



Welcome to
Mitchell Park
Kindergarten
2024

30 Lanark Avenue

Mitchell Park, SA, 5043

Telephone: 8276 8578

Email: dl.3654.leaders@schools.sa.edu.au

Occasional Care Email: dl.3654.ocare@schools.sa.edu.au

Website: <https://www.preschools.sa.gov.au/mitchell-park-kindergarten>

Our Educators

Preschool

Director:	Caren Matthias
Teachers:	Catherine Somers Samantha Steinmuller
Early Childhood Worker:	Mary Tahtsis
Preschool Support:	Kristy Baldock
Administration:	Francie Bourke

Occasional Care:

Early Childhood Worker (Level 2):	Mary Tahtsis
Early Childhood Worker (Level 1):	Gibb Shakallis

We also employ additional bilingual support and preschools support workers as required.

Mitchell Park Kindergarten has a proud history of providing high quality early childhood programs to the community. Our educators are committed to working in partnership with families and providing an inclusive program that is responsive to the learning needs of all children.

We welcome you and your family to Mitchell Park Kindergarten and look forward sharing your child's learning journey with you!

We acknowledge that we meet to learn and play on the lands of the Kaurna people.

We respect the Kaurna people as the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to Elders both past and present.





Philosophy Statement

At Mitchell Park Kindergarten we respectfully acknowledge the Kurna people of the Adelaide Plains as the custodians of the land on which we play and learn.

We believe that all children are competent and capable and have a right to be actively involved in high quality early childhood education programs.

We value:

- Lifelong learning, respect, kindness and being safe.
- The importance of developing genuine, reciprocal relationships between children, families, educators and our community.
- The cultural diversity and experiences that each child brings, and acknowledge that families are their children's first, and most important, educators.
- Play, and its importance to children's development.
- Children's input, and see them as active participants in, and creators of, their own learning.
- Environmental awareness, and the importance of educating children for a sustainable future.

We will:

- Foster a love of learning in children and provide an environment where they feel safe, secure and supported to explore, learn and grow.
- Work in partnership with families and caregivers to support children's learning and development.
- Foster a strong sense of community by building an inviting and accepting environment where all families and caregivers are welcome.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in, and with, our community.
- Extend all children's learning from what they know, can do and understand.
- Promote connections to the natural world and encourage sustainable practices within our program.
- Teach with intent and purpose to support all children to grow and develop as successful learners.

Developed August 2022 by the children, community, Governing Council and educators at Mitchell Park Kindergarten

GROUPS AND SESSION TIMES

Session times

Children are entitled to attend up to 600 hours of kindergarten/preschool per year. At Mitchell Park Kindergarten, children attend 30 hours over a fortnight in one of the two groups on offer. Each session of preschool is staffed by two teachers, with an educator to child ratio of 1:10. There may also be additional preschool support or bilingual workers assigned as required.

Our groups are:

KALTA GROUP		KUULA GROUP	
Monday	8.30am – 3.00pm	Thursday	8.30am – 3.00pm
Tuesday	8.30am – 3.00pm	Friday	8.30am – 3.00pm
Alternate Wednesday (odd weeks of term)	8.30am – 12.30pm	Alternate Wednesday (even weeks of term)	8.30am – 12.30pm

Please see your term timetable for detailed week by week information about when your child will attend.

Preschools operate with four terms a year the same as schools. Children attend preschool during term time only. The term times for 2024 are:

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
29 January to 12 April	29 April to 5 July	22 July to 27 September	14 October to 13 December
(11 weeks)	(10 weeks)	(10 weeks)	(9 weeks)

Information about term dates is available from the Kindergarten and from the Department for Education on their website:

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/parents-and-families/term-dates-south-australian-state-schools#print>

Attendance at preschool

To gain maximum benefit from the educational program at preschool, it is important for your child to attend regularly. It allows them time to follow and build on their learning experiences over consecutive days and supports them to build safe and secure relationships with their peers and educators. If your child will be absent, we ask you to phone the kindy on **8276 8578** or kindy mobile, **0448 225 364**, to let us know. If you are planning a family holiday, please notify an educator of the dates that you will be absent.

Pupil Free Days

Every year, the Department for Education grants between two and four pupil free days to preschools for staff to participate in professional learning and development. These days are negotiated and approved by the Governing Council at the beginning of the year and families are provided with four weeks' notice prior to each day. Children do not attend preschool on our pupil free days.

POSITIVE TRANSITION TO PRESCHOOL

Our goal is for children to feel safe and secure and to settle in their own time and to do this we need to take the lead from the child. We understand that some children may be anxious at the beginning of the term and that transitioning to preschool in the first few weeks varies from child to child. Our educators are sensitive to these differences and respond to the individual needs of each child and his/her family providing support as required.

Our educators are empathetic, kind and highly experienced in supporting children to ensure a successful start to preschool. Some ways we may do this include:

- Providing a 'Hello and Welcome to Kindergarten' book in your enrolment pack to assist your child's connection to preschool, through visual representation of our preschool and routines.
- Having a predictable routine that helps your child to feel safe, secure, and confident about what will happen next.
- Acknowledging your child's feelings and allowing them to express them via painting, drawing, digging etc.
- Offering comfort and reassurance to your child.
- Distraction or diversion of your child's attention to an activity that they enjoy.

Parents are encouraged to stay at first, for as long as necessary, and gradually work towards leaving your child for part, or all, of the day. Circumstances will be different for every child and we will work with you to find the best strategies. Some children won't want their parents to stay at all. This is great, but if your child isn't one of those, try not to worry too much, they all work through their transition in their own way!

COMMUNICATION

Good communication is essential between parents, carers and educators and we hope that you feel comfortable approaching us with any areas of concern you may have. At Mitchell Park Kindergarten we have established a variety of ways to regularly communicate with families including:

- Face to face conversations
- Phone calls/ text messages
- Email
- Notes placed in your parent folder
- Website and Facebook page
- Storypark app

We also use the whiteboard at the entrance to let you know of anything else that may be happening so please have a look when you drop your child off!

Please ensure that our details for your child are up to date. It is particularly important that we are aware of changes to your work, home or emergency contact details or any newly discovered allergies or health issues.

Storypark

We use 'Storypark' as one way of documenting children's learning and communicating with families. Storypark is an easy to use, private, online service that helps educators, parents and families work together to record, share and extend children's learning. It is a way for families to interact quickly and effectively through iPhone, Android devices and tablets. You can choose to add your own stories or leave comments and feedback.

Once we receive your completed consent form, we will email you a Storypark invitation.

WHAT TO BRING EACH DAY

- A named bag which is easy for your child to open and close.
- A named hat (bucket or legionnaire style). Hats will be provided in your child's first term and will be billed to your first term invoice.
- A piece of fruit for morning snack.
- A healthy lunch (see attached sheet for ideas!) You may like to pack lunch in insulated containers or add an ice pack to keep it cool!
- A drink bottle filled with water.
- A spare set of named clothes. We have a lot of messy and water play!
- Please apply sunscreen before you come to preschool. If you forget we will have some that you can use! If your child has a sunscreen allergy, please bring in a suitable alternative which is clearly labelled with your child's name.



***PLEASE NAME ALL BELONGINGS!** This includes clothing, shoes, bags, hats, lunch boxes and drink bottles. Children often have identical items and they can be easily mixed up! By naming items, it helps us to reunite them with their owners! It also helps children to develop independence and responsibility for their own belongings. Any items left at preschool will be placed in our lost property box for you to collect.

WHAT TO WEAR

When children are actively involved in play with paint, water, mud, clay and sand, it is inevitable that some of this will end up on their clothes! We provide smocks, raincoats and rubber boots for children to wear with some messy activities, but they do not always prevent messy clothes!

These messy activities are popular with the children all year round and we ask that you please send your child to preschool in old clothes that you will not mind if they get dirty! We do have some spare clothes at preschool but please send a spare set in your child's bag. If you have any concerns about dirty/wet clothes, please speak to an educator.

We also have kindy clothes available to purchase through 'Eduthreads' online. Please follow the link below to place an order.

<https://eduthreads.com.au/collections/mitchell-park-kindergarten>

Uniforms now
available online!

www.eduthreads.com.au

eduTHREADS

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so you can get on with the important things

DAILY ROUTINE (MON/TUES AND THURS/FRI)

- 8.30am** Children and families arrive and are settled by an educator. Children complete their morning 'jobs', hanging up their bag, placing their water bottle in the trolley and their lunch box in their drawer. Children can participate in a variety of learning experiences in both the indoor and outdoor environment.
- 10.00am** Group time.
Kaurua Acknowledgment and daily information. This is where we may split into small groups to focus on numeracy or literacy activities, or to focus on various lines of inquiry as suggested by the children.
Fruit time.
- 10.30am** Free choice of inside and outside learning experiences.
- 11.45am** Group time.
Children are supported to participate in a group session that relates to the preschool program and usually features singing, reading or movement or is connected to the learning they have done in the morning.
- 12.00pm** Lunchtime.
Children apply sunscreen and wash their hands before getting their lunch. Children eat lunch together and are supervised during this time.
- 12.30pm** Free choice of inside and outside learning experiences.
- 2.45pm** Group time.
A whole group relaxation session may be offered to support children to rest and reflect on the day.
- 3.00pm** End of day. All children must be collected by this time.

There may be times when late pickup is unavoidable. If you have an emergency and are going to be late to collect your child, please call the Kindergarten and let us know so that we can reassure your child. If someone other than the usual parent/caregiver is coming to collect your child please speak to an educator. We will require contact details for the person collecting and will need to check their photo identification before releasing your child.

We appreciate your support in adhering to our drop off and pick up times.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Term fees

Fees are **\$180.00** per term with an additional **\$10** hat charge billed to your account in your child's first term. Term fees are set by the Governing Council and are payable by the end of week 4 each term. Fees are reviewed yearly and may be subject to change depending on the needs of the kindergarten. Your child's fees enable us to pay ongoing costs and to buy materials such as paint and paper.

The Department for Education provides a grant each year to help with expenses based on the number of children attending our preschool program each day. Term fees and fundraising profits raised by the Governing Council are used for purchasing new equipment and maintaining and improving facilities.

Invoices will be issued at the beginning of each term. Payment can be made in a variety of ways including:

- Direct debit/Bank transfer – Mitchell Park Kindergarten
BSB: 105-131
Account no: 044 981 140
- Centrepay – please see the Director for more information

If you are having any difficulties with payment, please contact the Director for a confidential discussion.

Excursions and special events

As part of our program, we celebrate events that are relevant to our community, for example, community events such as Harmony Day or cultural events such as Diwali, Lunar New Year, Christmas and Eid. Please let us know of any events or celebrations that are important to your family so that we can include them in our program.

At times we may have visitors to the centre who can provide experiences for the children relevant to our program or we may take the children on local walks or excursions. Parent permission is required for excursions.

Birthdays

We celebrate children's birthdays by singing Happy Birthday, 'blowing' out candles on a pretend cake, and presenting them with a special birthday sticker. Please do not bring a birthday cake or other treats to share as some children have allergies and/or other food related health concerns.

Parent involvement

There are a number of ways that you can be involved in our preschool. You may like to be a member of our **Governing Council**, or help with **fundraising, gardening, washing or maintenance of the centre**. You may be willing to share your culture or skills with us! Let us know if you can play a musical instrument, paint, draw or love to cook! We also often ask for help with specific tasks... keep any eye on the notice board or Storypark!

Fundraising

Mitchell Park Kindergarten fundraises to supplement the grants that are received from the Department for Education. Throughout the year we run a few fundraising activities and appreciate your support with these.

Photographs

A professional photographer attends the kindergarten each year to photograph the children individually and in a group. These photographs are available for purchase. We regularly photograph the children and use these in our program and as part of the assessment process. Photos will not be shared on social media.

Toys

We discourage children from bringing small or precious toys from home as they may become lost or damaged. We encourage the children to be observant and welcome items from nature or any object which may be relevant to our program.

Concerns and complaints

There may be times when you have concerns or issues that need a formal process or response. In line with the Department for Education policy, our kindergarten has a '*Parent Concerns and Complaints Policy*', which outlines the appropriate procedures to follow. This policy indicates that your child's preschool should be the first point of contact for parents/caregivers, followed by the Local Education Office, and then the Parent Complaint unit if the complaint cannot be resolved at the local level.

- Preschool contact number: 8276 8578
- Local Education Office: 8207 3700
- Parent Complaint Unit: 1800 677 435

School transition

There are a number of Department for Education schools located in close proximity to the kindergarten. Please contact your chosen school to determine whether you live within their zone for enrolment.

Please ensure that you enrol your child at your chosen school a minimum of 6 months in advance. Schools in our local area conduct tours or information mornings for parents/caregivers of preschool children.

OCCASIONAL CARE

We have Occasional Care for children aged 12 months to 4 years who are not currently booked into another type of early childhood service. A priority of access determines the allocation of places. Currently this service is offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays. (Children under 2, Thursday morning only.)

Please see the Director for more information.

PLAYGROUP

A playgroup operates at Clovelly Park Primary School on Friday mornings from 9.30am – 11.00am (term time only). This playgroup is facilitated by an educator from our preschool. Please see the Director for more information.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE

Our learning program is flexible and allows children to have;

- Control of their own learning
- Freedom to manage their own time
- Opportunities to interact with people who value the quality of play
- Time for uninterrupted and self-selected activities
- Opportunities to be active and curious and quiet and reflective.

Educators plan a program using the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF). There are five main learning outcomes educators use to plan for each child's learning and development.

The learning outcomes are:

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

Using the EYLF, educators plan a play-based curriculum that allows children to develop their skills and knowledge through active learning experiences. Through play, children explore and learn to understand the world around them as they communicate, discover, imagine and create. In a play-based program, children participate in both teacher and child-initiated learning experiences that enable them to develop social skills, fine and gross motor skills, confidence, language, and creativity.

Literacy and numeracy

Our curriculum is also guided by the Department for Education's, Literacy and Numeracy Indicators. Positive attitudes and competencies in literacy and numeracy are vital for children's successful learning and these foundations are built in early childhood. The indicators support educators to track and monitor children's literacy and numeracy development.

Assessment and reporting

Educators regularly review children's progress during their time at preschool based on observations, work samples, information from parents and interviews. Parent/caregiver and educator interviews are held at the end of term 1 and again at the end of term 3 and a Learning Statement is written for each child at the end of their preschool year. With your permission, this report will also be forwarded to your child's school.

Education Support Services

A number of education support services are available through the preschool. These include the services of speech pathologists, psychologists, special education teachers and bilingual assistants. Please see the Director if you have any concerns about your child's development and for more information on referral procedures.

Educators actively monitor children's development and where concerns are observed, may wish to make a referral to Support Services for assessment or specialist advice. Any referrals will always be discussed with you prior to being made.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Food and allergy awareness

Good nutrition involves eating a variety of foods. Encouraging healthy choices from an early age ensures good habits in the future. Establishing healthy eating patterns at a young age provides a critical foundation for good eating patterns in adult life. At Mitchell Park Kindergarten, we encourage families to send fruit, vegetables, cheese and lunches with their children. Please see our 'What food does my child need for kindy?' sheet to assist you with ideas.

Our 'Nutrition, Food, Beverages and Dietary Requirements Policy' does not allow for items containing **NUTS** or **NUT PRODUCTS** to be brought into the kindergarten due to some children having severe, life-threatening allergies. This includes foods such as muesli bars, Nutella and peanut butter.

Please see our website for full details of our policy.

Sun safety

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world. Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Sun exposure in the first 10 years of life determines, to a substantial degree, the likelihood of skin cancer developing late in life (Cancer Council SA).

Our 'Sun Protection/Hot Weather Policy' states that children are required to wear a hat (bucket or legionnaire style) when the UV is 3 or above. A bucket hat will be provided at the start of the year and should remain at kindy. Please apply sunscreen to your child in the morning before attending kindergarten. Educators will help children to reapply at lunch time or as required.

Please see our website for full details of our policy.

Illness

If your child is not well, please keep them at home and contact us to let us know. If children are unwell at kindergarten, they will be cared for until a parent or emergency contact person can collect them. We do not have the facilities or staffing to care for sick children.

If your child develops a contagious condition, we ask that you inform us as soon as possible. Some more common illnesses that we need to know about include: chickenpox, hand, foot and mouth disease, measles, ringworm, school sores and whooping cough. If there is a case of an infectious disease, we will notify you.

Children must stay at home for 24 hours after vomiting or diarrhoea or until they have been on antibiotics for an illness for 24 hours.

Asthma, Allergy & Anaphylaxis

Parents of children who suffer from asthma, allergy and/or anaphylaxis **MUST** complete a specific management plan with their doctor detailing the child's symptoms and appropriate management before they can attend. Educators will also work with you to complete a Health Support Agreement and Safety Risk Management Plan for your child.

Administration of Medication

Where children require medication at specific times on an ongoing basis this can be supported. In these instances, families must provide a medication agreement form completed by the child's doctor. Please see the Director for further information.

Accidents

All educators are trained in first aid, including anaphylaxis and CPR. All minor injuries are treated by educators, recorded, and reported to parents. In the event of a more serious injury, educators will contact parents/caregivers.

In the case of an emergency, an ambulance will be called, and parents/caregivers will be notified as soon as possible.

Immunisations

The kindergarten request and keep copies of a child's immunisation records while they are enrolled at the service, and parents/caregivers are legally required to provide their child's immunisation records to the early childhood service. As you will have already given your immunisation record upon enrolment, please provide an updated record after your child receives a scheduled immunisation.

If you have any questions or require assistance with any of the information provided, please contact the Director on 8276 8578, or via email, dl.3654.leaders@schools.sa.edu.au