



**An introduction
to
Torrensville Preschool**

ABOUT US

Torrensville Preschool Centre offers sessional Preschool and Occasional Care Programs to our local community.

Torrensville Preschool Centre was opened in 1993 and replaced the Hatwell Kindergarten on the same site. The building is purpose built and lies within a pleasant tree-filled playground. The Preschool is adjacent to Torrensville Primary School.

We are a learning community that:

- Respects and values the cultural diversity of our children and families.
- Promotes and supports children to engage in a safe, stimulating, play-based learning environment where creativity, imagination and life skills are fostered.
- Works collaboratively to achieve best learning outcomes for all.
- Provides an environment where trust, respect and sharing are valued, supported and promoted.

CENTRE PHILOSOPHY

At Torrensville Preschool. Children learn through play. Connections to Numeracy and Literacy are a part of everyday play and are identified and extended.

Children's voices are heard, valued and respected.

We:

- Support children to engage in a safe, learning environment where creativity, imagination, life skills and social connections are nurtured through play.
- Include the outdoor and natural environments as important elements
- Encourage an atmosphere where families and educators collaborate to support learning outcomes for all.
- Celebrate the diversity that our families bring.
- Acknowledge our First Nations people and explore their traditions, beliefs and connections to land.
- Provide a community where trust, respect and sharing are valued, supported and promoted.
- Embrace spontaneous and planned teachable moments throughout the day.

Ratified by Governing Council

SERVICES

Preschool

Children are eligible for a maximum of 15 hours per week of Preschool during the year prior to starting school. Currently at Torrensville, children attend 5 days of Preschool per fortnight. We offer sessions on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays; children attend for 3 days one week, and 2 days the next, giving them 30 hours of Preschool over a fortnight.

The Preschool operates during school terms. The fees are determined by Governing council and reviewed on an annual basis. Invoices are distributed at the beginning of each term. Parents are welcome to negotiate payment options with the Director as required.

The Preschool is staffed on a daily basis by 2 Early Childhood Teachers and a Certificate 3 Early Childhood Worker.

To be eligible for Preschool in term 1, children must have turned 4 prior to 1st May in the year that they start. Children who turn 4 years old from 1 May to 31st October can commence preschool at the start of term 3 of that year.

Occasional Care

Occasional Care is available to children from the age of 5 months until they start Preschool. We operate 4 sessions for 2-4-year old's on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings and one session for under 2's on Friday mornings. The cost is \$5 per session or \$1.50 with concession. Occasional care sessions are from 8.45 until 11.30am Tuesday to Thursday, and 9.00 – 11.45 on Friday's. Occasional Care operates during school terms.

Occasional Care is staffed by a Diploma trained Early Childhood Worker and a Certificate 3 Early Childhood Worker.

Support Services

The Department for Education and Child Development supports us to provide a number of additional services to children who require them. They include disability support, special education, speech pathology, psychology and bi-lingual support. Please contact the Centre Director should you wish to discuss any of these options.

The School Dental Service offers expert oral health care to children at clinics throughout South Australia. All preschool and school children under 18 years are eligible for this service. To find your local clinic, call SA Dental Services on: 82228222 or visit www.sadental.sa.gov.au
Children's Centres for Early Childhood and Parenting provide a range of services for families of children birth to 8 years, including supported playgroups, parenting groups, family support and allied health services.

For more information, speak to the Director or phone Cowandilla Children's Centre on 8443 7800 or Lockleys Children's Centre on 8443 5758.

EDUCATORS

Preschool

Director: Claire Evans

Teachers: Ruth Bowler
Lindsie Shipham

Early Childhood Workers: Michelle Baker

Volunteer: Michelle Preiss
(Michelle has been volunteering at Torrensville for over 35 years and helps us in many ways, including organising our washing roster. She is a valued member of our Preschool community)

Occasional Care

Early Childhood Worker Level 2: Megan Harris

Early Childhood Worker Level 1: Diane Napolitano

STARTING PRESCHOOL

How to Enrol

Children are eligible to one year of Preschool in the year before they start School. Children must have turned 4 before May 1st to be eligible to start at the beginning of the year. Children who turn 4 between 1st May and 31st October may begin Preschool in term 3.

The first step to enrolling at Torrensville Preschool is to complete a registration of interest form. This form gives us contact information for your family and important information about your child that will help us to plan for his/her transition into the Preschool. At this time, you can make an appointment to come and see the Preschool and meet the Director if you wish to.

For families who are starting at the beginning of the year: At the beginning of August, families in our catchment zone will be sent a letter asking them to confirm their enrolment request for the following year. If spaces allow, families out of our catchment area will be sent a confirmation request letter at the beginning of September. At this time you will be given information

about a transition visit for your child and family, which will be held in term 4.

Your child's Preschool year formally starts at the beginning of term 1. For the first week of term 1, Preschool will finish at 12.30pm.

Learning Framework

Educators plan a program using the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF). The EYLF describes 5 outcomes for learning. They are:

1. Children have a strong sense of identity.
2. Children are connected and contribute to their world.
3. Children have 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. In a play-based program children participate in both child - initiated and teacher initiated experiences across a range of learning areas that enable them to develop language, social skills, fine and gross motor skills and creativity. Children are also involved in small and large group times related to the current teaching focus.

The program is sent to parents every fortnight through our Class Dojo app and is also on display in our program and reflection book. If you have any questions about the curriculum or your child's learning, please speak to one of the Educators.

Excursions and Special Events

In 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, Eid, Christmas, Easter and the Lunar New Year. We are interested to know of events or celebrations that are important to your family, so that we can include them in our program.

Where relevant we may have visitors to the Centre who have something to share that is relevant to our program or we may take the children on an excursion out of the Centre. Traditionally we attend a performance by the Patch Theatre in August each year.

We take the children to the School library each week and we may take them on walks around the local area.

Parent permission is required for excursions.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

We believe that each child is unique and we try to get to know each child on a personal level as quickly as possible. This helps us to understand their strengths and interests and to build on this within the program. Part of this process is a parent interview during term 2, where parents make a time to talk with a teacher about their child.

During your child's time at Preschool, Educators collate a folder of your child's work and photographs of them involved in the program. We will

also, from time to time, place photos of the children's day on our Class Dojo app.

A Statement of Learning is written for each child at the end of the year. The Statement details information about their learning at Preschool, their strengths and interests as well as areas the Educators have been supporting. With your permission a copy is forwarded to your child's School and a copy is included in their folder for your family to keep.

COSTS

The Centre receives Government funding to cover salaries and some running costs. We rely on parent fees and fundraising to cover the rest. Preschool fees are set in consultation with Governing Council and reviewed annually. These preschool contribution charges help cover the costs of running a government funded preschool education program over the course of a year.

Invoices are distributed at the beginning of each term and payment can be made by cash, cheques or EFT. We do not have credit card facilities. Child Care Benefit and Concession Cards do not apply to Preschool fees. Families who have difficulty paying should speak to the Director in confidence. There may from time to time be additional voluntary costs for excursions, special events or Preschool photos.

The Governing Council will organise fundraising events throughout the year. Your support is appreciated.

POLICIES

The Centre has a range of required Policies and this information is available to parents in the Policy Folder at the Centre and on our website. Policies in the folder include:

- Food and allergy awareness policy.
- Sun smart policy.
- Toileting and changing children procedure
- Water policy
- Behaviour, interactions and guidance code.
- Priority of access policy.
- Fees policy.
- Social media policy
- Rest sleep policy
- Excursion policy
- Medication policy
- Staying safe: drop off and pick up policy
- Parent Complaints and concerns.
- Safe transportation policy

Illness

Should children develop a contagious condition we ask that you inform the Centre as soon as possible.

If a child or family member tests positive for Covid-19 all people who live in that household must quarantine for 7 days (14 if the household cannot separate). If a child has symptoms they must not attend Preschool and get tested as soon as possible.

Some more common illnesses that we need to know about include chickenpox, conjunctivitis, hand, foot and mouth disease, cold sores,

school sores, measles, mumps, ringworm, rubella, salmonella and whooping cough.

Children with contagious illnesses (e.g. colds, flu, gastric illness, bronchitis and the conditions listed above) should be excluded from Preschool until they are no longer contagious. Educators or your doctor can tell you when your child can return to Preschool. Children who have been vomiting or have had diarrhea should not return to Preschool until they are symptom free for 24 hours.

If your child is ill, please do not send them to Preschool, we do not have the facilities or staffing to care for sick children. Should your child become ill at Preschool, you or your nominated emergency contact will be called to collect your child.

First Aid

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 staff will contact parents, so that you can consult your doctor.

In the case of an emergency an ambulance will be called, and the child may be taken to the nearest Hospital accompanied by an Educator.

Parents will be contacted as soon as possible.

Staying Safe

Each day your child attends Preschool, please sign your child in and out using the sign in sheets available on the veranda. As staff "duty of care" does not start until the Preschool session begins at 8.30 a.m., we must ask that you **do not** leave your child until then.

Should you arrive after the session has begun, please speak to a staff member, so that we know that your child has arrived.

If you need to pick up your child early, you need to tell a staff member that you are taking your child and remember to sign out.

Please be prompt when collecting children at the end of the day. The finishing time is 3pm. Should someone other than the usual carers be collecting your child, please write this in the diary located next to the sign in sheet. If there are any last minute changes to pick up arrangements, please phone the Centre.

We understand that there may be times when you are running late – please phone us if you can, as children can become distressed if parents are late.

Please be aware of other children when opening gates and ensure that only the children in your care are exiting with you.

Your child will gain most from their Preschool experience if their attendance is regular. If your child is absent for any reason, please give us a call to let us know. We have an answering machine, so you can call and leave a message at any time.

Please do not park in the disabled car park unless you have a disability parking permit or in the no parking space in front of the Preschool access gates.

Birthdays

We celebrate children's Birthdays by singing happy birthday and blowing out candles on a pretend cake. Please do not bring a birthday cake or other treats to share, due to allergies and health and hygiene concerns.

Permissions

On your enrolment form you are asked to give a number of permissions. They are:

- **Photo Permission:** This permission allows us to photograph your child during activities, to display around the Centre, to use in newsletters and to put in their folders. We will not use these photographs for any other purpose including our website and Class Dojo app, without a DFE Talent release form being signed by you.
- **Short Local Walks Permission:** This permission allows us to take your child on occasional local walks (i.e. around the block) or more frequently to Torrensville Primary School. We visit the school often, mostly to use the library and the oval.

Should we plan a longer excursion, a separate consent form will be required from you. We will ask for volunteer parents to assist us on excursions. It is a requirement that staff undertake a risk assessment when planning for excursions.

Transition to School

Enrolment at the School of your choice is the responsibility of parents (including enrolment to Torrensville Primary). We recommend that you enrol your child at Primary School as soon as possible.

Your School will contact you to organise transition visits in term 4. Often schools will have a teacher visit the Preschool prior to the visits, to meet the child and to talk to Preschool Educators.

Educators from the Preschool will attend some of the transition visits to Torrensville Primary School with the children who are enrolled there. With your permission, a copy of your child's Statement of Learning will be forwarded to your child's next teacher.

THE PRESCHOOL DAY

How to Prepare Your Child for Preschool:

There are many ways that you, as parents, can support your child's transition to Preschool. Each child will handle this phase differently, depending on their personality and previous experiences. Most will make the transition easily, but for some it may take a little longer. Educators will work with you through this process; please do not hesitate to talk to us if you have concerns about your child.

Some things you can do include:

- Make sure your child knows that he/she will soon be going to Preschool.
- Talk positively about Preschool.
- Go past the Preschool regularly and point out the Preschool building, walk up and have a look through the fence.
- As much as possible, make sure your child can manage toileting on their own.
- Practice opening and closing their bag and lunch box. You could have a practice 'snack' and 'lunch' at home, to help them learn independence with these tasks.
- Practice putting on and taking off their shoes.
- Help them to learn to recognise their own name, especially where it is written on their belongings.
- Make sure that they know that they can find their spare clothes in their bag in case of a toilet accident.

What to do for the first day:

- Talk to your child about what is likely to happen during the day.
- Talk about drink, snack, and lunch times. Make sure they know what their snack box, lunchbox and drink bottle look like.

- Make sure your child knows where the toilet is, how to get a drink, where their bag and belongings are kept. Have them hang up their own bag.
- Try to help your child find a friend in the Preschool.
- Make sure your child knows who will pick them up.
- Don't be late for pick-up, especially in the first couple of weeks.

The Preschool Day

On arrival, help your child to hang up their bag. Sign in, check the noticeboard and notice pocket. You may wish to look at the program journal and displays with your child. If you arrive before Preschool starting time, you need to stay with your child on the veranda or in the playground. When the Preschool session begins, the doors are opened and you can then help your child to choose an activity. You are welcome to stay as long as you wish with your child, just remember to say goodbye before you leave. This is also a good time to speak to an Educator should you need to.

Children are engaged in inside and outside activities until around 9:30 a.m. They are then called to the mat for an activity. On some days we divide into small groups for a literacy or numeracy activity. At the conclusion of mat time we wash hands and eat snacks, then resume our inside or outside activities. Children mostly choose where they would like to play during this time.

At 11.45am the children are again called to the mat. We have another whole group activity, the children then wash hands and eat lunch sitting at tables. One day per week we visit the library at the School. This day is dependent on availability of the school facilities and may change from year to year.

At 2.30pm we pack up all activities, children come back to the mat at 2.45pm for a singing or group game, before being dismissed individually to parents or carers at 3pm.

Please make sure you sign out before you leave and that you have all belongings. Ask your child if he/she have any work that they would like to take home.

Leaving Your Child

You are welcome to stay with your child until they are settled for the day. When it is time to go, be sure to say goodbye. It is important that you never go without saying goodbye, as your child may become distressed. From time to time some children become upset when you leave. If you are having difficulty with separation and you are unsure, please speak to a staff member.

Children who are upset and clinging to their parents most often settle very quickly when they are left, as they are able to be distracted from being upset and engage in an activity.

If your child does not settle once you leave, staff will call you.

WHAT TO BRING

Developing confidence and independence, especially with self-care is very important for children's feeling of well-being and there are many ways that we can help children to do this. Please make sure all belongings are clearly named, preferably on the outside. Not only does this help us all to keep track of belongings, it helps us to help your child to be independent in caring for their things and to recognise their name.

We have a lost property box, please check it regularly.

Children should wear clothing that is comfortable and that they can manage themselves. Although we provide smocks for messy activities, they may still get dirty, so do not send them in their best clothes. Children should wear shoes that allow them to run and climb safely – thongs/flip flops, gumboots and smooth soled shoes are not suitable. Clothing with our Preschool logo is not compulsory, however if you wish to order these, please visit www.eduthreads.com.au to order from our wide range of items.

WE ARE A NUT-AWARE CENTRE – NO NUTS OR NUT-BASED FOODS

Children need to bring these items to Preschool each day:

1. Backpack/bag (named on the outside).
2. Change of clothes.
3. Drink bottle – WATER ONLY.
4. Snack
5. Lunch – in a separate insulated pack
6. Hat – named.

Morning Snack

Children eat their snack all together. We encourage healthy eating and would prefer if children ate only fruit or vegetables for snack.

Snacks are kept in your child's backpack.

Lunch

We do not have the facilities to refrigerate lunches, so please pack them in an insulated bag with an icepack.

Children may bring any healthy food that they can manage themselves and does not have to be heated up. We suggest a sandwich, wrap, salad, roti or rice, with a piece of fruit or cheese, dip and savoury biscuits. Children sit at tables to eat lunch, so it is ok to send yoghurt. We encourage nude food so please do not include processed packaged foods, including sweets, chips or sugary snacks.

Drinks

Please send a drink bottle with water only. We also supply water and clean cups for children should they need to use them.

Water bottles are kept in children's backpacks.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

The Governing Council

The Governing Council is a group of interested parents responsible for working with the Director on the running of the Preschool, including financial management, physical resources, fundraising and policy. Whilst this may sound like an onerous task, it is in fact an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

The Governing Council meet twice per term, at a time determined by the group. It's a great opportunity to hear about the Preschool and to get involved.

An Annual General Meeting is held each February and all parents are invited to attend.

Communication

Each child has a notice pocket, located either side of the main door, please check it regularly. Although we send most of our correspondence via email, or Class Dojo, you may from time to time receive curriculum information and notices of interest for you to take home via name pockets.

An invitation will be sent out to all parents to download our Class Dojo app where you will find information and photographs on Preschool activities and events.

Each child has a folder containing photographs and work samples that builds over the course of the year. Parents are invited to have a look at the folder at any time.

During term 2 we will invite parents to book an interview with one of the Educators. At the interview you can share information about your child, give us any feedback and discuss your child's transition to Preschool.

You are, of course, welcome to make an appointment at any time during the year should you wish to discuss your child's progress.

Should any of the details on your child's enrolment form change during the year, please update them with us immediately, particularly addresses, phone number, emergency contacts, health and custody details.

Parent Involvement

Parents are encouraged to be involved in the life of the Preschool in a range of ways. You may like to be on the Governing Council or to help with fundraising, gardening or maintenance of the Centre. You may be willing to share your culture or skills with us; tell us if you play an instrument, paint, draw, love to cook or garden, or if you can help us celebrate a special event.

We rely on parent help to take washing home and may ask for volunteers for odd jobs throughout the year.

Keep an eye on the parent notice board; we often ask for help with specific tasks, you or someone in your family might be able to help with.

Useful Things to Bring from Home

Should our 'making table' need replenishing, we will ask families to bring along items i.e. Paper, cardboard, magazines, egg cartons, buttons, wool, string, boxes, ice-cream containers, etc.

Have you been on a special outing or holiday? Encourage your child to share their experience with us. They might like to bring some photographs or a drawing of where they have been and what they have done.

During term one, children will be asked to bring in an 'All about me' page, where we ask them to tell us about themselves and their families. These pages may come back with drawing or pictures, writing, stickers, decorations or photos. The children will then share their special information page with others at the centre and it will be placed in our Book about me. This book is available to all children to revisit and discuss and share with their friends throughout the year.

Torrensville Preschool Centre

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