

# Vale Park Preschool

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## Statement of philosophy

### National Quality Standard Area 5 | Relationships with children

Relationships with children are responsive, respectful and promote children's sense of security and belonging.

### Purpose

This statement of philosophy reflects the beliefs and values of those associated with our service. Together with the Approved Learning Framework, it assists educators in considering our approach to learning, development, and wellbeing. It also underpins policies and procedures, and guides all aspects of our operations and practices.

Information from [QUALITY AREA 7: REVIEWING YOUR SERVICE PHILOSOPHY](#)

**LINKS TO THE NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD 7.1.1 Service philosophy and purpose** | A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of the service's operations. A written statement of philosophy outlines the purpose and principles under which the service operates. It should also reflect the guiding principles of the National Quality Framework (section 3(3) of the National Law), and the Approved Learning Frameworks (Element 1.1.1).

**WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO REVIEW YOUR PHILOSOPHY?** | Regularly reviewing the philosophy ensures it meets the needs of the service and all current stakeholders. With changes in children and families at the service, as well as educators, leadership, and management, it is essential that the philosophy remains a 'living' document. A review provides the opportunity to stop, reflect, and rethink about 'what we do and why we do it'. It also enables any new developments and opportunities to be considered, such as new research to inform practice, changes in legislation, professional development opportunities, changes to policies and procedures, and conversations between educators, children, and families

**WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED?** | All those involved in the service should have a voice in the development and review of the statement of philosophy. When the educational leader, nominated supervisor, co-ordinators and educators all contribute to the review of the statement of philosophy, they will have a better understanding of how the philosophy underpins everyday practices and decision-making. Also, their involvement creates ownership – it encourages commitment and willingness to put the philosophy into practice. Encouraging families, children, educators, and key community stakeholders to be meaningfully involved may also be used to demonstrate how Quality Area 6 of the NQS is met. Inviting children to be involved and incorporating their views will show how their ideas are respected and valued, further developing their sense of agency (QA1).



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of South Australia

Department for Education

**THE REVISION PROCESS** | The process for revising the statement of philosophy can include the following steps:

1. If relevant, consider the vision of the larger organisation your service is a part of.
2. Critically reflect on the existing philosophy (if you have one in place). Is it still relevant?
3. Identify and document the values and beliefs of all those involved in the service (including children, families, educators, staff, management, and relevant community representatives).
4. Develop a shared vision. Reflect on how this might be achieved.
5. Decide what it should say and how it should look.
6. Draft the philosophy and obtain further input and feedback from those involved in the service.
7. Set timeframes for the next review.
8. Display the philosophy.

For steps 2, 3 and 4, the following table may be useful to evoke reflection and discussion:

WHY? Philosophy	HOW? Practice	WHAT? Principles
Why do you do what you do? Who is it benefitting? Why is it important?	How does your philosophy shape and guide the operation of the service? What practices are embedded in the service, that promote the service's values and beliefs? How do you involve children in the process of reviewing the philosophy?	What is achieved? What are the outcomes for children, families, educators, and the community?

**PRINCIPLES/OUTCOMES** | When looking at principles/outcomes for your statement of philosophy, you may wish to consider the following:

- > The rights and best interests of the child underpin all practice. Their safety, health and wellbeing are paramount. Each is respected without discrimination or bias and has a voice.
- > Children are viewed as successful, competent, and capable learners who are given opportunities to construct their own understandings, contribute to the learning of others, and participate in decisions that affect them.
- > Equity, inclusion, and diversity are embedded in practice. Children are given every opportunity to succeed, and their diverse circumstances, cultural background and abilities are respected and valued
- > Collaborative partnerships in the community are developed and maintained.
- > Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are acknowledged, respected, and valued.
- > The child in the context of their family is valued. Trusting, supportive relationships, and collaborative partnerships are developed and maintained with families.
- > Management, team members and educators are dedicated to quality outcomes for children. They are professional, committed to lifelong learning, skilled, knowledgeable, reflective, and collaborative.
- > Continuous improvement, best practice and quality outcomes underpin practice. Current research, theories and understandings are considered and applied in the context of the uniqueness of the service, through a process of ongoing critical reflection.
- > Children are supported to become environmentally responsible which is embedded in practice, program, and policies.

It may also be helpful to refer to the:

- > service's Quality Improvement Plan
- > Guiding Principles of the National Quality Framework
- > Early Childhood Australia's Code of Ethics

**ASSESSMENT AND RATING** | During the assessment and rating visit the authorised officer may:

- > discuss how the service's philosophy statement guides pedagogy and curriculum decisions
- > observe the values stated in the service philosophy being reflected in the service's environment, policies, and procedures
- > sight documentation relating to the service's review of its statement of philosophy (such as staff meeting minutes, emails to families etc)
- > sight evidence that the service's statement of philosophy is included in the induction process for all team members and in the enrolment and orientation process for families

## > Vale Park Preschool Statement of Philosophy

The foundation for lifelong learning is established in the early years of a child's life. We value children as curious, independent, capable, and competent learners who question and investigate their world while developing their learning identity.

Our learning environment enables children to co-construct their learning through involvement in authentic experiences embracing the cultures, values and interests of our families, local communities and Aboriginal and Torrens Strait Islander People.

The Early Years Learning Framework guides our practice into which we incorporate the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum, Indicators of Preschool Literacy/Numeracy as well as Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM). The curriculum is implemented through intentional teaching moments and play based experiences in conjunction with an inquiry approach. The planning cycle informs the curriculum through regular collaborative reflection and analysis of children's engagement, interests, dispositions and abilities. Family and child input is sought and valued as part of this process.

We seek to facilitate an environment where children:

- Feel a strong sense of self and cultural identity.
- Are valued, confident and feel a sense of belonging.
- Develop positive and respectful relationships with their peers, educators, and the environment.
- Take responsibility for their health, physical and emotional wellbeing, and the natural world.
- Develop a range of skills and processes necessary for life including inquiry, investigation, critical thinking, persistence, and resilience which includes risk taking.
- Communicate in multiple ways for a range of purposes.

As educators at Vale Park Preschool we:

- Respect and respond to children in a caring, positive, and thoughtful manner.
- Provide a challenging and inclusive environment.
- Work in partnerships with families, the community, and relevant professionals to share knowledge and engage in collaborative decision making.
- Regularly reflect on our practice and participate in ongoing professional training and development.
- Work collaboratively embracing each other's knowledge, skills, and strengths.
- Are open to new ideas and challenges.
- Have high expectations for ourselves and the children.

Vision statement

Children are curious, independent, and knowledgeable learners who investigate their world. Authentic relationships nurture children's sense of belonging and combined with a high-quality learning environment, enables children to deeply engage in play-based experiences. This strengthens their dispositions for learning which extends their understanding of themselves and their world.

Mission Statement

Educators at Vale Park Preschool are committed to enhancing children's understanding of the world around them and their sense of self and learning identity, so that they can become compassionate, reflective, and fulfilled individuals.

*Date of your last philosophy review. Dec 2022*

## Supporting information

Any links required, etc.

## Approvals

Status: Draft

Version: 0.1

Approved by: Vicki Angel | Director, Vale Park Preschool

Approved by: Name | Governing Council, Vale Park Preschool

Approval date: 21 February 2023

Next review date: 21 February 2026 (must be 3 years from the approved date)

## Revision record

(List the revision record in order of most recent updates at the top)

Version: 1.0

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Amendment(s): document creation.