



Welcome

We would like to welcome you and your child to our kindergarten. We are pleased that you have chosen Akuna Kindergarten for your child and we look forward to your family's involvement with our centre throughout the year. We have included, in this booklet, some basic information about our centre. Please don't hesitate to ask staff if you have any queries and/or suggestions.

The kindergarten was opened in 1982 and the building extended, due to the fundraising of the hard working staff and parents at the time in 1990, 2006 & 2015. Over the past ten years we have made significant improvements to both the outdoor and indoor centre facilities with the support and hard fundraising of parents and we will continue to do so in the future.

Please use the car park provided behind the kindergarten. The city council created the car park at considerable expense in order to ensure the safety of all children.

Our staff team currently comprises of a Director and Teachers with qualifications in Early Childhood education, Early Childhood Workers and Preschool Support Workers. We all have a strong commitment to social justice and equal opportunity principles.

Preschool staffing is determined by the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD). Children's enrolment figures are used to determine the level of staffing necessary to maintain the correct adult to child ratio, staffing changes yearly so the staff below will not necessarily be the same as below. To ensure that our staffing levels are maintained, it is important that all children attend regularly.

The staff team at Akuna Kindergarten are:

Director: Brooke Winterfield

Teachers: Lauren Manser & Tiana Pietrafesa

Early Childhood Workers (ECW):

Tracey Hinton
Haidee Allen
Emma Martin
Kelly Coutts
Kacey Farmilo
Kim Perryman
Candy Duckworth

From time to time we also have the part time services of Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and a Child Health Nurse. Students from secondary schools also attend for work experience and on occasions we also have volunteers. Staff are on-duty at the kindergarten from Monday to Friday, 8.30am until 4.00pm.

Preliminary Information

Intakes

Children are entitled to access four terms of preschool in the year before they start school as follows:

- If a child turns four years of age **before** 1 May, they may start preschool in Term 1 in that year
- If a child turns four years of age **on or after** 1 May, they are eligible to start preschool from the beginning of Term 1 in the following year

Whilst it helps us if you have already decided upon which school your child will attend, it is not essential. Children with identified special needs may be accepted into kindergarten earlier and/or be offered extra time at kindergarten, if it is considered this will benefit the child educationally. Session places are dependent on keeping with in centre capacity and staff ratios.

Waiting lists and enrolments

Preliminary enrolments are accepted for children from birth. As our numbers are high we can often have waiting lists for enrolments, as such we recommend parents pre-enroll children well in advance and take note of our priority of access policy.

Should you pre-enroll and then move, or decide not to attend this centre, please notify us as soon as possible so that the place reserved for your child can be offered to another family.

Sessional preschool

State government policy provides, for children aged four years, attendance of 15 hours of preschool per week for four terms prior to their entry to school.

Early admission is available (where resources permit) for children with additional needs. Entry is conditional on availability of places. Early entry to preschool in this category may be considered for children with special rights such as disability, developmental delay, gifted development or children who are at risk of learning and developmental delay because of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds or family circumstances.

Early entry is decided on a case by case basis. Directors / principals may negotiate early enrolment when:

- additional time at preschool is likely to significantly improve a child's learning and developmental outcomes
- the preschool has the capacity within its current resources (staffing and assigned physical capacity)
- consultation has occurred between the director/principal, centre staff, parents and where applicable, support personnel.

Proof of Age Requirements:

At the time of enrolling in preschool, parents/guardians are required to provide proof of their child's birth age. The following documents will be accepted:

- passport
- birth certificate
- Official Centrelink documentation stating the child's name and birth date.

Playgroup

Akuna Playgroup provides a fantastic opportunity for you and your child/ren to become familiar with the kindergarten before starting. Our playgroup is run by staff and parents working together to create a fun, sociable and challenging environment for children from birth to 5 years and their families. Our routines promote children's independence and organisation and aid in developing skills for life. They are also based on the knowledge of how children learn best and encourage you to work with your child to support their development in a variety of areas.

Playgroup runs on **Friday mornings from 9.30am until 11.00am** and is open to all children (0 years to school age) accompanied by a parent or guardian. Cost is \$3.00 per week per family, as well as an annual insurance fee payable to the Playgroup Association. Staff will be available to assist you upon arrival with any inquires.



Fees & Sessions



At Akuna Kindergarten, children's access to preschool is currently provided over a two week cycle totalling 30 hours per fortnight (see options below).

We can offer the following two options for access to preschool at Akuna Kindergarten.

Option 1 –

Each week - Monday / Wednesday 9.00am – 3.00pm

Additional session 9.00am – 3.00pm once a fortnight on a Tuesday or Thursday or Friday (McPark children preferred)

Option 2 –

Each week - Tuesday / Thursday 9.00am – 3.00pm

Additional session 9.00am – 3.00pm once a fortnight on a Monday or Wednesday or Friday (McPark children preferred)

Every effort will be made to establish attendance schedules to suit individual family needs. However, preferred choices may not always be possible since group sizes need to remain inside the centre's capacity limits.

Fees

The Department for Education and Child Development pay staff salaries and the preschool receives a small operating grant (determined by child attendances) from the state government. However, we rely heavily on the payment of termly fees and fundraising to help with the day to day expenses such as maintenance, cleaning, repairs to equipment, curriculum materials (eg books and toys) and special materials for activities (such as art and craft).

The level of kindergarten fees is set annually by the Governing Council. At the beginning of each term, an invoice detailing the total amount due for the term will be placed in your child's note pocket. Payment methods include bank transfer, credit card, Centre pay, cheque and cash payments.

Bank Transfer Details -

Account Name: Akuna Kindergarten **BSB:** 065 504 **Account Number:** 00902940
REFERENCE – Your child's name

Money and a filled-out payment slip should be placed in the clear plastic bags provided and placed in the fee box which is in the cupboard near the office. The centre Treasurer will receipt all money and receipts will be placed inside your child's note pocket. Fees paid in whole during the child's first term will receive a 5% discount.

We appreciate that from time to time, families experience financial difficulties. Please be assured that no child will be excluded from a program for financial reasons. There are many ways that we can support families. Please do not hesitate to talk to the staff if you are experiencing any difficulties in meeting the cost of fees.

Sessional preschool fees are currently:

\$120.00 per term or discount reducing fees to \$460.00 per year if full year is paid in Term 1. A reduction in fees is not available for families who choose not to access their entitled 15 hours.

What to Bring



When starting full time kindy your child needs to bring.....

1. **A hat (Broadbrim or legionnaire style).** Our preschool is a sun smart centre and children are required to wear hats when outside (If the UV is over 3). The centre has logood hats for sale for \$10.00 each. (Please see staff to purchase) **Please name all clothes and possessions**, especially shoes, socks, hats and bags.
2. **A bag.** A drawstring bag, backpack or case for children to keep their own belongings in.
3. **Fruit or vegetables** for the two health snack times each day which are separate to their lunch and left in their bag.
4. **A named drink bottle** filled with **WATER ONLY**. Please do not send cordial, fruit juice in a bottle or in a fruit box.
5. **A separate lunch** container (to be placed in the lunch basked in the kitchen) which contains some or all of the following: sandwich, fruit, salad vegetables, cheese, yogurt, dried/savoury biscuits. Sandwiches can contain any fillings except for those containing nut products.
6. **Some spare clothes** – just in case, this is a must for all children!
7. **Library Book Bag** for borrowing kindy books each session they attend. Children will receive their book bag during their first three weeks of kindy and it can remain in their kindy bag at all times.



General Information

Settling your child into kindergarten

Some children need a lot of reassurance to settle into kindergarten, while others throw themselves whole heartedly into activities straight away. There are many individual differences. Whilst families know their child best, the teachers understand general patterns of behaviour, so between us an individual process for managing separation can be arranged.

Families are always welcome to stay at the kindergarten until they feel that their child is ready to stay without them. However, please be assured that the staff are very experienced at sensitively handling any distress that children may experience when separating from a family member for the first time. Please have confidence in us!

In the 'settling in' stage it is a good idea to leave a phone number where you can be reached, just in case! We would always ring you if your child does not settle quickly. Should your child be upset when you leave, please do not hesitate to ring the centre when you get home.

Starting Kindergarten is a big step in a child's life. It is often the first big step outside the familiar home and family environment. The child learns to:

- See themselves as an individual
- Come to know and feel secure in the care of new adults
- Become part of a group
- Make friends with children of their own age group (a very specialised skill)
- Take turns with toys and equipment
- Express their ideas and feelings
- Find out and remember where things are
- Share adult attention
- Trust other children and accept their help
- Relate to other children as the people they have the most contact with
- Be caring and supportive of other children.
- Assert their own rights and learn to negotiate in acceptable ways.
- Explore and experiment with a wide range of interesting experiences, many of which may not be familiar.
- Begin to see themselves as a part of a wider community.
- Begin to be aware of someone else's perspective

Excursions and special events

We acknowledge the importance of excursions to enhance children's learning and development. Therefore, we may organise and participate in excursions throughout the year. These excursions or special events are either significant community events or linked to aspects of the kindergarten program and are developmentally and age appropriate.

Families will be informed of these events and related details via a special newsletter, seeking consent for their child's participation. Most excursions/events do incur an additional charge but we attempt to keep costs to a minimum (part of the cost is often budgeted for by the centre so parents can afford excursions). During 2018, we implemented an excursion levy to minimise costs and provide a once off payment for the year, this will be invoiced and payable in Term 1.

Families are always welcome to participate in excursions and special events. We appreciate (and require) as many 'hands on deck' whenever we are out of the centre, as the ratio needs to be one adult to each five children. Roll calls will be carried out to account for children on leaving and arriving at the destination as well as the centre.

Sometimes we take children on short walking excursions to follow up on special interests as part of the educational program. The places we go to are any of the following: Conroe Heights Shopping Centre, around the block and through Tweed Cres, down Ramsay Ave to North Tce. Signed permission for these excursions will be obtained termly and a notice informing you of our intention to undertake a walk will be placed on the notice board in the morning.

Food and Nutrition

Healthy eating helps young children to grow strong bodies, develop normally and reach their potential for learning. Children mainly learn eating habits from their parents and other people in whose care they are. These habits learnt during childhood tend to continue into adulthood. As young children, cannot select and prepare food for themselves, the adults in the child's life become responsible for making healthy food choices for them.

Akuna Kindergarten promotes safe, healthy eating habits in line with the *Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools* and relates to the DECD wellbeing strategy. We believe in the power of "modelling" healthy eating habits to children. Our regular low salt, fat and sugar cooking experiences provide science and maths learning also. The provision of fresh drinking water is available throughout the day.

Akuna Kindergarten has the following guidelines for families for food brought from home:

SNACK TIMES - Families are encouraged to supply fruit and vegetables only at fruit time (at least 2 pieces for a full day) to:

- ✓ provide children with important minerals and vitamins
- ✓ encourage a taste for healthy foods.

LUNCH TIMES - Families are encouraged to provide healthy food and drink choices in line with the *Right Bite* strategy. Please also take note of our litter less lunches strategy which we will implement during Term 1.

- ✓ Children should bring a lunch containing some or all of the following: sandwich, fruit, salad vegetables, cheese, yogurt, dried/savoury biscuits. Sandwiches can contain any fillings except for those containing nut products. * **Peanut paste and Nutella contain nut products. Due to children with severe nut allergies, these products will not be permitted.**
- ✓ Children should have a separate container for their lunch and this is to be placed in the lunch basket in the kitchen, whilst fruit remains in their bag. We recommend a thermal bag to keep lunches fresh, particularly for meats, cheese etc. You are welcome to place lunches and dairy products in the fridge

Children gain independence by eating their own piece of fruit and making appropriate choices for snack and lunch times. This assists them in becoming independent for recess and lunch times later on at school. Please make sure that lunch boxes, bags and especially drink bottles are named.

Please avoid sending foods that are high in preservatives, colouring, sugar and fat, such as chocolate, lollies, sweet biscuits, chips, soft drinks and cordial.

****We are a Nut Free Kindergarten ****

Change of address/telephone number / emergency contacts

Please keep the centre informed of any change of address, telephone numbers or emergency contacts. This is critical in case there is an emergency and we need to contact you quickly.

Library

Each child will receive a kindy book bag to borrow books in their first term. Children are welcome to borrow books from the kindergarten's library for up to a week at a time. **Parents are encouraged to help their children to borrow library books regularly as reading at home is an important part of literacy development.** Numeracy and Literacy kits as well as persona dolls are also available. We utilise a very easy electronic borrowing system, which staff are happy to help with if you need. Children wishing to borrow books must have a library bag.

Parent Library – There is also a parent library consisting of current books and ideas related to parenting children. Books can be borrowed for up to 1 month (unless the book is very popular when the limit is for 2 weeks). These books can also be borrowed under your children's names on the electronic borrowing system.





General Information Continued...

Lost Property Basket – Please check it regularly for any clothes or lunch boxes that may be yours. It is kept outside on the lockers for easy access.

Toys – Please don't let your child bring toys to kindergarten. Sometimes it may be appropriate to bring something special to show us but then it needs to be taken home by the parent and not to be left at kindergarten.

Children's clothing –

It is recommended that children wear clothes that allow them to be actively involved in all aspects of the kindergarten program. Smocks are provided but are not always sufficient protections for messy activities. Clothing and shoes, which enable children to play safely and go to the toilet independently, are most suitable.

Printed windcheaters with the kindergarten logo are available and offer a good alternative. This involves buying or making a garment in whatever colour or style you choose (not white), naming it and bringing it to kindergarten with \$8.00 in an envelope (to pay the printer) by your full day visit in Term 4.

Girls are discouraged from wearing long dresses. They are unsafe when climbing and inhibit involvement in a range of activities. During the summer months, we make maximum use of water play in the sandpit. Children do get wet! Please be prepared for your child to be an active participant in this play.

Shoes / Footwear – Please provide sandals, sneakers or shoes that provide good support for your child's feet and will not slip off and leave feet unprotected. Platform soles are inappropriate, unsafe and inhibit free movement. Below is information and examples from Limestone Coast Podiatry, of children's footwear that is appropriate and unsuitable for use at kindergarten. Please read the following information.



The early years of a child's life are the most important in the development of feet. Initially, it is better for babies and toddlers to walk barefoot or in soft soled shoes. When toddlers and children need to wear shoes, it is mainly to provide protection from injury or cold. Shoes need to allow freedom and mobility, and it is important that shoes are appropriate for the activity the child is undertaking. A well-fitted leather shoe, with an enclosed heel and a fastening on the top of the foot (i.e. buckle, laces or Velcro), is more functional. Shoes with adjustable fastenings are superior to elastic sided boots as the elastic tends to stretch very quickly and provide limited support.



Shoes that are designed for casual / beach wear, or rubber boots designed for wet weather activities, are not appropriate for everyday use. The shoes displayed above can be a tripping hazard, and are not designed to be used for long periods or for activities such as climbing or running. Because these shoes are unstable, tendons and joints do not function correctly. This can potentially lead to long term problems in certain foot types.

Absence

Infections can be prevented from spreading if children are kept at home when they are unwell. If your child is unable to participate in all aspects of the kindergarten program (that is, indoor and outdoor activities) please keep him/ her at home. If your child will be absent from kindergarten, please let a staff member know on 87259146. Please let us know if your child is suffering from any condition that is infectious. **Please do not bring an unwell child to kindergarten because s/he insists on coming.** There are always children in the centre who may be susceptible to the simplest illness that you may unwittingly be exposing to him/her.

Birthdays

We routinely celebrate all children's birthdays by getting a playdough cake complete with candles and singing happy birthday. Each child receives a sticker on their birthday. **Due to healthy eating regulations families are asked not to bring cakes etc. to share with other children in the group, alternatively you may wish to think of a healthy alternative such as a fruit platter etc.**

One of the important guiding principles of Akuna Kindergarten is routinely reflected in all our interactions with children and that children are expected to adopt while at this kindergarten is the importance of active inclusion and sharing good times.

If your child is going to have a birthday party please respect the feelings of ALL the children by discreetly putting the invitation, in an envelope in the relevant child's pocket to be taken home and opened with their family.

Communication and Parent Participation



Family participation

We are committed to working in partnership with families and you are encouraged and welcome to participate in every aspect of kindergarten life. We believe families are important to children for many reasons; each child comes from within an individual and unique family group. We share with families the responsibility of the care and education of their young children, as we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Your child will benefit from your interest and participation and by talking and working together, parents and teachers can help each other to appreciate each child's individual needs, characteristics and interests.

As a busy centre we are always grateful for any **voluntary help** that you can provide. Possibilities for help include reading stories to children, assisting with small group activities, gardening, preparing materials and resources, cleaning up and repairing equipment.

Rosters

There are two rosters that are in use at the kindergarten.

1. **Laundry Roster** – involves each family only once during the year that the child is at kindergarten. A roster will be put in your child's pocket at the beginning of the term that you are listed.
2. **End of session roster** – involves help with cleaning and tidying up. Jobs that need to be done include washing paint brushes, easels, wiping tables, sweeping the floor, doing dishes, cleaning down the hand basins in the bathroom, helping children put on their shoes and sweeping sand. Parents are asked to nominate which day of the week suits them best and a roster is drawn up. It is usually a once or twice a term commitment.

Please help, as it makes such a difference to the smooth functioning of the kindergarten and is hugely appreciated.

Communication

Staff are always available to talk with families and we hope that you will be comfortable approaching us at any time. If you have an issue or concern that you would like to discuss more privately, please let us know and we will arrange a more appropriate time to do so.

You are welcome to ring the centre at any time. However, we would ask that if you have a query that may take some time to address, you contact us outside of session times (staff are on duty from 8.30am until 4.00pm, Monday to Friday).

Sign-in sheets are just inside the centre. On arrival please encourage your child to independently write their name on the roll. If pick up and drop off arrangements are different from normal please write in the name and phone number of the person concerned. If pick up arrangements change during the day please ring and let a staff member know. Parents are asked to sign out their child on the list provided in the library next to the fee cupboard before leaving the centre at pick up time.

Newsletters are published regularly; we encourage families to nominate to receive these electronically rather than in paper copy to save the environment. These usually contain information about coming events, the kindergarten program, requests for assistance, notes about our service, samples of children's work, etc. **Note pockets** are provided for each child and these should be checked daily for notices, newsletters and receipts from the Treasurer.

See Saw Parent Sharing App -

We utilise a creative tool to capture and reflect on aspects of your child's learning – in real time. This includes sharing learning stories and photos using an app called Seesaw. Seesaw will give you a window into your child's learning at preschool, especially around our term focus of building 'confident and involved learners'. Your child will have their own learning journal, and when staff add new learning you will receive a notification to see, hear and respond to your child's learning journey. Your child's individual page is completely private -- only you have access to your child's page and all of the content is stored securely.

Seesaw will complement the face to face communication we already have when you attend the centre as well as our portfolios etc. Once both the DECD Consent form and the Seesaw consent form on the enrolment form as signed you will receive an invitation to sign up via the emails given and then you can download the Seesaw Parent app for iPhone or Android, or access your child's journal on the web.

It is important to understand that whilst parents only have access to their child's journal, photos where multiple children are tagged means any families tagged will be able to read the comments below.

Governing Council

The Governing Council consists of parents, staff and community members and is responsible for the management of the kindergarten. Parents are encouraged to join the Governing Council. Areas of discussion such as the educational program, any special events, family and community concerns are talked about as well as the usual 'business' matters like fundraising, maintenance and development of the centre building and grounds.

An Annual General Meeting is held in February every year, with nominations being called for President, Treasurer, Secretary and Committee Members. Committees usually consist of about 10 - 15 parents, caregivers or community members. They are friendly informal meetings. It is a great way to meet new people and make a contribution. Your support will be hugely appreciated by the staff as we see children's education as a team effort. Meetings are held twice a term on Mondays from 7pm in weeks 3 and 8, unless otherwise notified. Parents are always welcome.

We are keen to have your ideas and support in any capacity that you feel you are able to help.

Fundraising

The state government provides a limited amount of financial support to preschools and to ensure that materials can be purchased we have fundraisers each term. We ask families using the service provided by the kindergarten (including playgroup families) to actively participate in our fundraising activities.

Governing Council on your behalf also decides and promotes other optional opportunities termly for all families. Whilst participating in these opportunities does raise funds for our centre, they are **completely optional and there is no obligation to participate**. These optional fundraisers often meet the needs expressed by families and result in you receiving a 'product' such as t-towels, photos, books, picture plates etc.

If you wish to be involved in the discussion around centre fundraising and have your say, then we suggest you join our Governing Council. As a centre, we are working towards further re-developing the children's outdoor learning environment. All funds raised through fundraising will help make this a possibility.

Photos

Photos are an important part of documentation we keep. Action photos of the children involved in groups enjoying a wide variety of experiences are routinely taken.

Please be aware that this means their photo may appear in other children's folders, be used with other media like newspaper and occasionally be displayed in other venues, displayed on the wall and/or be shown on electronic media.

Please alert staff if you are uncomfortable with any of these options.



Curriculum & Philosophy

Akuna Kindergarten offers children an exciting invitation to explore, discover, create and learn in a safe and challenging environment. Children actively engage in authentic, hands-on play experiences and our outdoor environment and surrounds provides opportunities for children to connect with nature on a regular basis. Our aim is to provide a curriculum that is play based, child-centred and emergent, based on children's individual strengths and interests and guided by 'Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. We are committed to empowering children and families to pursue their life journey with confidence, through the implementation of our values in all activities associated with the kindergarten.

Our kindergarten is influenced by principles underpinning the *Reggio Emilia* approach to education which values children as capable, curious learners. We place importance on providing opportunities for children to **make choices** and **direct their own learning**.

Children are encouraged to use higher order thinking skills and learning processes such as **problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, and investigation**. Children participate in **collaborative learning projects** in small groups and educators extend children's interests and knowledge around current projects.

We plan our program weekly using: **observations** we have made on particular children, our **knowledge** of child development, **interests** that we have observed from the children that are able to be followed up, **topics** that will extend children's thinking and ideas and the **Early Years Learning framework** (EYLF) that supports the following:

Belonging, Being, Becoming—the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF), provides the basis for our curriculum development based on extending and enriching children's learning. Fundamental to the Framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by *belonging, being and becoming*.

Belonging - Acknowledges children's interdependence with others and the basis of relationships in defining identities. Belonging is central to being and becoming in that it shapes who children are and who they can become.

Being - Recognises the significance of the here and now in children's lives. It is about the present and them knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life's joys and complexities and meeting challenges in everyday life.

Becoming - Reflects the process of children's identities, knowledge, understandings, capacities, skills and relationships changing during childhood. They are shaped by many different events and circumstances.

The Learning Outcomes broadly describe the development of children's learning.

These outcomes are:

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

The daily routine allows for **long uninterrupted periods of play** for children to explore, discover, create and imagine. Planned **large and small group sessions** occur during the day and are rich in literacy, mathematics, social skills, Child Protection Curriculum, and music and movement activities. Play is an essential aspect of learning for young children and planning for play is central to the development of a curriculum that integrates all areas of a child's development.

Our philosophy is based on the view of the child as a competent and capable learner who comes to us from their family with a wealth of knowledge, experiences and ideas. We acknowledge the family as the child's first educator and strive to develop respectful and open two-way relationships. We respect and value the diversity and uniqueness of our families and welcome their participation and input in our programme.

Our connections with the wider community give children the opportunity to create new understandings, develop their sense of belonging and citizenship and take their place within the wider South Australian and global community.

Our beliefs become a shared commitment between families, children and educators. By working together with open communication, respect and understanding, and by sharing ideas and striving for continued improvement and excellence, all parties will reap the benefits.

We believe learning develops from the many experiences that an individual had in their life, it is a life long process and each child learns at their own rate and style. We support parents in the care and education of their children through our many services, support services, community agencies and access to resources.

Children at Akuna Kindergarten have the opportunity to participate in taking **supervised risks**, such as climbing trees, cooking on campfires and going on community walks. We believe that through these experiences children are able to learn how to assess risk for themselves as well as **build confidence** and self-awareness.

At Akuna Kindergarten we value children's:

Curiosity and inquiry
Co-operation with others
Interdependence
Self motivation
Action learning
Decision making
Exploration
Questioning
Persistence
Wonder
Thinking
Optimism
Creativity
Independence
Problem Solving
Prior experiences
Experimentation
Interest in other people
Sense of justice and fair play

Assessment & Reporting

We recognise that learning is a life long process and that parents are children's primary educators and play a significant role in children's learning. Our role is to work in partnerships with parents to support you in the care and education of your children. Our kindergarten program is based on providing for the individual strengths, needs and interests of children. Assessment and Reporting is an integral part of this process in providing for the individual development of each child.

We document children's skills, interest, knowledge, development and progress. These include drawings or copies of things that children have made, photos, learning stories, observations of the areas of interest and skills that we observe as well as friendships and communication experiences. Records of some special group activities are also included and we utilise Floorbooks to document our small group inquiry projects. The material is collated and put into a folder. ***This means that not everything the child produces at kindergarten will be able to be taken home on the day.***

The children's folders are accessible at anytime to parents and children. Look for your child's name on the spine of a folder. We ask you to respect confidentiality and only access your child's file. Staff put the terms work into the folders at the end of the second to last week each term so they may be borrowed overnight during that last week to share with other family members at home.

Work the child has done during the week is filed and can be easily accessed if you ask for it. It is impractical and time consuming for staff to put work in the folders until it is all ready for compilation.

The folders are working documents that we use in our planning and constitute an important record of the child's progress made over the year they are at kindergarten. It is also a record of the experiences they were part of during the kindergarten education.

As they leave the centre the folders are given to the child to keep and enjoy with their family.

A termly statement of learning is written at the end of each term. This is combined into one document at the end of the year summarising your child's time in kindergarten. Parents receive a copy and another is sent to the school that the child will be attending.





Policy Summaries

Full copies of all centre policies are available for viewing on our website, please talk to Brooke if you wish to seek clarification or have any trouble viewing these.

Arrival and Departure Policy

Arrival – Parents are expected to bring children inside the building and help them to get organised for their session:- i.e. children put bags in lockers, sign in and organise drink bottles and lunch. They then come into the building with parent/carer and parents help place on name tag. Parents are asked to make contact with a staff member. This can be done in an informal way such as 'Hello', 'Good Morning' etc. They are asked to NOT leave children at the gates to make their own way into the building. This is an UNSAFE PRACTICE.

Dismissal - The children will be dismissed **individually** from the mat by **name**. Parents are asked to be patient as it is important that children leave the centre safely. All children are encouraged to say 'Goodbye' to the dismissing teacher. It is important parents supervise their child carefully at this busy time. The gates open and shut continuously until the last family leaves. The car park and road is also very busy. **Do not allow children other than your own out the gate.**

Parents responsibilities if someone else is collecting their child

- Be very clear to your child about who is to collect them from Kindy.
- Let staff know of these arrangements (either on the day or by phone).
- Record information on the **sign in sheet**, next to your child's name. If unsure, ask staff for help. We will need a contact phone number for this person, please ensure they are one of your emergency contacts on the enrolment form.

PLEASE BE PUNCTUAL - Should an emergency arise, **please telephone so that staff can reassure your child** – late collection can be stressful and upsetting for a child. If necessary arrange for another parent/friend to collect your child.

Parents are asked to respect the needs of the staff by not bringing children early or collecting them late. In the morning we need time and space to ensure the environment is safe and prepare for sessions. At the end of Kindy we need time to complete our work for the day, exchange information and have staff meetings etc.

Behaviour Management

At Akuna Kindergarten we provide an environment that is safe and nurturing. We believe that children need guidance and assistance in a caring way to help them learn to become responsible for their own behaviour and actions. However, at times we recognise that even young children can act in ways that may be physically or psychologically harmful to others. As a result, the centre has a Behaviour Management Policy outlining the strategies that are implemented to manage difficult or challenging behaviours. A copy of this policy is located outside the office door.

Health and safety

Precautions against the spread of colds, viral infections and contagious diseases are necessary. A child who has a temperature, a green runny nose, is taking antibiotics for an infection or is showing any signs of being unwell should be kept at home. Please notify staff if your child has an illness that is infectious. Parents will be advised via the notice board of any childhood diseases reported, including symptoms to look for and the length of time a child needs to stay away if the disease is infectious.

Sun Smart Policy

The centre actively advocates a sun-smart policy. Children must wear a broad rim or legionnaire style hat for all outside activities during Terms 1, 3 & 4.

It is very important that you child brings and wears a sun hat each day. It needs to be one that fits well, even when they run or have a swing, and which gives coverage to their whole head, including ears, face and back of neck. Children will be asked to stay inside or in shaded areas, not as a punishment but a safety issue! Learning to be responsible and independent for themselves and their belongings is much of what we do at kindergarten. **PLEASE NAME THE HATS** as keeping track of who belongs to which hat gets very tricky! A hat that routinely stays in their kindergarten bag helps set up a pattern that can usually be maintained and saves dramas or heartache!

Parents are asked to ensure that children come to kindergarten with sunscreen applied and wearing shirts that protect shoulders (**no singlets**). Staff will assist children to re-apply sunscreen at lunchtime when needed. Staff will use discretion about restricting outside play on extremely hot days or days when there are dangerous UV levels.

Smoke Free Zone

All schools and preschools, including car parks are smoke free zones. In the interests of both adults and children, please do not smoke on the preschool grounds or drop cigarette butts at the entrance to the kindergarten grounds.

Medication

Where ever possible, medication should be administered by the parent. The first dosage of medication at kindergarten must be administered by the parent or administered by the approved DECD employee under the supervision of the parent/guardian. It is the parent's responsibility to advise the kindergarten of any change to the child's dosage /medication via a doctor's letter or management plan signed by the treating doctor.

All medication must be in the correct named and labelled container and given to staff in its original bottle. All medication will be kept in the medication section of the refrigerator in the kitchen. Medication will not be administered in any circumstances unless the following procedures are undertaken:

- A Management Plan is developed and signed by the treating doctor
- Parent/guardian approval via the signed proforma

Once administered staff will sign the form and monitor the child for any adverse reactions. A separate form is required for any long term medication.

Mandatory Reporting

Doctors, teachers, early childhood workers and others who work with children are obliged by law to report any reasonable suspicion that a child has been maltreated, neglected, physically, emotionally or sexually abused to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL).

Injuries and First Aid

Any child with significant health issues will be required to have the appropriate forms completed by a doctor prior to the child being left under staff supervision. This ensures the well being of the child .

ALL children who have ever had asthma need to have an asthma plan completed by the child's Doctor, on file at the kindergarten.

All staff have current First Aid training. The First Aid Cabinet is located in the children's bathroom and is stock taked annually. The First Aid kit will be taken on all excursions.

Minor injuries – those that respond to a bandaid and/or minor first aid and affection, are treated by staff. All other injuries are referred to parents and/or medical officers.

If the injury is assessed to be of a more serious nature, but not requiring additional external medical attention, parents will be notified.

If the Injury is major an ambulance will be called and parents notified as soon as possible. Staff will administer First Aid until assistance arrives. Staff will write all occurrences on the 'injury / illness' form and the parent will sign to acknowledge the accident and the procedures taken when the child is collected.

The Kindergarten does not carry ambulance cover. The centre will not be responsible for or liable for any fees that may occur from the medical treatment, e.g. Ambulance, Doctor's fees, hospital fees etc.

Emergency procedures - Copies of the centre's Emergency Plans are displayed inside the kindergarten. If necessary we will evacuate through the double gates to the Akuna Reserve and notify police of the decision to do so.

Grievance Policy for Parents

At Akuna Kindergarten we believe parents are partners in the education of children. Regular two-way communication between parents/carers and the preschool is essential in helping children achieve their potential. Our preschool is committed to ensuring that anyone with parental responsibilities for a young person can raise a concern or complaint, with confidence that it will be heard and responded to in an appropriate and timely fashion.

If you have a concern in relation to an experience at the centre you are encouraged to address the issue with the person involved. If your concern is not resolved or you feel uncomfortable make time to speak with the Director. Allow a reasonable time for the issue to be resolved. If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been resolved at the local level, you may choose to seek support from DECD complaints resolution services:

Complaints about education and early childhood services - Education Complaint Unit

Phone: 1800 677 435

Email: DECD.EducationComplaint@sa.gov.au.

Issues of a general nature can be addressed at Governing Council meetings. Please put your concern in writing and hand it to a council member.

Confidentiality will be respected at all times



Starting School

Your child will begin school in Term 1 of the following year they began kindergarten. To enable children to make a smooth transition to school, most schools usually provide opportunities for children to visit the school and the prospective class, to get to know the teacher and fellow students and to become familiar with the new setting and routines prior to the child's entry to Reception. The individual child is the focus and as the needs of individual children may vary, entry to school is negotiated with parents/caregivers.

It is the parents/caregiver's responsibility to enrol their child at school.

Local schools we often feed to

Mc Donald Park Schools

87249811

St Martins Lutheran College

87251430

Glenburnie Primary School

87253695

Mil Leil Primary School

87255883

Tenison Woods College

87255455

Reidy Park Primary School

87253381

Yahl Primary School

87253658

We hope that your child's time at Akuna Kindergarten will be happy and rewarding. If you have any queries or suggestions, please do not hesitate to discuss them with us.