

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

Learning is individualised for each child, taking into account strengths, needs, interests, prior knowledge and readiness to learn. Teachers use their knowledge of the child to build new skills and /or extend skills through play. Strong emphasis is placed on supporting children's social emotional development, as we believe happy, confident and settled children learn best.

Math's and literacy skills are supported through purposeful experiences as opposed to rote learning. For example, children are provided with opportunities to develop counting and measurement skills through science and cooking experiences. Literacy is explored through storytelling, developing signs to support play etc. We have a strong focus on developing oral language as a foundation for later reading and writing development. The program provides a variety of experiences that allow children to express themselves, voice their opinions and engage in storytelling. For those children who cannot communicate orally we support them through alternative approaches, so that they too can be heard.

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

-An all weathers program, in which children can play, learn and explore outdoors every day. We have invested in Scandinavian rain gear, drop down blinds and outdoor ceiling fans to support comfortable all weathers play.

-A strong focus of supporting children's social/emotional development. One of the ways we do this is by incorporating components of the We Thinkers program (social skills program).

-An indoor/outdoor program in which children spend large parts of the day playing in two smaller groups, as opposed to one big group (one group inside and one group outside, swapping over throughout the day). This maximises opportunities for small group learning.

-Opportunities for the whole group to gather in order to build a sense of community and to build confidence in larger groups. This includes a meet and greet time at the beginning of the day and music and story time.

-An achievement wall, which explicitly celebrates children's learning and effort.

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

All incursions and excursions are interactive and carefully chosen to help build children's self-esteem, confidence in trying new things and engaging with different people. The concepts introduced within the incursions/excursions are then extended upon within the program.

Reptile Encounters - Provides an introduction into exploring and classifying animals, care and respect for wildlife and safe animal practices.

African Drumming - Provides an introduction to African culture, beat, rhythm, patterns, story-telling, dance and collaboration.

Bong Bong Hat Band - A performance that explores music, storytelling, magic and humour.

Flying Book Worm - Brings stories to life through dramatization which are then further explored within the program.

Traffic School - Provides an introduction to traffic rules and an opportunity to apply these rules.

Ed-Gym - Opportunity to extend, test and apply gross motor skills.

Library visit - Connects children with the broader community and provides an opportunity to experience a bus ride and explore local art.

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

We take a caring and flexible approach to support children experiencing difficulties separating. A separation plan is developed in collaboration between the teacher and the family, which takes into account the child's needs, personality and interests. The family and kindergarten work together to implement the plan, gradually building the child's comfort and confidence, whilst celebrating achievements/progress along the way. Visual supports are also used to help create a sense of predictability for the child.

A collaborative and strengths-based approach is used to support children with additional needs, with teachers working closely with the family and allied health professionals. We focus on explicitly highlighting each child's strengths and interests, helping to create an environment in which all children are valued as competent and able. When appropriate, additional supports are used to support the child's learning, such as key word signing or movement chairs. Where possible such supports are used with the whole group.