



Axedale Kindergarten's Frequently Asked Questions

Foregrounding Aboriginal Perspectives:

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

- *We strongly encourage and enjoy all interactions with families and friends either at the gate during drop off and pick up, via phone, Storypark or our Family & Community board at the gate. We value such interactions, as we acknowledge the integral role family, community and culture play in children's holistic development and sense of belonging.*
- *We actively seek to build connections with the local community through providing children with opportunities to go on excursions to places within our community, contribute to community events such as the Axedale Quick Shear as well as welcome incursions from local members of our community & beyond.*
- *We work alongside KESO, professionals who are members of the local Aboriginal community with an understanding of Aboriginal culture and the history of their community to ensure our learning environment and curriculum truly acknowledges, reflects and supports Aboriginal perspectives and ways of being. Axedale Kindergarten acknowledges the traditional owners of the land each morning, as we welcome one another and pay our respects to the past and present Dja Dja Wurrung elders and continue to educate children about their land.*
- *As a Kindergarten that embeds sustainable practices into our everyday routines, we love donations of pre-loved items or recyclables that the children use to learn, create and play with.*

Collaborative Generative Thinking:

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

- *Each child has an Individual Education Plan. The IEP is a fantastic way for families and educators to formulate achievable goals as well as outline any strengths and potential barriers children may have in their learning and development. Three times a year our team of educators and parents meet to discuss their child's progress, ways in which we can further support their child at kindergarten, how to support the continuation of learning at home and to formulate new goals for children leading into the coming term.*
- *Our curriculum is composed of both the Children's voices as well as that of Family/Community. The Family/Community component of our curriculum is achieved through frequent interactions during pick up and drop off times, via phone, email or Storypark. We also encourage families to contribute directly to the emergent curriculum by writing their ideas/experiences/suggestions onto the Family/Community board available to families at pick up and drop off times.*
- *At Axedale Kindergarten, we pride ourselves on open, honest, reciprocal communication with all families and strive to ensure that all families know that their voices are important, heard and respected. We remain accessible to our families through use of our Kindergarten mobile (phone call and text message), landline, emails and Storypark. If families need a little more time to chat, we are open to organising a time that suits the family and Educators to have a more in depth conversation to ensure the holistic needs and wellbeing of their child are being met.*

Families have opportunity to be involved in our service by:

- *We love to have visitors come and play with us at Axedale Kindergarten, so one of the many ways you can be involved at Kinder is through our Stay and Play roster. Allocating two 1 hour blocks a day, you are welcome to pop your name down and come and stay and play for an hour! This is a great way to see the program in action*



and share your child's learning with them. The children love having their families here! If you are not available during our Stay and Play times, we are more than happy to have you pop in another time - just let us know!

- *Families may like to volunteer to help during any excursions we have throughout the year, as an extra set of eyes and hands is always appreciated.*
- *You are welcome and encouraged to join our Parent Advisory Group (PAG)*
- *Participate in special events such as Family Nights, afternoon teas in the park or end of year celebrations.*
- *You might also like to share your hobbies, work or special interests with us, or come along to working bees.*

If you can think of any other ways you would like to be involved, please let us know! We love new ideas and suggestions on ways that you can be involved.

Opening to Complexity:

We promote child agency by:

- *Acknowledging that **all** children have a right to be active participants in all aspects of their lives and encourage children to share their voice with us, knowing that their individual voice is heard, valued and respected. We facilitate children's ability to use their voice, through developing strong, trusting, reciprocal relationships with all children. Through creating such relationships children sense and respond to feelings of belonging, enabling them to be open and confident in sharing their voice in all matters that directly influence their life.*
- *Our curriculum is an emergent curriculum facilitated by responsive teaching practices. This means that the learning environment continuously evolves and expands as the children's ideas, interests and abilities do. Our emergent curriculum fosters a sense of agency as children see their choices and decisions come to life in their learning environment.*
- *We provide children with an indoor-outdoor program which allows children to float between indoor or outdoor play at all times of the day. Our team will modify and adapt the indoor and outdoor space to reflect the weather conditions, while still providing children with the choice to play indoors or outdoors. For example, if the weather is very hot we will provide children with water play under the veranda, opportunities to explore scientific concepts using ice play or a shady spot to rest and read under a big tree. We also have wet weather suits for children to use during wet weather days!*
- *All aspects of our daily routine provide children with opportunities to be involved, contribute to the daily operations of the Kindergarten and learn along the way. Some examples of this in practice are:*
 - *Children can access their snack/lunch boxes at any time of the day, choosing when they would like to eat and where*
 - *Choice of Indoor or outdoor play*
 - *Access to a variety of open ended play spaces*
 - *Engage in sustainable practice through collecting scraps for the chickens and feeding the chickens*
 - *Collecting the chicken eggs each morning*
 - *Watering and caring for our garden and indoor plants through access to watering cans and spray bottles*
 - *Educators endeavour to source additional resources/materials for play and learning when asked by children, allowing the interest to continue evolving and the learning to keep progressing.*

Every Moment Matters:

Our program, including routines are organised in ways that maximize opportunities for each children's learning. A normal day at our kindergarten usually runs like:



- *Children arrive at Kindergarten and are greeted individually by one of their friendly Educators. Together, we say you later to their family at the gate, place their piece of shared fruit into the shared fruit bowl and make their way inside where they are greeted by another Educator.*
- *Children stop at the Hydration Station, placing their drink bottle down before moving through to the locker area*
- *Finding their picture and/or name tag, children hang up their bags on their bag hook before unpacking their lunchbox, snack square and hat and placing these into their lockers*
- *Children engage in open ended, indoor-outdoor play before coming together as a classroom family to engage in a 'Wake up brain' activity. This is a great opportunity for children to engage in gross motor movements such as obstacle courses, music and movement, ball skills and other activities to get them switched on and ready for their day ahead!*
- *Children assist in setting up our mat for our morning group time, by placing our coloured shapes on the ground. Children can choose to sit at whichever shape they would like, before we welcome one another to Axedale Kindergarten on Dja Dja Wurrung country during our Morning meeting. Children are encouraged to participate in group times and Educators will modify and adapt the group times to suit the learning styles and abilities of all children, but if a child does not want to participate, we respect their choice and provide the child with an additional activity close by where they can still hear and contribute if they desire.*
- *Children's voices are encouraged during this time (as well as all other times) to share with us something that they might like to explore for the day, something they might want to learn or play with, or share a new interest with us that we can scaffold throughout the day.*
- *Children are able to ask for any resources/materials/equipment they need to extend on their learning during their indoor-outdoor play and will be directed as to where they may be able to find what they are after, or an Educator will assist the child to source what they need.*
- *Snack can be eaten at any time during the day, with children placing their scraps into the Chicken Food Bucket. When it is full one of our Educators will assist the children in taking the scraps into our chickens, Chicken-Wrap and Chips. It is also a good opportunity for children to see if there are any eggs!*
- *Lunch time is one of the times during the day that we come together and eat as a group. Children can choose to eat at the table or on the ground on their snack squares. Lunch can be eaten indoors or outdoors because a picnic outside is always nice! However before this, we come together for a quick catch up to see how our morning has been, and discuss any intentional teaching lessons or activities that may be happening during the afternoon.*
- *Children are provided with a learning environment that consists of open ended play spaces and materials, experiences directly linked to individual interests or specific goals, as well as moments of intentional teaching through small group lessons or projects.*
- *Over the duration of the year at various times of the day, children will experience additional activities such as Kelly Sports, Bush Kinder, visits from Ange from the Library and other exciting things.*

Meaningful Documentation:

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

- *Through our interactions with families at pick up and drop off times. We love to share what has happened during the day at Axedale Kindergarten, but strongly encourage children and parents to share their day with one another on their way home, at dinner time or any time where there is moment to stop, connect and have a chat.*
- *Observations of children's learning which are posted to Story Park and can be easily accessed by all families*
- *'Axedale Adventures' which is sent to families at the end of each learning week via Story Park, highlighting some of the amazing learning and fun experiences that have happened, alongside photos*
- *The program is displayed inside the Kindergarten, but families are able to request to pop in and have a look at any time. Suggestions, ideas and feedback are welcome and encouraged.*



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:

- *Developing strong, trusting working relationships with families allowing all families to feel comfortable in sharing their feedback, suggestions or ideas on how we can enhance our curriculum or better support their child. We do this by remaining accessible, approachable and encouraging these types of interactions, ensuring families know that their voices are respected and heard.*
- *Through posting learning observations on Story Park, which can be accessed and commented on by families at any time. Learning stories highlight the learning that has occurred, how it is reflective of the EYLF v2.0, how/what will be done to scaffold this learning and a truthful reflection of how this extension of learning went.*

Keeping the Joy:

We value:

- *The rights of all children and families*
- *The important and influential role of family, culture and community in children's lives*
- *Play as the most natural way in which children learn and develop holistically*
- *The beauty of diversity and how we can learn and grow together when we choose acceptance, love and compassion*
- *Providing children and families with a learning environment that facilitates an authentic sense of belonging, the ability to be safe, secure and present in the very moment as they seek and make meaning of their world, all while becoming the very best version of themselves they can be.*
- *An emergent curriculum that reflects diversity in learning styles, interests, abilities and culture, and evolves alongside each child, at their own pace.*

Being Professional:

Educators Strive to:

- *Get to know all the children and families holistically, acknowledging their diversity in cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds, and ensuring that these are embedded within the learning environment, curriculum and their daily pedagogical practices and approaches.*
- *Acknowledge the various experiences that all children bring with them to Kindergarten, and modify and adapt the learning environment, curriculum and pedagogical practices and approaches to ensure an authentic sense of belonging is felt and that children are adequately supported and presented with the best possible chance for success.*
- *Regularly reflect upon and evaluate all aspects of their pedagogical practices and approaches to ensure they are reflecting best practice, upholding the rights of the child and meeting the learning and development needs of each child*
- *Engage in Professional Development to further enhance their professional knowledge, understanding and commitment to quality education.*