

Cowandilla Children's Centre Philosophy

We believe that children learn best when:

- They are happy and feel positive about themselves and their environment.
- They see learning as relevant and purposeful, hence relating to their needs, culture and life.
- They are discovering and problem solving for themselves in a safe, trusting and challenging environment.
- They are encouraged to become decision makers about their own learning, be responsible for outcomes and evaluate what they have done.
- Individuality is recognised and cooperation is valued and emphasised.
- Interdisciplinary team members are affirming role models and the relationships between them and children is positive and welcoming.

In order to foster learning both indoors and out, we will strive to achieve the following:

- A child/family centred program which caters for individual differences and interests, whilst promoting a sense of cooperation and collaboration.
- An emphasis on children's experiences upon which concepts and skills are built. Children and families bring a wealth of knowledge which must be drawn upon in order to build and extend each child/families continued learning.
- The care of others and the recognition of their qualities and needs; promoting personal development in social skills, whilst fostering an holistic approach to wellbeing.

In order to achieve these objectives we as a team will:

- Provide a fun and positive learning environment by implementing planned and unplanned experiences that encourage children's curiosity and engenders enthusiasm for learning through exploration both indoors and out.
- Encourage children to be self disciplined and responsible for their own behaviour and learning.
- Be open to the vast array of knowledge that children and families bring, to value their input and commit to build and extend on this throughout their shared learning journey.
- Always act as positive role models in what we say and do.
- Endeavour to ensure that learning is relevant and meaningful for individuals and their families.
- Continue to facilitate parental involvement in their child's learning and the local community.

Mission Statement

Cowandilla Children's Centre is a welcoming, inclusive, safe and vibrant community where children and their families feel valued, supported and connected.



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Welcome

Welcome to Cowandilla Children's Centre Preschool. We are a vibrant culturally and linguistically diverse group of learners maximising opportunities through purposeful play.

What is Preschool?

Children can attend preschool/kindergarten for the year (4 terms) before they start school. In the year that they attend children are engaged in a Play-Based Curriculum; experiences and activities that assist children to become school ready are presented in the context of play. Each of the activities that the children engage in has an underpinning skill attached to them. For example: Playdough is a manipulative activity that builds hand strength. Puzzles develop problem solving skills, and construction material such as Lego assist creativity and fine motor development.

At preschool, children are encouraged to care for each other in a collaborative and friendly environment. Being able to form friendships is paramount in developing a sense of belonging and general wellbeing. The skills that children acquire at preschool are transferable to school, and enable children to adjust to the rigors of a classroom.

Prior to your child commencing Preschool orientation visits are offered to assist you and your child to understand how the Preschool works.

Learning Environment & Curriculum

Facilities

Our preschool is spacious, bright and airy. To meet your child's developmental needs the centre is equipped with a range of literacy and numeracy equipment, puzzles, games, construction toys and musical instruments. Our outdoor learning space provides for a large range of nature play experiences with a mud pit and butterfly garden.





Learning Environment

Our learning environment is:

- Welcoming, safe and secure
- Stimulating and challenging
- Inclusive.

Children are actively encouraged to participate in a range of experiences that enhance the development of:

- Confidence
- Problem solving in a range of contexts
- Initiative and resourcefulness
- Positivity - can do attitude
- Independent play and thinking
- Sustainable practice
- Life skills - collaborative and co-operative play.

Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and Respect, Reflect, Relate (RRR)

Our learning curriculum (programme) is the observational interactions, experiences and routines which are part of each child's day. We are continually assessing and updating our practice. Our curriculum is on display and parental feedback is welcome.

Assessment and Reporting

We continuously assess children's progress using:

- Observations
- Questioning
- Child interviews
- Listening.

We will advise parents of progress via:

- Informal conversations
- Interviews (By appointment)
- Children's portfolios
- Formal parent interviews
- Statement of Learning report at the completion of preschool.





Session Times

Term Dates

Term dates are available on the DfE website or simply Google South Australian term dates.

Session Times

Group 1: Monday and Tuesdays 8.30am - 3.30pm

Group 2: Wednesdays and Thursdays 8.30am - 3.30pm

Each group also attends one and a half Fridays a term to ensure the 600 hours of preschool is accessed by the end of the year. Friday dates will be shared at enrolment and parent induction sessions. Please ensure you arrive on time when arriving and picking up children. We request that if your child is not attending or if you are late, that you call 8443 7800 and advise a staff member.

Supervision & Care

Emergency Care

We understand that family emergencies sometime arise, eg. Hospitalization of family member, accidents. We try to help where possible, please speak with the Director.

School Transition

We work closely with the school and others to ensure children have a happy and smooth transition into school. Transition visits which occur in the last few weeks of preschool, enable children to become familiar with their new school, staff, routines and expectations. We liaise with school staff to ensure they have an understanding of the individual needs of each child.





Playgroup

Friday 9.00am to 11.00am (during school term only)

Playgroup enables local families to meet and enjoy our facilities. It is an opportunity for children to develop social skills and become familiar with the preschool.

There is no playgroup session on the last Friday of each term.

Parent/caregiver responsibilities

While our coordinator oversees the session, parents/caregivers are required to:

- Closely supervise children at all times
- Assist with packing up and facilitating group times
- Provide a piece of fruit for shared snack
- Assist to cut up fruit
- Wash up all plates and return to cupboards
- Wipe down tables and easels
- Wash paint pots and brushes
- Cover sandpit.

Communication

Confidentiality

Staff respect the confidentiality of all matters relating to your child and family. We are obliged to withhold the release of address and telephone numbers unless we have written or verbal consent from the party concerned.

Information Notice Board

Located in the main entrance area. This board has essential and interesting news about preschool, parent programs and community events.

Newsletter

Families receive a newsletter informing them about preschool activities, meetings and curriculum information.





Email

dl.0106.cc@schools.sa.edu.au

Pidgeon Hole

Each child has a pidgeon hole inside the preschool into which all notices and newsletters are placed. Please check these regularly.

Change of Address

Please inform staff if there is a change to contact details as current records are essential in an emergency.

Arriving at Preschool

On arrival, please initial the sign **in** sheet and greet a staff member. This ensures staff are aware of your child's presence and provides an opportunity to share information that is relevant on the day.

Leaving Preschool

Please initial the sign **out** sheet. It is important that staff know who is collecting your child each day. If the routine for collection changes please notify a staff member.

Absences

Please inform staff if your child is to be absent, particularly in case of infectious illness. Should you wish to withdraw your child from the preschool, please notify staff as soon as possible.

Telephone Messages

When staff are unable to come to the telephone during session times, please leave a message with school reception and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

How to deal with issues and concerns

From time to time issues may arise that require resolution. Guidelines to assist you in resolving concerns relating to parent/staff relationships, policies or curriculum are available from the Director.





Daily requirements for your child

Essentials

Please **NAME ALL** personal items and ensure your child has the following:

- Practical easy to manage clothing for a range of play experiences
- Hat - compulsory during Terms one and four
- Healthy snack - no cake, sweet biscuits or lollies
- Preschool bag - with **NAME** clearly visible
- Change of clothes
- Drink bottle - **WATER ONLY**.

What to leave at home:

- **ALL** Toys and special items. Should your child need a comfort toy, please discuss this with a staff member.

Parental Involvement

Informal Roles

- Attending working bees
- Washing smocks etc. and cleaning equipment during and at the end of each term.

Formal Roles

- Nominate for Governing Council
- Weekly wash roster.





Health and Safety

Sun Protection

We encourage children to:

- Wear protective clothing for outside play
- A hat
- Play in shaded areas
- Wear UV sunscreen.

* Our Sunsafe Policy and other policies are available to view.

Nut Awareness Policy

As some children may suffer from an acute allergic reaction when exposed to nuts, we ask that **ALL** foods with nuts or containing traces of nuts are enjoyed at home. Please see policy folder.

Nutritious Food

Please support our encouragement of healthy eating by ensuring your child brings nutritious foods such as:

- Fresh fruit and vegetables
- Cheese and dry biscuits
- Rice crackers or rice cakes with toppings, cheese or dips
- Sandwiches with healthy fillings
- Yoghurt pots and spoon.

Illness or Injury

If your child is unwell prior to arriving it is in the best interests of other children to keep them home until they have fully recovered. Please inform us if your child is contagious or suffering from any of the following:

- Chicken pox
- Measles
- Mumps
- School sores
- Head lice
- Conjunctivitis.
- Gastro/diarrhoea.

In the event of your child becoming ill or having an accident at preschool we will contact you or your indicated emergency contact person. In an emergency, staff will not hesitate to call an ambulance.





Medication

Please notify staff in writing if your child requires medication prescribed by a doctor. Labelled medication for asthma and severe allergies are to be given to staff on arrival. A medication or action plan must be completed and signed by your doctor before staff can administer these medications. Medication forms are available from the Director.

Mandatory Reporting

Staff are legally obliged to report any indication or incidence of child abuse or neglect that comes to our attention.

Smoke Free Zone

Please note the preschool and school premises (buildings and grounds) are a **SMOKE FREE ZONE**.

Behaviour Management

At Cowandilla Preschool we:

- Believe **EVERYONE** has the right to feel safe
- Teach children to take responsibility for their own actions
- Provide a supportive environment
- Model and encourage positive ways of behaving
- Provide explicit behaviour guidelines
- Our Behaviour Management Policy is available to parents.

Support Services Available

Bilingual Support

- Bilingual support hours are allocated by the Department for Education, please speak with the Director.
- Speech assessments and programmes - Children will be referred to our DfE Speech Pathologist.
- Child and Family Health Centre (Cnr. Jenkins and Wilson Streets).





Children's Centre Services

Occasional Care

Occasional care is sessional occasional child care for babies, toddlers and children under school age.

The Department for Education occasional care services are targeted to support children who are not accessing alternative early childhood education and care programs, including preschool, a child care centre or family day care. It enables parents to participate in a range of activities by booking their child/children into occasional care.

First priority of access is given to children:

- under the guardianship of the minister
- at risk of serious abuse and neglect
- in Aboriginal families
- in families which include a person with a disability or health condition that impacts upon their parenting
- with a disability and/or additional needs
- in socially isolated families.

Second priority is given to low income families with an Australian Government Pensioner Concession or Health Care Card.

Allied health program

The allied health program supports early intervention for children aged birth to 3 years to minimise developmental delays. The program builds the capacity of children's centre preschool staff to identify children at risk of developmental delay, and supports staff and parents in promoting child development.

Allied health staff are:

- speech pathologists, who assist with all aspects of communication including speech, language, literacy, signs, symbols and gestures and can also assist with issues around eating and drinking
- occupational therapists, who support children's participation in and performance of daily activities involving the strengthening of play skills, fine and gross motor skills, concentration and self-regulation skills.





Allied health staff build the capacity of staff, parents and carers of the centre through:

- staff consultation and training on topics such as sensory processing and strategies for assisting children with behavioural, emotional and sensory regulation, resource development, screening, assessments and programming assistance
- parenting groups, parent consultation, referrals and distribution of resources to assist children with toileting, feeding, play, speech and language skills.

Community development coordinators

Community development coordinators aim to:

- connect families with other families, community activities and learning, and health and support services that best meet their needs
- facilitate opportunities for families to increase their knowledge and skills around parenting and childhood development
- support parents to develop personally and build their leadership skills
- encourage families and staff to have a strong voice about the programs and services offered

Programs and Services

Community development coordinators work in partnership with other agencies to facilitate a range of programs and services including:

- playgroups for parents and carers that include Aboriginal families, dads, step-parents, grandparents, foster carers, family day care educators, refugees and newly arrived families and children
- parenting programs that include child development, early literacy, song time, music and movement, baby massage, support groups and cooking
- community events including family fun days, community lunches, school holiday programs, cultural events, celebrations and barbeques
- personal development to enhance literacy, career pathways, skill development, volunteering, TAFE and SACE studies.





Family Practitioner

Family services coordinators aim to:

- create local networks and connect families with services and supports that best meets their needs
- build parenting capacity and early childhood development skills and knowledge, specifically in understanding the importance of relationships for children
- encourage and support families to actively participate within their community
- increase access to a range of interconnected learning, health and support services
- build centre staff expertise in responding to children experiencing the effects of trauma, abuse and neglect.

Coordinator activities

Family Practitioner Services perform activities including:

- short-term counselling to identify and respond to personal issues
- connecting families with appropriate services that deal with domestic violence, housing, drug and alcohol problems, mental health and follow up and advocacy
- working with the Department for Child Protection to assist children in out-of-home care to be reunified with their parents or to facilitate positive connections with their parents and extended family.
- parenting programs with a focus on relationships, social and emotional wellbeing and trauma.

Child and Family Health Service

CaFHS conduct preschool health checks, for children aged four to five years old. Included are hearing and eyesight tests. If you wish to seek advice about your child's health and development contact CaFHS on 1300733 606.





Cowandilla Primary School

Cowandilla Primary School has approximately 440 students. We are located in the western suburbs of Adelaide, in the West Torrens Council area. The Children's Centre, with its Preschool, and the school are fully integrated.

We are a Climate Change Specialist School with an active environmental student leader group.

Our school includes an Intensive English Language Centre (IELC). This year we have 5 IELC classes, catering for New Arrivals students from Reception to Year 7.

Cowandilla Preschool

21 Jenkins Street, Cowandilla SA 5033
Telephone: 8443 7800
Email: Briony.Brooks935@schools.sa.edu.au

Cowandilla Primary School

21 Jenkins Street, Cowandilla SA 5033
Telephone: 8443 7800
Facsimile: 8234 2445
Email: dl.0106.info@schools.sa.edu.au

Out of School Hours Care

21 Jenkins Street, Cowandilla SA 5033
Telephone: 8351 7629
Facsimile: 8234 2445
Email: dl.0106.oshc@schools.sa.edu.au

Cowandilla Children's Centre

Corner Jenkins and Wilson Streets, Cowandilla SA 5033
Telephone: 8352 5346
Facsimile: 8352 6296
Email: Briony.Brooks935@schools.sa.edu.au

CAFHS

34 Wilson Street, Cowandilla SA 5033
Please ring 1300 733 606 between 9am and 4.30pm
Monday to Friday to make an appointment