



## Uraidla and Hills Community Kindergarten

### Sustainability Statement

At Uraidla and Hills Community Kindergarten we are committed to provide opportunities for our children to develop skills, understandings and values for sustainability and to consider their place in developing a sustainable future.

We aim to actively care for the environment and contribute towards a sustainable future. We believe that working with children to act sustainably and look for opportunities to find sustainable options will develop positive lifelong attitudes towards the environment and sustainability. We promote a number of sustainable practices in the kindergarten environment and engage the children to respect and care for our environment.

#### **Reduce, Reuse Recycle**

We aim to reduce waste in the kindergarten through reusing and recycling. Communication primarily occurs through email, thus reducing the use of paper. Toner cartridges are recycled.

Families are encouraged to bring recyclable materials to kindergarten for art, craft, gardening etc. and children are, encouraged to recycle their own paper and scrap waste.

Children are encouraged to have fewer wrappers in their lunch boxes and in term 3 each year we will introduce the "Nude Food" concept and work towards embedding this into the kindergarten culture. From this we discuss the idea of minimising waste, landfill and the environmental impact of this.

Children learn to identify the recycling symbol on packaging and learn to identify the appropriate bin for their rubbish. Compost, recycle or reuse and rubbish waste. These bins are coloured to match home council waste bins.

Compostable scraps go into either the Bokashi bin, the compost tumbler or are fed to the worms in the worm farm. Children source the Bokashi juice and the worm juice to water the plants with this rich natural fertilizer. Autumn leaves and shredded paper is added to the compost tumbler and all compost is when ready added to the garden.

A range of experiments are conducted throughout the year to investigate the breaking down of different materials; or the water uptake of plants; or the growth of roots and shoots on bulbs etc. Junior scientist's hypothesis and record their predictions and then again record the outcomes.

#### **Our Outdoor Learning Environment**

Children are taught and supported to develop an appreciation and care for their natural environment. Opportunities are planned for and arise spontaneously to explore relationships with living things. Children feel, explore, discover, imagine, create, share, investigate, respect and otherwise engage with nature with enthusiastic educators who provide for their learning and development.

Each year we wish to work with the Red Shed in the Uraidla Community to support and add to our outdoor learning environment. In 2016 we designed and with support from volunteers at The Red Shed we made the bee hotels for our kindergarten garden. Each year we plan to add to this initiative with support from either The Red Shed or other local community groups.

When we opened the kindergarten in 2015, our outdoor environment was very sterile and uninviting. Each year we work with our kindergarten community to determine their interest and identify an area of outdoor space to explore and develop further for the children.

Children are taught to work the soil, add compost and get the garden ready for planting. Seasonal vegetables and herbs are planted and the children are involved in the process every step of the way from paddock to plate. With harvesting and cooking their produce being the highlight for many. Throughout the process children are engaged in charting the growth of different plants and recording their findings.

### **Lifecycles**

Each year educators source a range of different animals to watch and monitor to develop an understanding of the cycles of living organisms. Often children and families collect tadpoles and caterpillars for us to nurture and learn about. A range of pets visit us for anywhere from 10 minutes to a week and once again we learn from each and everyone. During term 3 each year we incubate some eggs and watch chickens grow and mature before they are then accommodated for by our parent community.

The cycle of a sunflower seed is explored in great detail across the year. In term 4 children plant the seeds to welcome the new cohort of children into the kindergarten the following year. Over the holidays they grow and flower in time for the new young learners and their families in term 1. As the plant begins to die children watch and monitor what is happening. When the time is right the seeds are collected and shared. Some seeds are saved and packaged and shared with the reception students who planted them. Some seeds are fed to the birds. Some seeds are saved to be replanted in term 4 for the next cohort of children.

### **Water Conservation and Power Conservation**

During term 1, children are taught the symbols of full flush and half flush on the kindergarten toilets and why this is important. Water saving taps have been installed in the children's bathroom and in the outdoor area. Children begin to understand the need for conserving our water and this is encouraged as they play in their outdoor environment. A rainwater tank is installed to support the sand play and in time another one will be installed near the mud play.

Most of the kindergarten lights operate with motion sensors and the air-conditioner turns itself off after a given time. We are fortunate to have natural light flow into the kindergarten and at different times of the year we sometimes operate with all our lights off, giving us a different ambience to work with.

During winter children begin to notice the warmth when sitting in the sun. We will extend this to introduce the power of the sun in a manner appropriate for our young learners.

### **Supporters**

The kindergarten uses the resources of KESAB, Natural Resource Management and our local community.