

PROGRAM, CURRICULUM & PHILOSOPHICAL BELIEFS

The main emphasis of the kindergarten program is to promote learning and teaching in a safe, caring and supportive environment. The curriculum at McArthur Park Kindergarten is play based, child-centred and emergent, based on children's individual needs and interest. It is guided by the national **Early Years Learning Framework**. The framework presents a vision for children's learning.

"All children experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life."

We endorse the principles fundamental to the framework of '***Belonging, Being, Becoming***'

Belonging: Knowing where and with whom you belong. Belonging acknowledges children's interdependence with others and emphasizes the importance of relationships which in early childhood and throughout life are crucial to developing a sense of belonging.

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 them knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life's joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life. The early years are not solely preparation for the future but also the present.

Becoming: Children's identities, knowledge, understandings, capabilities, 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 emphasizes learning to participate fully and actively in society.

The framework recognizes that from before birth children are connected to family, community, culture and place. Their earliest development and learning takes place through these relationships, particularly with families, who are children's first and most influential educators.

Five Developmental Learning Outcomes

1. Children Have A Strong Sense Of Identity
2. Children Are Connected With and Contribute To Their Worlds
3. Children Are Confident And Involved Learners
4. Children Have A Strong Sense Of Wellbeing
5. Children Are Effective Communicators

We believe learning develops from the many experiences that an individual has in their life, it is a lifelong process and each child learns at their own rate and style.

The daily program allows for uninterrupted periods of play and organised learning experiences as well as planned group sessions e.g. music, literacy. Play is an essential aspect of learning for young children and planning for play is central to the development of a curriculum that integrates all areas of a child's development. Adults in the preschool have a critical role in responding to children's play ideas and establishing an environment which supports and extends children's learning and development through play. The program contains a balance of quiet/active and indoor/outdoor activities, play and explicit teaching.

We believe that each child comes from within an individual and unique family group and we value each child's unique individual contributions, their particular interests, needs and family background. This encourages an emphasis on the process of learning, rather than conforming to adult ideas about what is important, how things should look and how they should be.

In creating a curriculum that matches with early childhood philosophy, attention is given to the development of the whole child. Experiences are provided that cater for the intellectual, physical, social, emotional and creative development of the child. Educators believe that each child is a competent and capable learner. We support children to problem solve, engage with real tools (i.e. hammers, saws, hand drills, garden tools, hot glue guns) under adult supervision and participate in a range of experiences where they are supported to take safe risks.

We have a strong focus on developing children's social skills and helping children to develop the skills that enable them to be successful members of our learning community at Kindy. Friendships are important to children. We recognise that for many children, kindergarten is their first experience of interacting with others without the familiar support of a family member. We believe that children need to know skills such as respecting each other, co-operation, problem solving, sharing, turn-taking, conflict resolution and laughing and having fun together. All of these become an important part of our daily experiences.

Adults in the kindergarten

- Set up short and long term goals for each child based on information gained from families and observation of children at work and play.
- Foster positive self-concept and self-esteem by allowing children to make choices, initiate own experiences and to talk about what they see, feel and do.
- Encourage conversation, discussion and critical thinking by setting open ended tasks and questions, adding more information to child initiated topics and by following up children's interests and questions.
- Document children's progress, their needs and interest and share each child's development with parents and other staff informally and formally.

We support parents in the care and education of their children through our many services, support services, community agencies and access to resources.