

Within the kindergarten's play-based curriculum how is the development of early learning, particularly within the literacy and numeracy domains, supported?

We aim to broaden your child's experiences through play and interaction with materials and peers. We provide a program that is individually based and follows children's interests, needs and level of development. We believe each child is unique. Our goal is to generate a love of learning, creativity and confidence which will enable the children to comfortably develop at their own pace. Learning at kindergarten is done through play, so children will have fun while they are growing and learning. A broad base of experiences will encourage the children to examine, describe, experiment, explore, create, design and discover. The experiences the children become involved in will be in groups of various sizes. The program combines self-directed experiences, individual play areas and group learning experiences. We explore many areas: literacy, language games, discussions, numeracy, music, movement, science, construction and manipulative materials, creative play, sensory activities, art and craft and physical play.

What does the kindergarten program look like in regards to routine/s and flexibility?

The routine is very flexible, to ensure that children are given optimum time to explore the available learning experiences. We are guided by the interests and needs of the group with a usual routine being:

- Arrival - the children are responsible for choosing a locker and hanging up their bag on their peg.
- Inside time – children freely choose learning experiences, including flexible fruit time.
- Mat time – is a key part of the program, as it allows the children to develop a strong sense of community through shared learning and experiences.
- Outside time - this environment is set up daily to meet children's developmental needs and interests. Outdoor play is a time to develop social skills and collaboration, and participate in physical play activities.
- Lunch time – the children come to together as a group to eat lunch.
- Quiet time – includes quiet activities such as puzzles or sharing books.
- End of day mat time - children are responsible for packing their own bags at the end of session.

What type of excursions/incursions are included and how are these experiences linked to the kindergarten program?

Each year children participate in a range of special events and excursions that enrich their learning and experiences and the kindergarten program. These may be based on the children's interests, the community in which we live, and reflect family involvement in the program. These include Special events such as Mother's Day afternoon, Father's night/ special person's night, Responsible Pet Education program, Wild Action Zoo visit, Museum Victoria visit, African Drumming, and excursion to Apex Traffic school. Each year the excursions the children participate in may vary, depending on the children's interests – last year in addition to an excursion to Traffic School, the kinder groups went on excursions to Beechworth Bakery and the Benalla Art Gallery. Community visitors may include Fire Brigade, Police, Ambulance, Librarian and Dental Van. Each year we participate in the Smiles 4 Miles program which focuses on children's oral health and healthy eating practises.

How does this kindergarten support the needs of children who are experiencing difficulty separating from their parent and/or the additional needs of children?

Inclusion of children is about educators recognising that all children have the right to be engaged and valued participants in, and contributors to the curriculum. It involves getting to know each child well so that we can respond to their needs and build on their strengths and skills to ensure they have equal opportunities to learn and participate. We believe that it is important to develop trusting, respectful caring relationships with each child, and the child's family. These relationships are crucial in dealing with children who may be experiencing difficulty separating from their parent. In regards to the additional needs of children, we value and are responsive towards the interests and abilities of each child. We plan the program to cater for different learning capacities and learning styles. Educators intentionally extend each child's learning in both planned and spontaneous learning experiences. Educators respond to each child's individual circumstances and requirements.