



Government of South Australia
Department for Education

Information for Families



Welcome to Mount Barker Kindergarten

A very warm welcome is extended to you and your family from the staff and Governing Council of Mount Barker Kindergarten. We hope you will see the kindergarten as an extension of your home as we work in partnership with you to achieve the best possible learning outcomes for your child. Our aim is to provide quality education that utilises the individual strengths and interests of your child.

Contact Details:

Location: 2B Dumas Street

Mount Barker, SA 5152

Phone: (08) 8391 0685

Fax: (08) 8391 3082

Email: dl.4637.leaders@schools.sa.edu.au

Website: <https://www.preschools.sa.gov.au/mount-barker-kindergarten-inc>

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Mount-Barker-Kindergarten-and-Gigglebugs-Playgroup-100164488340871/>

Staff:

Director: Mandy Smith

Teachers: Ann Atkins

Deb Paech

Beryl Barnard

ECW/Finance: Floria Talajan

SESSION TIMES

Kindergarten: Full days: 8:30 am to 3:30 pm (2 days each week)
Fridays: 8:30 am to 1:30 pm (2 days each term)

Children are entitled to attend up to 15 hours of kindergarten. We do our best to accommodate parents' preferences for days, taking into account the needs of the child, family and vacancies at the centre. Traditionally we run a Monday-Tuesday group and a Wednesday-Thursday group - please speak with our Director if you would like to discuss other flexible options.

For your child's safety you will need to **sign them in and out** of the kindergarten. Should you arrange for somebody other than yourself to collect your child, it is imperative that both your child and an educator are informed.

Fees: \$150 per term

Fees are set by Governing Council and reviewed annually. Fees and fundraising money contribute a major part of the kindergarten income, supplementing the minimal funding provided by the Department of Education and Child Development. The fees contribute significantly to the running costs of the centre including: educational equipment, painting and craft resources; upgrading and maintenance of equipment and grounds; and utilities (eg electricity, water and telephone). Payments may be made through online direct debit, cash or cheque. If you are experiencing financial difficulties please speak with our Director for confidential arrangements.

Playgroup: Fridays: 9:00 am to 11:00 am Cost: \$2.00 per family

Playgroup provides wonderful opportunities for children and parents to meet other families from our broader community in a friendly environment to chat, play and learn. Please bring a piece of fruit for a share snack at about 10:30 am, followed by song and story time before saying farewell at 11:00 am. All families are welcome.

GOVERNING COUNCIL

Mount Barker Kindergarten is a Department for Education service and is supported by parents serving on the Governing Council. Members are elected at the Annual General Meeting in Week 3 of Term 1, and meetings are held twice a term, usually at night. All parents and carers are welcome to attend.

The Governing Council is responsible for the overall management of the centre in consultation with the Director and has responsibility for:

- ♦ Financial management of the kindergarten, including budgeting, maintenance and upgrade of equipment and fundraising.
- ♦ Facilitating discussion of related issues within the parent body.
- ♦ Setting future goals for the kindergarten and managing WHS practices.
- ♦ Contributing to implementation of the kindergarten program.
- ♦ Reviewing and maintaining policies and guidelines.

A DAY AT KINDERGARTEN

	Parents/Carers sign-in their child on arrival
9:00	Inside activities while children settle
9:20	Inside and outside supported free play
10:00	Fruit/healthy snack
	Children are able to eat when hungry throughout the day
10:15	Inside and outside supported free play
11:30	Tidy up and set up for lunch
11:45	Middle group time
	Stories, music/dance, relaxation, inquiry activities
12:00	Lunch time
	Re-apply sunscreen (as appropriate)
12:30	Relaxation/quiet activities (eg reading or puzzles)
12:45	Inside and outside supported free play
2:45	Pack up time
3:10	End of day group
	Songs, stories and group games
3:30	Farewell children
	Parents/Carers sign-out their child before leaving

These times are approximate and vary from time to time according to the children's needs and interests. This schedule ensures long periods of uninterrupted play supported by educators who extend children's learning.

LEARNING PROGRAM

We deliver an emergent program that responds to the strengths and interests of each child, drawing on their prior knowledge and family experiences. Our curriculum documents include *The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* (EYLF) and *The Preschool indicators of Numeracy and Literacy* in line with the National Quality Standards (NQS) and Department for Education directives. Learning outcomes are:

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

The program is displayed on the Curriculum Board along with highlights of children's learning. Walls displays and each child's learning journal provide further evidence of the children's engagement with the curriculum as it unfolds. Our cycle of planning involves observation of each child, planning, implementation and reflection.

SETTLING INTO KINDERGARTEN

Settling will vary according to each child. Please be patient during this big step in the life of your child. We want to work in partnership with you to ensure the best outcome for your child so that they become comfortable and develop a sense of belonging to the kindergarten environment.

"When children feel safe, secure and supported they grow in confidence to explore and learn" (DEEWR, 2009).

Understanding and Managing Separation:

Parents and carers can help reduce their child's distress by:

- ♦ Supporting your child to develop helpful thinking and reminding them of what usually happens when you are away from each other. "When I leave you, you are ok and I'll come back for you."
- ♦ Giving your child some ways to cope when they are apart from you - "here is a photo of us together to remind you we will be together again soon" "Let's take some deep breaths to calm us down."
- ♦ Being calm and helping your child to be calm too - "Mummy seems happy and relaxed, everything is ok. I feel safe."
- ♦ Calling the kindergarten about half an hour after leaving to see how your child is going.

Source: Understanding and managing separations distress (Kids Matter).

WHAT TO BRING

- ♦ A bag to put their belongings in and a broad brimmed or legionnaire hat.
- ♦ A water bottle - educators will refill with filtered water as required.
- ♦ A piece of fruit or nutritious snack for morning and afternoon - cheese and crackers, dried fruit, carrot, celery are appropriate. Please do not send lollies, chocolate treats, sweet biscuits or chips. Snacks are kept in the bags for ease of access by your child.
- ♦ Mount Barker Kindergarten is an **Allergy Aware** site and we will inform you of any foods to avoid that may impact the health of our community.
- ♦ When your child stays for lunch, please pack a nutritious lunch in a separate lunch box. Lunch boxes go on the shelf under the parent sign-in.
- ♦ We understand that some children will benefit from a special toy or comforter that they may wish to access during the day, especially at relaxation time. Please discourage your child from bringing other toys from home to kindergarten as they can easily be lost or broken.
- ♦ Please pack two complete changes of clothes in case of messy/water play or the occasional toileting accident.

Please ensure you name all your child's belongings.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Mount Barker Kindergarten provides a safe, inclusive environment that is vibrant, flexible and responsive to each child's interest, needs and abilities as individuals and in groups. We provide high quality teaching and learning in line with the *National Quality Framework*, based on the Principles, Practices and Outcomes of the *Early Years Learning Framework*.

This philosophy reflects our vision and motto, ***Play, Learn, Grow***:

Play - we implement a play-based curriculum, focused on positive social interactions and wellbeing. Play enables children to make independent choices using open-ended resources, enhancing individual development.

Learn - our emergent curriculum is responsive to children's learning ideas, utilising teachable moments and building upon children's interests and existing understandings. We respect each child's individual learning style in tandem with developmental appropriateness.

Grow - we provide learning opportunities that challenge and engage children, supporting deeper thinking and problem solving as they understand and make sense of the world around them.

Our educators work in partnership with families, recognising and valuing their place as children's first educators. We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land and their culture. We increasingly build partnerships with our extended community (including parents, caregivers, children, local businesses, service providers, child care centres and children's groups).

This philosophy defines our values of ***Trust*** and ***Respect, Nurturing and Caring, Responsibility and Empowerment***, which are the foundation of quality early childhood education:

Trust and ***Respect*** - children gain increasing confidence to further develop their own identity while exploring and taking considered learning risks.

Nurturing and ***Caring*** - children learn about empathy and consideration for others. They develop a sense of what is fair, begin to see alternate points of view, and act in respectful and inclusive ways.

Responsibility and ***Empowerment*** - children strengthen their ability initiate their own interactions and accept some responsibility for themselves, their actions and their environments.

As educators, we are committed to ongoing critical reflection that improves our everyday practice, thereby continuing to provide quality care and education. Our team values are:

open communication; being supportive; shared commitment in working towards common goals; and an overarching positive attitude to work and life-long learning.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

A questionnaire at the beginning of the year starts our collaborative work with families to achieve the best possible outcomes for your child. Our team share aspects of your child's learning through informal chats and you are welcome to make an appointment time for more formal conversations at any time. Towards the end of Term 4 you will receive a summative Statement of Learning that captures your child's key friendships, progress and achievements at kindergarten.

Each child has a Learning Journal that provides a snap-shot of individual and group learning outcomes during their time at kindergarten. This evidence is sourced through learning stories, art work, photos, stories from home, celebrations and other artefacts related to your child's year at kindergarten. We encourage parents, carers and extended families to look through your child's journal with them from time to time. Your child will be presented with their book to take home and keep at the end of the year.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS

As educators we respect that you are your child's first educators and experts regarding their development. We believe that positive partnerships with you and your family will enhance learning outcomes for your child. Please tell us of significant events at home that may impact on your child during their time at kindergarten and be assured of our confidentiality as appropriate.

You are always welcome to stay, or drop in at the kindergarten anytime during the session. If you have time, stay with your child and share an activity for a few minutes when you arrive. You may like to observe, help out, or simply enjoy being here. We are available to listen to your concerns or queries and have conversations about your child's learning, so please feel free to approach us.

Please let us know if you have any hobbies or interests you would like to share with the children (examples include: playing a musical instrument, cooking, craft, photography).

SPECIAL SERVICES

Through the Department for Education we have access to a team of specialists in the area of child development, education and welfare. Included in this team are speech therapists, psychologists, social workers and special education advisers. Our experienced Preschool Support team work in partnership with families and service provided to inclusively ensure the best possible learning outcomes for children with diverse needs. Should you have any concerns regarding your child's progress or feel you would like access to a member of our specialist team, please talk with the Director.

BUSHFIRE AND EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Mount Barker Kindergarten is a Category 1 High Risk Bushfire Kindergarten. **We will be closed on 'Catastrophic Days.'** Please ask staff for a copy of our policy. The staff and Governing Council have developed a plan in case of emergency such as internal or external fire, earthquake or threatening situation. We practice emergency drills with the children in a relaxed manner.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH

Illness:

Please call us on 8391 0685 when your child is ill or going on holidays. Alternatively we can be notified by email on dl.4637.leaders@schools.sa.edu.au.

Known Conditions and Medications:

It is now a requirement that children attending kindergarten needing medication to be administered by staff must have a form completed and signed. All medication must be prescribed by a GP and be given to the staff to be safely stored away from children. Staff will only accept medication for non-contagious conditions and when the child is otherwise well.

Any child who may require hospitalisation due to a known illness or condition must have a **HEALTH CARE PLAN** to ensure everyone's responsibilities are clearly defined. Please see the Director if you have any further queries.

First Aid:

At times children have accidents at kindergarten. Educators have an up-to-date first aid certificate and take great care when assisting your child. When an incident occurs during the session educators will place a first aid note into your parent pocket and speak with the parent or carer who collects your child. You will be notified by phone at the time of a more serious incident.

Immunisations:

During an outbreak of some illnesses within our kindergarten community (specifically those preventable by immunisations) children who do not have up-to-date immunisations may be excluded from kindergarten for the duration of the outbreak.

Current information and immunisations are available from your doctor, local council, or Child & Youth Services (Ph: 8391 3922).

Child and Youth Health Screenings:

Regular 4-Year Old Health Screenings are encouraged for all children during their year at kindergarten. You will be invited to attend with your child.

COMMUNICATION

Emails are used to send newsletters and other relevant notices to parents. Please let us know if you prefer hard copies. Other communications (such as accounts, receipts and other notices) are placed in Parent Pockets, located in the main kindergarten room. Please check these regularly and read the notice board at the entrance as these are an important part of our communication with you.

POLICIES

Key policies and procedures are available on our website www.preschools.sa.gov.au/mount-barker-kindergarten-inc. A complete set of our current policies and procedures is available for you to view at the kindergarten. For more information regarding policies, please visit the Department for Education Policies and Procedures webpage for Early Childhood Services.

CELEBRATIONS

Celebrations are an important part of life for our children, their families and communities. They promote a sense of belonging and positive self-esteem. Educators celebrate each child's birthday at kindergarten by singing *Happy Birthday* and placing a commemorative photo in their Learning Journal.

We value sharing and celebrating the diverse cultural heritage and customs of our families (such as language, food, art and festivals). Please speak with one of our educators if you or a relative are able to share aspects of your family culture.

IMMUNISATION

From 7th August 2020 new South Australian legislation requires every child attending kindergarten to be vaccinated. You will need to give the kindergarten a copy of your child's **Immunisation History Statement** before they start.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS AND CLOSURE DAYS

As public holidays fall on Mondays, where possible our closure days (4 each year) will be held on Wednesdays or Thursdays.