



## South Bendigo Kindergarten Frequently Asked Questions

### We really value:

- Being culturally responsive to all our children and families and recognise the deep and rich learning opportunities our families' history, skills and knowledge provide the kindergarten community with. We cherish this information which is why we recognise families as the first educators of their children.
- Being present with the children. We are in the now, taking note of and being part of the special moments within their day. Educators are learning with and from the children as we equally collaborate to make the learning journey unique and special for each child, as we prepare the children for life.
- That each child is equipped with their own set of unique skills and knowledge that they are able to freely explore and develop as they learn through play, discovering who they are.
- That children are capable and independent as they take responsibility for themselves, their environment and their belongings.

### Educators strive to:

- Build relationships with the children built on respect, trust, warmth and kindness. As the children experience the joy of such a beautiful relationship, they begin to reflect this in their own interactions with one another, promoting inclusive and friendliness among all children.
- Create children who are active agents in all aspects of their learning as they are brave and take risk to learn and grow.
- Create children who are working towards becoming advocates for themselves in their social interactions. The children are supported by educators to feel confident and empowered to use their voice and body language to express their feelings in a safe and respectful manner.
- Ensure the children are free to utilise the resources within the kindergarten to further support them in their learning journey. This includes Dja Dja Country and the teachings it provides us with in the past and now.
- Work collaboratively with the children to create an engaging, rich and meaningful learning environment.

### Our Educational Program is shared with families in many ways, here are some of them:

- Our program book is displayed at the sign in area
- Continued and ongoing conversations with families
- Interviews are held once a term to share a more in-depth and personal look at what your child has been up to within the program.
- Portfolios are developed for each child which celebrates their kindergarten year.
- Our family wall- sharing photos of each child's family and the experiences they have over the year.
- Emails sent home weekly of what the children have been up to
- We send a newsletter home twice a term with updates on what is happening at kindergarten

**Our program, including routines, is organised in ways that maximise opportunities for each child's learning. A normal day at our preschool usually runs like this:**

- The children arrive in the morning and are welcomed by their educators. The children independently put their lunch box and drink bottle on the trolley and put their bag in their bag locker. The children then wash their hands and begin indoor/ outdoor play.
- We continue indoor/ outdoor play allowing the children to experience uninterrupted play; this is when the real learning begins for the children.
- Morning snack is at approximately 10.30am, depending on when the children request this. We have a short group time before we begin snack to allow the children to come together and discuss how they are feeling or share any exciting stories. We then continue uninterrupted play indoor/ outdoor until lunch time at approximately 12.30pm.
- At the conclusion of the day we pack up all together. Many hands make light work, even little ones! Children have a moment of relaxation on the mat before they have afternoon snack around 3.00pm. The children will then independently pack their own bags and put them at the exit ready for pick up time.
- We then finish the day as a group engaged in mat activities where educators can keep everyone safe while our parents arrive for pick up.

**The expertise of families is recognised and they share in decision making about their child's learning and wellbeing, this occurs in the following ways:**

- We involve families as much as possible by including their individual cultures and call upon their individual expertise to teach the educators and children. We welcome all families in to teach us about their work or share their culture with us.
- We ask families to contribute to our philosophy each year to ensure we are reflecting the current families' enrolled.
- We speak with parents as much as we can and include all families to the best of our ability through using many forms of communication such as verbal, phone and email.
- We have a Parent Advisory Group who volunteers their time to help make our kindergarten the best place it can be for the children.
- We have an open door policy allowing parents and loved ones to come in a play with us whenever they are able too.

**Each child's learning and development is assessed as part of an ongoing cycle of planning, documenting and evaluation, we share this with families and seek their involvement by:**

- We create individual portfolios for each child. Each child is allowed to choose which artwork pieces they display in this folder. Educators contribute to this folio by putting photos and learning stories of the children in these.
- We conduct Interviews once a term however families are welcome to arrange a time to meet with educators at any time across the year.
- We seek parent input upon enrolment by asking them to set goals for their child which educators will work towards supporting the child to achieve across the kindergarten year.

**We build relationships and engage with the local community in the following ways:**

- We plant our veggie garden with Bunnings each year.
- We have the Bendigo Chinese Lion come in each year at Easter
- We have prep teachers from primary schools come visit in term 4 to meet the children
- We use local transport (buses) for excursions in Bendigo and surrounds.
- We invite local indigenous people in to educate the children and staff more about country.

**Families have opportunities to be involved in our service by:**

- We invite families in on a daily basis to stay and play with us whenever they have the time available.
- We understand that many families are busy working during the week which is why we leave our yard gates open on the weekend and invite families in to have a play.
- We have weekend kinder duty to maintain our yard and gardens. We understand that during the week we are busy working and some families may only have time to contribute on the weekends.

- We welcome families to bring in photos of their family members which we can include on our family kinder wall to show how much we value their presence in our learning environment.
- We have our Parent Advisory Group which educators are always working closely with.
- We invite families to all our incursion and excursions throughout the year.
- We have family fun nights and picnics throughout the year.

**We don't teach Prep curriculum. We prepare children for lifelong learning by teaching the dispositions for learning:**

At South Bendigo Kindergarten we run a play based program which includes rich learning experiences collaboratively built by the educators and children. It is through this, we are able to teach children the skills they need to be lifelong learners.

These skills include:

- Social Skills
- Independence
- Respect for self and others
- Confidence
- Resilience
- Gross and fine motor skills
- Teamwork
- Persistence
- Imagination