

WELCOME TO



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Government of South Australia
Department for Education and
Child Development

STIRLING DISTRICT KINDERGARTEN

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS:

Welcome!

Kindergarten is a place for learning, sharing, and friendship. Parents can share in their child's education, so please call in at any time and join in a session or part of a session.

The staff team are:

Director:	Philippa Rust
Teachers:	Angela Feddern Susan Jenner
Early Childhood Workers:	Frankie Mclean Sally Monteleone Barbra Casson-Green Lindsey Scholtz
Finance Officer/ECW	Irene Condon



SESSION TIMES

KINDERGARTEN:

Kindergarten sessions are offered Monday to Thursday.

Children are able to access up to 15 hours of kindergarten per week. This is made up of 2 full days.

Your child's sessions are organised with the Director and may be influenced by available vacancies.

Full day 8.30am – 4.00pm – Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs

PLAYGROUP: Operates on Friday mornings

Please contact the centre for times

All welcome from birth to 5 years of age. Cost \$5.00 per family.

FEES are payable at the beginning of each term.

The Department of Education and Child Development provides minimal funding for the centre, which contributes towards, but does not cover the costs of operating the kindergarten. Fees are necessary because there is a shortfall between the level of government funding and the costs of operating a viable and quality service.

Fees will be set by Governing Council on an annual basis. Governing Council may review and change fees during the year if the financial viability of either the programs or the kindergarten is at risk.

- Kindergarten 15 hours costs \$280.00 per term (includes excursions and incursions).
- Pre Entry Sessions (held on Fridays in term 4) costs \$70 per term.
- Playgroup (held on Fridays 11.30am to 1.00pm) is \$5.00 per session.
- Occasional Care (if available) \$50.00 per day / \$30.00 per half day

- In case of financial difficulty, please consult the Director for confidential arrangements.

STARTING KINDERGARTEN

On arrival all children must be signed in on the Daily Sign In Sheet located in the main entrance. All children must be signed out at the end of their session.

When children start kindergarten for the first time or transfer from another kindergarten, be prepared for them to be a little apprehensive or anxious. Some children take longer than others to settle, and however much your child may be looking forward to going to kindergarten, it is a new experience and a very big step in their lives: -

Perhaps - the learning environment is different

- there are new children and adults to get to know
- there is new play materials to try out
- there is a need to share toys and adults with other children.

Try not to worry. Your child may begin happily but have anxious moments a few days later. This is normal too.

The first big separation from a parent or caregiver is a major step in your child's life. Learning to deal with changes such as this is something all children have to learn. In the kindergarten setting staff are committed to making the change as smooth as possible for the child and to help them with this new learning.

Give lots of hugs and cuddles before and after kindergarten to show your child your love and be prepared to stay at kindergarten to help him or her settle in. This will help your child to take the change in his or her stride. Be reliable and on time when you pick up your child - this can be an anxious time if other parents come and you are not there. We believe your child is special and we will do all that we can to build confidence and self-esteem.

Never leave without telling your child you are going as your child needs to know that he or she can trust you. If you feel that you and your child are having separation difficulties please consult staff.

If you do leave your child and they are distressed please telephone the centre approximately 20 minutes later and talk with one of the teachers who can let you know how your child has settled. In circumstances where a child does not settle a teacher will call you to discuss the situation and together you will make a decision on what to do next.



CURRICULUM

Young Children Learn best through Play

Play is critical for children's learning, growth and development.

Play experiences develop pathways in the brain, build complex language and social skills, develop imagination and enable children to develop high level thinking skills.

BRAIN DEVELOPMENT STARTS EARLY

'The research tells us that the brains of all children appear to thrive best in a nurturing, consistent and social environment, characterized by interventions which both secure the child yet enable him or her to explore and play safely.' Shonkoff and Phillips, 2001: Smith 2001

Brain research identifies that:

- The highest rate of brain development occurs in the early years of a child's life
- Children's early life experiences shape the way their brains develop, in the short term and throughout their life
- The young brain is very 'plastic', it is continually responding and reacting to everything that the child experiences
- Secure relationships and rich life experiences encourage the child to explore and learn. This continues the brain building process.
- Children's early brain development is the foundation for all learning and development that follows.

"Recognizing the early years are a period of unique opportunity and vulnerability means that the environments of early childhood should be designed so they facilitate, rather than blunt, the remarkable intrinsic push toward growth that is characteristic of every child...." The Future of Children

The preschool curriculum is designed to

- Connect with children's prior experiences and understandings
- Broaden children's knowledge and skills across the curriculum
- Expose children to a wide range of learning experiences
- Engage children's imagination and curiosity
- Actively encourage independent learning and more complex play
- Support children to deepen their interests and take ownership of their learning
- Reflect and respect children's cultural backgrounds
- Extend children's thinking and problem solving skills
- Develop children's language skills in talking, listening, viewing, drawing and writing
- Support children's overall development and well being
- Assist children to successfully transition to school

We use the national curriculum "The Early Years Learning Framework" and the stated Learning Outcomes are:

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



TEACHERS PLAN TO FACILITATE CHILDREN'S LEARNING BY

Working in partnership with families and other professionals

- Respecting and building onto children's ideas and interests
- Asking open ended questions, providing feedback and supporting children to test their ideas
- Encouraging children to explore and take risks in their learning
- Providing stimulating learning experiences, indoors and outdoors
- Listening observing, recording, planning and responding to children's ongoing learning needs
- Being a co-player, modelling play, supporting children to enter and exit play situations
- Teaching by modelling, demonstrating and explaining

Research confirms that the higher the qualifications of staff, the better the outcomes for children. DECS Kindergartens/ Preschools employ qualified early childhood teachers.

ALL THEY DO AT KINDY IS PLAY!

Do you see play as fun and not related to learning OR do you see children's play as learning? DECS Kindergartens and Preschools value learning through play. Our programs provide children with extended periods of time to engage in a broad range of play based learning opportunities; for individual children and for small and large groups of children.

Teachers are deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful in their planning and teaching for learning through play. They support children to develop a broad range of understandings and skills as they build onto children's current ideas and interests. They use information from parents and children (including observations of children at play) to facilitate each child's ongoing learning.

When children are absorbed in their play they are learning to focus their attention and persist with challenging tasks. They are also learning to seek out new information, to find things out for themselves. Children are learning to be self-motivated learners who love to learn. Learning through play lays the foundation for children's later academic and social success.

Play Is Learning

Rich and varied play experiences strongly boost all aspects of children's learning and development.

They teach children about:-

- Their own and others identities

- Skilful ways of interacting
- Fairness and the rights of all
- Their environment
- How to be positive and healthy
- Language, literacy and numeracy
- New technologies

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IS VALUABLE!!

You are welcome in the kindergarten at any time to share the children's activities. If you have time, stay with your child and share an activity for a few minutes when you arrive. Please come and read a story to the children occasionally. Just come a little before the session ends, and bring a favourite story or we will supply a book. Children tend to settle into kindergarten more quickly when they see their parents and teachers interacting happily.

If you have any talents or hobbies (playing a musical instrument, spinning, weaving etc) please tell us so you can share it with the children. Please tell us of significant events at home that may affect your child's behaviour and feel free to ask for privacy if matters are confidential.

YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO BRING

- a bag that they can easily manage (named on the outside please),
- a hat (named please)
- a change of clothes (named please)
- a piece of fruit each day. If you have no fruit, please send a sandwich or other healthy snack (not peanut paste, peanut products or nutella as we have children with life threatening allergies to nuts)
- a water bottle

Children must have a hat and sunscreen for outside play from 1st September to 30th April. Please send your child in comfortable hardwearing clothes.



FULL DAY PROGRAM

What to bring on a full day:

- Each child will need to bring the following:
- Named lunch box with lunch inside that doesn't require re-heating. Suggestions include sandwiches, salad, yoghurt, rolls, meat, cheese, crackers, fruit etc. Please place lunch in the box located in front of the kitchen and staff will transfer to the fridge, as we would like to keep these separate from snack foods.
- Children will also need to bring 2 pieces of fruit: 1 for the morning and 1 for the afternoon. PLEASE KEEP THESE SEPARATE in their bag.
- **Please do not send foods such as: muesli bars, chocolates, chips, roll-ups and anything, which may contain nuts. These include peanut butter, Nutella and coconut.**
- Make sure children have suitable clothing for the day and are dressed for the current weather.

DRINKING WATER

Children are encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day. Staff talk to children about why water is a good drink and set good examples by drinking plenty of water themselves. Children need to bring their own labelled drink bottle. Staff teach the children how to refill their bottles with filtered water as necessary. Cordial and soft drink are not suitable drinks for kindy.



“Mother’s Day Celebration Morning”

HEALTHY EATING AT PRESCHOOL

Snack and Lunch time

Children are encouraged to bring along foods that are low in sugar, fat and salt.

Please ensure your child brings at least two healthy snacks to kindy per session. Snacks need to be left in children's bags so they can access them when they are hungry. There is a table set up for children to sit at while eating their snack which staff monitor.

Lunch time is held at the same time each day. Children need to have a substantial amount of healthy food packed in their lunch boxes for lunch time. Lunch boxes need to be put in the fridge.

As a critical part of the social environment that shapes children's eating behaviour our site will ensure that a healthy lifestyle is learned, practised and supported through the curriculum and the environment. The ***Food and Drink Supply strategy for South Aust. Schools and preschools (2007)*** suggests a food spectrum (see table below) from which to set dietary guidelines.

<u>GREEN</u> CHOOSE PLENTY	<u>AMBER</u> - Select carefully. Check labels against nutrient criteria	<u>RED</u> - Up to twice per term as part of a whole community event
Bread, cereals, vegetables, fruit, reduced fat dairy products, lean meat, fish, poultry and alternatives, water, reduced fat milk and reduced fat soy.	Full fat dairy food, some savoury commercial products like pizza, pasta, processed meats, spreads and oils, sauces, snack food bars, cakes, muffins, biscuits, ice-cream, dairy desserts, some fruit juice, some breakfast cereals	Sweetened drinks, soft drinks, energy drinks, confectionery, deep fried foods, crisps, chips, chocolate covered ice creams, icy poles, croissants, doughnuts, cream filled goodies, pies, pasties sausage rolls.

We have a NO NUT Policy

Due to the increasing incidence of severe allergies to nuts in children, the kindergarten is now a ***NUT FREE ZONE***. This means that no nuts of any kind are to be brought to kindy, to ensure the health and well being of all children. Please do not send any foods containing nuts, including peanut butter, nutella, coconut or other nut based products.

If a staff member discovers that a child has brought food containing nuts, the food will be removed and put aside until pick up time.

The child's parent or caregiver will be consulted and reminded of the "No Nut Policy".

Occasionally, children with different severe allergies may be attending Stirling District Kindergarten. If the allergy is life threatening, similar procedures to those described above will be implemented, to ensure the child is kept safe. All families will be informed if this situation arises.

Food Safety and Hygiene

Children are encouraged to:

- Sit down while eating
- Wash hands before and after eating
- Helping to clean up after eating
- Look after their own lunchboxes by packing them away when they have finished eating
- Make appropriate decisions about when and what they eat.

Learning About Food

Preparation of foods will be included in learning activities. Foods will also be used to introduce children to other cultures. Children will learn about where food comes from and how it is grown.

Behaviour Management Policy

Behaviour is seen as an expression of feelings or an attempt to meet underlying needs. We need to be aware of what the child is trying to communicate, validate the child's feelings, and deal with the underlying problem as well as guiding the child towards more appropriate ways of communicating needs and interacting pro socially with others. Staff will teach, reinforce and model positive behaviours rather than imposing consequences for undesirable behaviours. Staff will model appropriate styles of interaction and appropriate responses to conflict resolution. Each child's level of development, needs and cultural context will be considered and expectations will be matched to these. Learning how to manage feelings occurs in the context of positive relationships and time spent affirming each child, and is the basis of our behaviour policy.

All children have the right to feel:

Valued	Happy	Confident
Safe	Special	Welcomed
Secure	Respected	Supported
Unique/Accepted	Trusted	

At Stirling District Kindergarten we believe:

The staff of Stirling District Kindergarten believe that behaviour management involves teaching children how to deal positively with problems and how to make positive choices. This philosophy guides our behaviour management policy, and includes components of positive recognition, clear and consistent expectations and guidelines, and fair and relevant consequences.

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We believe that everyone has the right to feel safe all of the time and we actively teach this to the children through our child protection curriculum.

We ignore behaviour if it is not dangerous and only seeking attention.

Children learn best when they experience success and have positive self-esteem.

We believe that behaviour changes more quickly when handled in a positive way.

We accept that children feel angry, frustrated and upset at times and need help to express feeling appropriately.

We encourage children to take responsibility for their actions and their own safety.

Staff and parents need to share responsibility, being consistent at all times, creating a safe, secure environment for children and modelling appropriate behaviours.

The behaviours we encourage at Stirling District Kindergarten are:

Respecting and caring for each other and our environment

Sharing

Taking turns

Being co-operative

Being polite

Moving safely

Being friendly

Listening

Helping

Using appropriate social language

Participating in activities

Ways we maximise positive behaviours at Stirling District Kindergarten include:

Verbally acknowledging positive behaviours.

Reinforcing acceptable behaviours regularly at group time and informally.

Talking through behavioural problems with a child to support a more positive action.

Ensuring the learning environment is safe and well supervised.

Communication with parents is clear and concise.

Staff are consistent in implementing rules and consequences.

Staff discuss issues in order to develop positive strategies to support a child.

Strategies we use for inappropriate behaviour:

- Talk with the child, validate feelings, talk about how other child feels. Suggest solutions or help child to suggest solutions- protective behaviours.
- If unacceptable behaviour continues, quietly remove child to another activity.
- Time in with staff member if necessary- not time out.
- Children with ongoing behaviour problems will have a special plan tailored specifically for them in consultation with the parents. May be referred for specialised help.

The behaviours which are not acceptable or appropriate at Stirling District Kindergarten are:

Verbally or physically hurting others eg:

Growling

Spitting

Punching

Name-calling

Throwing things

Kicking

Damaging kindy property

Hitting

Pinching

Swearing

Pushing

Bullying

Disrespecting others and their belongings



Ways we minimise challenging behaviours at Stirling District Kindergarten include:

Providing positive role models by staff.

Telling the child if it is inappropriate behaviour.

Encourage positive behaviours stating the behaviour expected i.e. the desired outcome.

Talking through the problem with the child providing other options and appropriate behaviour for future situations.

Offer choices and redirect the child's play.

Remove the child from the play situation.

Provide the child with some quiet thinking time in an appropriate supervised area.

With Children we:

Encourage children to take responsibility for their actions and their own safety .
Informing (warning) children about dangerous situations and / or practices.
Support children in learning about the consequences of their own behaviour.
Promote problem solving, listening and being aware of the rights of others.
Encourage children to seek staff when needing help of reassurance.
Informing children of the kindergartens boundaries (including the sites “no go” zones)

Consulting and Informing Parents

Parents will be given information on enrolment about the sites Behaviour Code that will be written and verbal.
Parents will have the opportunity to seek more information and ask questions about the code.
Parents will be given the opportunity to speak to staff about their own child and any concerns they may have.
Parents will be informed if their child has specific behaviour needs, which may lead to an Individual Behaviour Plan being negotiated with parents and the child.
Confidentiality will be observed in all discussions with families and in exchange of information with other agencies.
Transition programs are carefully planned and monitored with staff from the new setting and families for children with challenging behaviours.

How Parents can help support the Site Behaviour Management Policy

Inform staff in changes to their child's routine, which may affect their behaviour.
Inform staff of positive and effective strategies that they use at home.
Being consistent with the rules and acceptable behaviours at home and other places.
Discussing child's behaviour at the centre and effective strategies used by staff.
Support the child's regular attendance.
Provide information to departmental personnel that will assist them to understand their child's needs and support their learning.
Providing assessment reports from other agencies.

CENTRE POLICIES

A complete folder of all centre policies is available for parents to read in the Parent Library. Copies of any policies can be emailed to you on request.

REPORTING

Staff members report on children's progress to parents in a range of ways: through newsletters, informal chats with parents and formal interviews. Parents are invited to an interview in the beginning of term 2 to set goals and create an Individual Learning Plan. A Summative report is given to the parents through an interview process when the child leaves Kindergarten with a copy to go to the child's school.

COLLECTING CHILDREN

Please collect children promptly at the end of their session as children tend to get upset when parents are late, and the staff need time to clean up, have a lunch break and prepare for the next session. If you arrive before the session begins, please stay with your child until starting time. Repeated late collections *will* result in an additional fee of \$5.00 per occasion being charges.

If someone else is collecting your child, please phone in advance or write the details on the Daily Sign In Sheet. When you collect your child at the end of the session you must sign them out.

PARKING

As with most other schools and kindergartens, parking can be very difficult. If we notice you arrive for pickup within the last 15 mins of the sessions and children's learning is not interrupted we will say an early 'Goodbye' to your child so that another parking space is made available. Parking is available on Avenue Rd and in the playground car park.

There is **no parking available behind the CFS or on kindergarten grounds.**

Please!! Under no circumstances park in front of the CFS sheds or office – not even for a minute, as this hinders a quick exit for emergency vehicles.

BIRTHDAYS

We celebrate your child's birthday with a "pretend" cake with candles, a rousing rendition of "Happy Birthday" and a special birthday sticker. There is no need to send along additional treats for the children to share as there are several reasons why some children are not able to join in – the most alarming is that some children are highly allergic to certain foods. We also have Nutrition Guidelines based on Government Policies which are quite specific about the food and drink that can be distributed at kindy.

COMMUNICATION

Please read the notice board regularly. You will receive newsletters fortnightly via email. If you are unable to print attachments hard copies will be available at the centre. Please contact teachers if you have any information or concerns you would like to discuss. This can be done in person, by telephone or email. Open lines of communication leads to better learning outcomes for children who are at the centre of everything we do.

EMERGENCY CARE

We offer emergency care to parents who need this service when we have positions available. This means your child can stay for extra hours (during normal session times) if necessary. An hourly charge of \$10.00 applies for this service.

"STIRLING DISTRICT KINDERGARTEN" LOGO CLOTHING

We have a range of good quality children's clothing available at a reasonable cost, all with the kindy logo on them. A price list is available and samples of clothing are available at kindy if you would like to have a look.

We also have Kindy hats available at the cost of \$10.00.

FUNDRAISING

We have limited our fundraising to one event per year being the Annual Art Show. You will receive details about this event in due course.

GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Governing Council, together with the Director, has responsibility for

- setting future goals for the centre,
- the financial management of the centre budget, (including fundraising)
- managing OHSW practices
- developing site policies and practices
- managing centre maintenance
- upholding DECS policies and guidelines

Membership on the Governing Council provides an opportunity to get to know other parents and to work with them towards common goals. You may like to help in this way. Please let us know if you are interested.

LOST PROPERTY

All items of clothing that are likely to be removed at kindergarten need to be named PLEASE!!! Please check the lost property box regularly located in the bag area under the pergola.

TOYS

Please do not bring toys from home to kindergarten. If a child has something special to show bring it and show us at the beginning of a session and then take it home with you. It is distressing for children and parents to have toys lost or broken.

SICK CHILDREN

Please do not send sick children to kindergarten. If your child vomits in the morning before kindergarten or during the previous night, please keep him or her home for the day even if he or she wants to come. This is not a decision for children to make. When children are sick they need to be with their parents, and it is unfair to other families to send a sick child to kindergarten. We have neither the staff nor the facilities to give sick children the attention they need.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Please keep us informed of any medical conditions, allergies or infectious diseases that your child develops. Please always let us know if your contact details change in case we need to contact you urgently.

PARTY PLANS

In order to prevent embarrassment, the Governing Council has a policy that the kindergarten is not to be used by parents as a venue for Party plans, raffle tickets etc .that are not authorised by the Governing Council.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

Every child has the opportunity to have a 4 year old health screening prior to commencing school. These screenings are conducted by nurses from the Child and Youth Health Service (in the front of our building). We will inform you when your child's check up is imminent.

SPECIAL NEEDS SERVICES

DECD, (Department of Education and Child Development), provides access to a team of specialists in speech pathology, social work, psychology and special education, who are available to meet the needs of children or families who might be experiencing difficulties in specific areas. These services are free of charge through the department. If you have concerns about your child's development in any of these areas please see staff.

PARENT LIBRARY

We have some excellent books in our Parent Library on a wide range of parenting issues. Well worth a look! Ask staff if you need a hand! Please enter your name and book borrowed into the book provided.

EARLY LITERACY KITS

These kits are available for parents to borrow to share with their children. Staff and parents have made them to enable parents and children to discover a love of language and literacy. A lot of effort and expense has gone into making the kits so please take care

of them and supervise their use so that pieces do not get lost. If something is missing please report it to one of the staff.

JOIN US

Please feel free to use the kitchen, make a cuppa, and make yourself at home!



Kids Stuff

Playdough

2 cups of flour	4 tablespoons cream of tartar
1 cup salt	2 tablespoons cooking oil
food colouring	2 cups boiling water

Mix dry ingredients, add oil to water, mix then stir into dry ingredients. Knead well.

Gloop

Corn flour
Water
Food Colouring
Mix corn flour and cold water until smooth. Add food colouring.

Bubble Blowing

Mix together equal parts of glycerine, dish washing liquid and water.