



PRESCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

Updated: 07/2023

Centre number: 6501

Centre name: Acacia Kindergarten

1. General information

- Preschool Director
Jane McDonald
- Postal address
PO Box 2602, Mt Gambier, SA 5290
- Location address
12 Bailey St, Mt Gambier, SA 5290
- DfE Region
Limestone Coast
- Geographical location – ie. road distance from GPO (km)
Approx. 450km from Adelaide and Melbourne
- Telephone number
08 87257373
- Preschool website address:
www.acaciakgn.sa.edu.au
- Preschool e-mail address
dl.6501.leaders@schools.sa.edu.au
- Enrolment/Attendance
With a ratio of 1:10 in place, the kindergarten has an enrolment cap of 80 children.
- Co-located/stand-alone
Acacia is a stand-alone facility adjacent to the Mount Gambier North Primary School on what is known as the North Hill, with a beautiful outlook across the city to the extinct volcano cone which is “the Mount”. The Kindergarten and the Mount Gambier North Primary School each operate

completely independently of each other. The Kindergarten uses the North School's facilities.

- Programs operating at the preschool

- Transition to kindergarten

Transition to Acacia Kindergarten is offered when the kindergarten has the capacity to do so depending on current staffing and enrolments. Transition programs are not funded. Families are strongly encouraged to attend playgroup to support their child's transition to kindergarten.

- Sessional Kindergarten for eligible children

Children are entitled to 15 hours of preschool education in the year prior to starting school. Session bookings are configured to suit family needs and the kindergartens current vacancies. Children attend two full consecutive days and an alternate Wednesday as the Universal Access session.

- Inclusive Preschool Program

A specialised program set up for children with significant additional needs operates on site Mondays, Tuesdays and alternate Wednesdays. This Program has its own teacher and Early Childhood Worker and caters for a maximum of 6 children, depending on the complexity and dynamics of children in this program.

- Extended Care

Acacia Kindergarten offers Before and After Kindy Care for parents who are working or studying. Children can arrive at kindy before sessional kindergarten starts, between 8:40am-9am and stay after the session from 3-3:30pm. There is an additional fee of \$5 for children who are booked into access this care.

- Lunch/Full Day Program

Acacia Kindergarten does not have a separate Lunch Care Program. Lunch is part of our daily session, and families are not charged for this time.

- Bilingual Support

Acacia Kindergarten offers Bilingual Support to children who meet the criteria for funding, as set out by DfE. More recently we have seen the number of children requiring this service increase, with the New Arrivals Program being offered at the co-located North School.

- Preschool Support

Preschool Support and Early Intervention hours are provided to children who are eligible based on assessments made by the Student Support Services.

□ Playgroup

Playgroup operates on Wednesday mornings from 9:30-11:30am. Our playgroup is run by our experienced Early Childhood Worker. Families are welcome to attend playgroup throughout the term.

2. Key Centre Policies

Values

Relationships, Respect, Responsibility

Vision

An inclusive community of powerful, resilient and connected learners.

3. Curriculum

- Framework used: Belonging, Being and Becoming: the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF).
- Indicators of Preschool Numeracy and Literacy
- Specific curriculum approaches
 - ❖ Playful learning pedagogies, inspired by the Reggio Emilia principles, using an emergent curriculum and inquiry-based learning.
 - ❖ A strong focus on environmental sustainability and nature play.

4. Centre Based Staff

- Staff Profile
1.0 Early Childhood Qualified Director, 1.0 Early Childhood Qualified Teacher, 1.0 Early Childhood Worker (currently a shared role). Additional staffing is supplementary funded for the Inclusive Preschool Program and Universal Access. Preschool Support Workers and Bilingual Support Worker as determined by needs.
- Performance Management Program
All staff members have Performance Development Plans directly linked to the site's Quality Improvement Plan and the National Standards for Teachers. The site has a Performance Development Procedure.

- Access to special support staff

Acacia, like other Kindergartens in the area, has access to a number of options for children and families needing additional, skilled support, ranging from DfE Student Support Services, to those at the SE Regional Community Health Service.

5. Centre Facilities

- Buildings and grounds

The building itself is of local limestone construction and includes the following:

- A large office, overlooking main indoor area.
- Large kitchen, library and store rooms
- Adult bathroom / laundry / shower / change room
- Children's bathroom equipped for disabled access
- Large open indoor learning area
- Specialised indoor and outdoor learning area for children with special rights.

Although the building is very large, this is not at the expense of the outdoor area, where we have developed a beautiful natural park like setting, including:

- Very broad, grass hillside that allows for energetic games and falls away to the east to a substantial digging patch under large eucalypts and large flat areas under huge deciduous trees to the west.
- A climbing and obstacle course area where gross motor play is encouraged.
- Many spaces in and around existing trees for spontaneous and planned small groups.
- A large undercover sandpit
- A boat and jetty with surrounding coastal garden.
- Double swing area
- A large east facing paved area for setting up activities
- A smaller west facing verandah for well protected activities
- Vegetable and herb garden beds

Our approach to developing our beautiful outdoor areas has been one of minimal interference with the land, to allow it to speak to us as it is, and to work with it with respect. We have aimed to develop a variety of natural open ended spaces for children to utilise. We wish to support children's active play as well as their need for quiet spaces, recognising that each can be as imaginative and valuable to their learning as the other.

- Capacity (per session)

45 children attending per session to adhere to 1:10 ratio for a Category 1 site.

- Centre Ownership

Department for Education (DfE)

- Access for children and staff with disabilities

Our site is well set up for people needing disabled access of any kind, including ramps, disabled toilet, and specialized equipment. The car park has two allocated disabled parks.

6. Local Community (intended for country preschools)

- General characteristics:

Mount Gambier is the largest city in regional South Australia. 436kms from Adelaide and 441kms from Melbourne. Located on the slopes of a dormant volcano Mount Gambier services a population of approximately 33,000 and is one of the fastest growing cities in South Australia.

As the largest city in regional South Australia, Mount Gambier has a wide industry base. This ranges from primary industries, such as softwood timber, livestock, crops and fishing, to manufacturing and transport.

The culture is primarily Australian/European with migrants from South East Asia, Africa, Middle East and Europe. The kindergarten is in a mixed socio economic area that has families from the housing trust area on low incomes or pensions mixed with families on double incomes. Many kindergarten families live on farming land in the surrounding districts.

- Parent Involvement

All parents are invited to be part of the kindergartens Governing Council and are actively to participate in our kindergarten community.

- Schools to which children generally transfer from this preschool

40% on children transfer to Mount Gambier North Primary School. The kindergarten has many children who enrol at Compton, Suttontown and Reidy Park Primary Schools, Tenison Woods College and St Martins Lutheran College.

- Other local care and educational facilities,

There are 6 Child Care Services operating as well as Family Day Care. Out of School Hours Care operates at some of the schools. There are nine large and small primary

schools in and around Mount Gambier, 2 public high schools and 2 R-12 private schools. Gordon Education Centre provides education for school aged children with special rights. Further studies with TAFE and University of South Australia are available through the Mount Gambier Campus'.

- Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities

Mount Gambier is a large regional centre with excellent sporting, recreational and shopping facilities, ranging from large well known chain stores to a variety of specialty stores.

- Other local facilities

Mount Gambier is a well known tourist centre with a number of medical clinics, a new public hospital, cinemas, theatres, and community library.

- Availability of staff housing

Government Housing is available in Mount Gambier as well as private rental.

- Accessibility

Plane services to Adelaide or Melbourne at either end of the day on a daily basis, bus service once a day to Adelaide. Good quality and scenic roads to Adelaide via the Coorong or Keith if travelling by car. Public transport within Mount Gambier is available through local taxi services and a town bus offers public transport in the city.

- Local Government

Mt Gambier City Council
PO Box 56
Mount Gambier SA 5290
Phone: 8721 2555