our Fundraising events.

How can you become involved?

GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Kindergarten Governing Council is elected annually and is made up of a group of interested and dedicated parents working for the benefit of all children at the kindergarten.

Some of the activities they engage in include:

- Financial management of the kindergarten
- Encouraging parent involvement
- Organising and running fundraising activities
- Supporting the children and staff in organised activities
- Maintenance work on the kindergarten building and grounds
- Attending meetings to keep informed of the latest developments in early childhood education
- Having valuable and valued input to the kindergarten’s curriculum and other areas of its day to day running
- Decision making

The committee meets monthly and welcomes involvement of all parents. They work for the benefit of your child, but can only achieve maximum effectiveness with the support of all families attending the kindergarten. Please help in any way you can.

We encourage you to consider becoming a member of our Governing Council.
PARENT INVOLVEMENT cont…

SOME OTHER WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN BECOME INVOLVED

- Help with the rosters (laundry, lunch supervision etc)
- Give time at kindergarten during session times (see below)
- Support all fundraising events
- Read stories with small groups of children
- Help in the kindergarten garden
- Demonstrate a hobby, craft, or play a musical instrument
- Assist with the end of session clean up
- Prepare craft materials
- Volunteer as an emergency parent helper in the case of staff absence
- Volunteer for typing, sewing (mending!)
- Cook with small groups of children
- Help on excursions

Your involvement will help to make our kindergarten a better community service.

SOME WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN HELP DURING SESSIONS

In the morning we could always use your help in setting up the kindergarten and packing up at the end of the day. There is a list of jobs to be done, if you can help, or you can ask the staff what they would like done. You may like to commit to a session a week or maybe a regular 1 or 2 hours per week. Let staff know if you can help us at any time.

We need your help with a small amount of washing each week – smocks, tea towels etc. Please place your name on the roster (on the verandah). Your help is very much appreciated.

We would love your help in carrying out our educational programme. Would you like to volunteer to come in to:

- Help the children on the computers
- Do some craft activities
- Gardening
- Reading stories
- Cooking
- Block building and board games
WRITTEN RECORDS AND FEEDBACK TO PARENTS

During each child’s time at this kindergarten, staff will establish a Portfolio and an Individual Learning Plan for your child. This will be based on parent information, child interviews, screening and staff observations.

These are kept together with samples of each child’s work and will be given to you together with a Summative report when your child is Transitioning to School.

Three copies of the Report will be produced:

- 1 for the School
- 1 for the Parent
- The original will be kept at the Kindergarten.

If you wish to discuss your child's progress or have any concerns please chat to the teaching staff. It may be necessary to make an appointment to ensure the Director has uninterrupted time to spend with you.

PROGRAMME

Our educational programme is very flexible, teachers support children to:

- Take control of their own learning
- Have the freedom to manage their own time
- Have the opportunities to interact with people who value the quality of play
- Have time for uninterrupted and self selected activities
- Have opportunities to be active and curious, quiet and reflective

We base our planning on observations, anecdotal recordings and staff discussion of individual children.

We observe, record and evaluate the programme to assess its effectiveness.

During sessions we have structured group times, where we focus on topics and activities such as literacy, numeracy and children’s wellbeing, games, nutrition and drama.

This could take many forms, ie: stories, movement session, music etc.

We send home a copy of the programme each fortnight so that you can enhance our learning programme – we encourage you to read, participate and add to our programme by bringing in additional resources.
CHILD PROTECTION AND BEHAVIOUR

CHILD PROTECTION CURRICULUM

Oaklands Estate Kindergarten uses the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum that is a revised curriculum for South Australian Schools and preschools. This revised curriculum includes aspects of the Protective Behaviours program taught in schools since 1985. Just as importantly, it includes new understandings about student learning and best practice in abuse prevention.

The children will be taught this curriculum during their year with us. All teaching staff have undergone professional learning on this curriculum.

The DECS Child Protection Policy (1998) states that all children need to experience programs designed to develop skills and strategies for personal safety and abuse prevention. DECS is committed to providing Child Protection programs which support children to:

- Develop knowledge, skills and understandings to achieve and maintain personal safety
- Participate in a range of developmentally appropriate experiences, which are responsive to their individual needs and interests
- Develop positive, responsible and caring attitudes and behaviours which recognise the rights of all people to be safe and free from both harassment and abuse.

At Oaklands Estate Kindergarten, we are required to ensure that all children in our kindergarten learn about child protection. However, a key component of the revised Child Protection curriculum is the recognition of positive participation and contributions of parents/caregivers. Your support, for example, could include discussing and reinforcing with your child what they are learning about keeping safe.

If you would like further information or support in this, please do not hesitate to contact the teaching staff.

Child Protection Information for Parents/Caregivers

It is a fundamental principle in Australian society that parents/caregivers or legal guardians have the responsibility to protect their children and keep them safe. Australia supports a United Nations agreement that children are to be protected from all forms of abuse, exploitation and violence. Abuse may be sexual, physical and emotional. Australia has laws to prevent and respond to the abuse or neglect of children.

In South Australia, this law is called the Children’s Protection Act. Under this Act, people who work and volunteer in schools and care settings are called mandated notifiers. This means that they must report child abuse or neglect if they have reasonable belief that a child is being harmed. All people employed in the Department of Education and Children’s Services (DECS) receive regular training in this responsibility. When people report child abuse, it is a confidential exchange of information with the Department for Families and Communities.

Schools and care settings have the responsibility to protect children and keep them safe when they are under their care. Schools and care settings work with parents/caregivers and government agencies to keep children safe. Some of the ways they contribute to children’s safety are through:

- Screening the people who want to work with children and young people
- Providing staff and volunteers with expected standards of behaviour towards children and young people
- Providing supervision of children in the class, in the yard, and on school excursions and camps
Implementing preschool and school policies to ensure that children are treated in a just way and to respond to racial, sexual, verbal and physical harassment.

Educating about living safely and being healthy in Australia – this includes road safety, water safety, sun protection, hygiene and healthy eating.

Providing education about the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

Involving learners in making decisions about their education setting.

Teaching children and young people how to develop positive relationships and providing opportunities to build self-esteem.

Teaching the DECS child protection curriculum.

The child protection curriculum teaches all children from a young age, in an age appropriate way, to:

- Recognise abuse and tell a trusted adult about it.
- Understand what is appropriate and inappropriate touching.
- Understand ways of keeping themselves safe.

Parents/caregivers also have the responsibility to protect children and ensure their safety, and are supported by society to do this. Parents/caregivers do this through:

- Providing adequate supervision at all times to minimise the risk of physical, sexual and emotional harm. Young children should not be left alone at home or in a public place, especially at night.
- Understanding the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touching of children, protecting them from being touched inappropriately and ensuring that children report inappropriate touching.
- Disciplining their children without causing harm. Some forms of punishment are illegal in Australia. Alternative effective parenting strategies can be discussed with community leaders and parenting agencies.

Other responsibilities for parents/caregivers include:

- Providing healthy food for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Healthy food such as fresh fruit and vegetables is low in fat and sugar.
- Providing appropriate clothing for different weather.
- Ensuring children learn good hygiene practices such as washing their hands before handling food and showering regularly.
- Ensuring children have enough sleep at night.
- Giving appropriate care when children are sick. Generally sick children should stay at home and, if necessary, receive medical attention.
- Encouraging children to participate cooperatively in school subjects and activities including school excursions and camps. Excursions and camps are an important part of education.

**BEHAVIOUR POLICY – Restorative Practice/ Social Justice**

To manage behaviours that may be unsafe or hurt another child, we prefer to use restorative language with the children to help them verbalise what happened, how others might be effected by their actions and how they can help to improve the situation. This empowers all children to take responsibility for actions that occurred. The underlying principle of this technique is to ensure that it is evident that the behaviour is the problem – not the child and that a positive outcome can be achieved for all involved. We use the Restorative Questions as part of our Behaviour Policy.

**When things go wrong**

- What happened?
- What were you thinking of at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?

**When someone has been hurt**

- What did you think when you realised what had happened?
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?