



Woodcroft Heights
Children's Centre
for Early Childhood
Development and Parenting

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PRESCHOOL



Information for new Parents

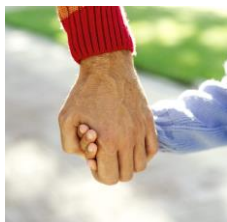
Version: February 2017

WELCOME

Welcome to Woodcroft Heights Children's Centre. Within our centre a range of education, care, family, community and health programs and services are on offer to support the needs of families and children from birth to eight years of age.

Our preschool programme is a core part of our education program for young children and we sincerely hope that you and your child/children will find your preschool year with us rich and rewarding.

The information provided in this booklet we hope, will help you to understand a little bit more about what happens at preschool and also help you to find your way around the centre easily.



STATEMENTS OF VISION, PURPOSE AND PHILOSOPHY

OUR VISION

Our Vision:

We are a welcoming, innovative and inclusive service where young children, families and community members wonder, explore, create and develop knowledge and skills so that children reach their full potential in learning, health and wellbeing.

OUR PURPOSE

Our purpose is to support positive lifelong learning and wellbeing outcomes for children through, leading and delivering accessible high quality integrated health, education and family services which are derived from community needs, are built upon genuine family and community partnerships and are delivered in a welcoming, happy and safe environment which has children at the centre of all policies, practices and processes.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

In relation to children we believe that:

Each child is unique and brings with them knowledge and life experiences as an active citizen in different family and community contexts

Each child is a competent learner with personal strengths

All children have a right to equity of access to services and an environment free of discrimination.

In relation to children's learning and wellbeing we believe that:

Children have a right to play as a process and context for learning

Children's learning is holistic and is best supported in a constructivist learning environment which builds on the knowledge and experiences of children, and allows time for extended exploration and problem solving
Children's emotional development and learning dispositions, such as curiosity, resilience and optimism are important attributes for achieving optimal lifelong outcomes

Children have a right to safe, healthy environments which encourage engagement in learning, provide challenge, promote self worth and initiative and show respect for the contributions they bring

Children have a right to be happy and have fun

A continuous cycle of planning, implementation, reflection and review must inform program development.

In relation to families we believe that:

Families are a child's first and most influential educators

Each family is unique and that differing family customs, structures, beliefs and cultures are worthy of understanding and respect

Positive relationships with families which promote open communication and mutual trust support children's learning and wellbeing

Building learning communities which recognise and utilise the strengths and competencies of families promotes genuine partnerships and positive learning and wellbeing outcomes for individual and the community as a whole.

In relation to community we believe that:

We have a responsibility to develop knowledge of the context of our local community as this is critical to the development of responsive programs and services

Building positive partnerships and connections between professionals, community members, families and children supports the delivery of integrated service delivery to benefit children and families

A 'no wrong door' approach to our service delivery supports children's right to access to services

Continuously seeking to build and enhance the capacity of the whole community is important to maximising learning and wellbeing outcomes for children.

In relation to colleagues we believe that:

All staff have a responsibility to build collaborative relationships through fostering open communication, a culture of respect, support and professionalism

Continual reflection, sharing of knowledge, experience and resources to build capacity of all service providers are critical to maximising opportunities for children

Taking time to celebrate, have fun and recognise achievements builds strong healthy teams to optimise service delivery.

In relation to professionalism we believe that:

All members of the community have a right to experience a welcoming environment in which staff interact with all in a positive ethical manner, present with a professional personal appearance, respect confidentiality, and demonstrate reliability

Organisational and our centre goals and policies should drive and be evident in our day to day practice

Grievances should be accepted and acted upon

Advocacy for high quality universally available early childhood programs and child friendly environments is a part of the role of our professional staff team.

In relation to Professional Learning and Development we believe that:

Building new knowledge and capacity amongst our whole community is at the heart of strengthening our service delivery and developing innovative practices to improve outcomes for children

Our staff team must demonstrate a commitment to expanding their knowledge and skills, participating in research, embracing and acting upon new learning and contributing to the expansion of knowledge amongst the broader early childhood community

All research and professional development must be undertaken in an ethical manner.



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Our preschool program is regulated by the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011. Under Regulation 168, all preschools must have a number of designated policies and procedures.

Some of these policies apply generally to all preschool settings across Australia. Others, whilst aligned to the nationally mandated policies, are specific for our local context (and are highlighted later in this booklet).

Policies required are listed below:

Health and safety policies and procedures – National Quality Area 2

- Nutrition, food and beverages, dietary requirements
- Sun protection
- Water safety
- Administration of first aid
- Incident, injury, trauma and illness
- Dealing with infectious diseases
- Dealing with medical conditions
- Emergency and evacuation
- Delivery and collection of children
- Excursions
- Child protection



Australian Children's
Education & Care
Quality Authority™

Staffing arrangements – National Quality Area 4

- Code of conduct
- Determining the responsible person present
- Participation of volunteers and students

Relationships with children – National Quality Area 5

- Interactions with children (Behaviour support)

Service management – National Quality Area 7

- Enrolment
- Orientation
- Acceptance and refusal of authorisations
- Payment of fees
- Prescribed information to meet NQF requirements

INFORMATION PRIVACY AND INFORMATION SHARING STATEMENTS



The Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) is committed to respecting the confidentiality of information provided by children/students and parents.

There will be occasions where sharing information with others outside DECD will be important to your child's educational progress, safety or wellbeing. In these circumstances, DECD follows the SA Government's *Information Sharing: Guidelines for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and families*.

Details about these statements are outlined on the front page of our preschool enrolment form. Parents/Guardians are asked to sign this page as part of our enrolment process.



WOODCROFT HEIGHTS CHILDREN'S CENTRE, PRESCHOOL PROGRAMME

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM/PROGRAM

Curriculum planning in a preschool is quite a complex process, based on the needs, interests and skills of the individual children who attend the centre. When children arrive at preschool, they bring with them a wide range of abilities, experiences and values. Our role as educators is to provide an environment which will support, stimulate and structure the learning for each child in a safe, caring and nurturing setting. We aim to do a lot more than 'keep our children amused' while they are with us.



A national Early Years Learning Framework, '*Belonging, Being and Becoming*' is used by centre staff to support curriculum planning at our centre. This framework has a specific emphasis on play-based learning. When children play, they learn about themselves, other people and the world around them. They develop their ability to communicate, develop and practise physical skills, and they learn to solve a multitude of problems. The Early Years Learning Framework recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development for all young children. An outline of our centre program is always displayed in the centre.



Working in partnership with families is a high priority for staff in our centre. As part of our commitment to providing the best possible learning environment for each child, we ask parents to complete a 'Child Profile' when children commence preschool. The staff will use the information that you provide on this profile together with observations we make and 'work' samples that we collect to help plan an interesting and relevant program for your child.

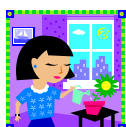
Preschool staff are committed to providing you with information about your child's participation in our programme and developmental progress. This happens in a number of ways. Firstly, staff are always more than happy to have face to face discussions with you – either brief informal conversations when you come to the centre or longer formal discussions by appointment. Secondly, a brief written report is provided at the end of each preschool term (for children attending fulltime preschool sessions). A comprehensive written report is also provided at the end of the year as children transition to school. Centre displays and newsletters also provide valuable information about centre activities.

TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD: WHAT HAPPENED AT KINDERGARTEN TODAY?

All of us as parents like to be confident that our children have been happy and busy at preschool. The staff at the centre are always willing to talk with you about aspects of our programme or any concerns you have about your child – so please do not be afraid to approach us at any time!

A natural question for parents to ask children at the end of a session is, "What did you do at kindy today?" A very common (and normal) response to this question is, "Nothing." Please be assured that your child will not have spent their whole time at preschool doing 'nothing'. Children often need time to digest their day, to sort it out and think about it. They may only be willing to talk about preschool at a later time – maybe late in the afternoon or evening. You may gain insights into a child's day just by watching or listening to them – eg singing songs to themselves. It is also important to mention that if children are asked the same question as a matter of routine, they may become bored with the question and 'fob you off' with a very 'routine' answer. Children, just like adults, may also sense if you are in a hurry or not really interested in listening to them and will answer accordingly.

It is also worthwhile to reassure you that children who present their parents with large numbers of drawings, paintings and pastings at the end of every session are not the only ones who have been busy at kindergarten! Children who have spent their day playing with dough, doing puzzles, reading books or playing in the sand pit will have been involved in very valuable learning experiences but will not present you with a tangible product to take home.



ROUTINES AND HOUSEKEEPING INFORMATION

WELCOME AND FAREWELL OF CHILDREN

Please always bring children right into the preschool area at the beginning of sessions so that staff can welcome them and can mark them as present on the roll. A staff member sitting at a table close to the main door into the preschool will mark children as present as they arrive. At the end of sessions staff will only release a child to an adult who is recorded on their enrolment form as having authority to collect them unless prior arrangements have been made. This can be done via the 'Parent Communication' book which is located under the Fees Box. The 'Parent Communication' book should be completed and signed every time a person nominated by you has been given permission to collect your child (unless a regular arrangement (eg with a Long Day Care Centre) has been recorded on your child's enrolment form and confirmed by staff at the beginning of each term). If changes to arrangements for collection of a child occur during a session please ring the centre.

Please ensure that preschool staff and child care centre staff, family day care providers or OSHC staff are clearly informed regarding arrangements for 'drop off' and 'collection' of children.

SESSION TIMES

FULLTIME KINDERGARTEN

GROUP 1 (GREEN GROUP)

Monday	8.50 – 3.00pm
Tuesday	8.50 – 3.00pm
Wednesday	12.20 – 3.00pm

GROUP 2 (GOLD GROUP)

Wednesday	8.50 – 11.30am
Thursday	8.50 – 3.00pm
Friday	8.50 – 3.00pm

DAILY TIMETABLE

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

8.50 – 9.15	Inside Play
9.15 – 10.30	Inside/Outside Play
10.30 – 10.45	Group Time
10.45 – 11.00	Snack Time
11.00 – 12.00	Inside/Outside Play
12.00 – 12.30	Lunch Break
12.30 – 1.15	Quieter Inside Play
1.15 – 2.15	Inside/Outside Play
2.15 – 2.30	Snack Time
2.30 – 2.45	Inside/Outside Play
2.45 – 3.00	Group Time
3.00	Farewell



Wednesday Morning (Gold Group)

8.50 – 9.00 Inside Play
9.30 – 10.15 Woodcroft Primary School Library visit
10.15 – 10.30 Snack Time
10.30 – 11.15 Inside/Outside Play
11.15 – 11.30 Group Time
11.30 Farewell

Wednesday Afternoon (Green Group)

12.20 – 12.45 Inside Play
12.45 – 1.40 Inside/Outside Play
1.40 – 2.00 Snack Time
2.00 – 2.45 Woodcroft Primary School Library visit
2.45 – 3.00 Group Time
3.00 Farewell

FEES (2017)

Fees per term

Fulltime Kindergarten (2 days or 2 1/2 days)	\$110.00
One half day per week	\$30.00
One full day per week	\$55.00

Fees can be paid by cash, cheque or direct credit into the centre bank account.

The 'Fees Box' is located on the wall toward at the southern end of the preschool space adjacent to the store room. Kindergarten fees, direct credit advice or other money (eg raffle money) can be placed in this box. Money should be sealed in an envelope (envelopes are available close to the fees box). Please ensure that all money placed in the Fees Box is **clearly labelled** giving your child's name, the amount enclosed, what the money is for, and the date.

POCKETS

Each child who attends Kindergarten sessions has a 'pocket' located adjacent the Director's Office. These pockets are information or communication pockets and staff will use these to pass on information such as newsletters and receipts etc. Please check your pocket regularly.

NOTICEBOARDS

A range of pamphlets on diverse topics is available on the wall in the main entry foyer. A Pin-up board is located close to the main entry door to the preschool contains information about a wide variety of courses, events and services available within the centre and local community. Please take time to read these regularly. General reminders and information about current and up coming events is often posted on main entry doors. Please take note of this information each time you come to the centre.

LITERACY KITS

Literacy kits are available for preschool children to borrow on a rotational roster. Please look for information in newsletters or ask one of the staff about the borrowing roster and processes for these kits.

LIBRARY VISITS

As part of our preschool programme children visit the Woodcroft Primary School Resource centre on a weekly basis. Children are able to borrow books during these visits. Books can be borrowed for one week at a time. Children who wish to borrow books must have a cloth library bag separate from their regular kindergarten bag to ensure that books are well protected. Children are only able to borrow when they attend fulltime kindergarten on the days that library visits are scheduled. In 2017 library visits will be scheduled on Wednesdays.



CLOTHING

All kindergarten children need a 'sunsmart' legionnaire style, 'bucket' or wide brimmed hat for outdoor play. We adopt a 'no sunsmart hat no outdoor play' policy in this centre (ie children who do not have a sunsmart hat as recommended by the Cancer Council are asked to play inside or under the verandah).

Please ensure that all clothing is comfortable, sunsmart and allows children to participate in all kindergarten activities fully and safely. Clothing and footwear (eg flowing dresses and thongs) which can be caught up in climbing equipment are not recommended.

A spare set of clothes 'just in case of accidents' is recommended.

Centre T-shirts, polo tops and windcheaters with the kindergarten logo are available for purchase from the centre.

Please ensure that all belongings including bags, hats, lunch boxes, drink bottles and shoes are **clearly named!**

SUNSCREEN

The Cancer Council SA recommends that people protect their skin at times when UV radiation level is 3 and above. In South Australia, UV radiation levels are 3 and above every day from September to April.

Woodcroft Heights Children's Centre we adopt a 'no sunsmart hat, no outdoor play' play policy during preschool sessions. (If the daily UV alert indicates UV levels below 3, staff may use their discretion and love hats).

Parents/guardians are encouraged to apply SPF50+ sunscreen to children at least 20 minutes before bringing them to preschool sessions.

When children attend a preschool program for more than half a day staff will support and assist them to apply sunscreen (to their face, neck and limbs) during the day when UV Index levels are moderate and above. This will occur as part of regular preschool 'lunchtime' routines during term 1, 3 and 4 and as deemed warranted at other times (eg in terms 2). All sunscreen made available for children by the Children's Centre is recommended by the Cancer Council SA (generally 'Kids Sunscreen SPF50+' – a gentle fragrance free product).

SNACKS, LUNCH AND DRINKS

Children need to bring two healthy snacks (eg fruit, cheese or a healthy sandwich) for snack time on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Children need one healthy snack on Wednesdays. A number of foods including all barlines, yoghurts, custards, canned fruits, lollies, chocolate, cakes or sweet biscuits are 'non recommended' for snack time. Please note that foods such as yoghurt in plastic tubes and small containers of fruit in syrup are often high in sugar as well as difficult for children to manage at snack time and are frequently spilt and wasted. Parents are requested not to send food containing nuts or eggs to ensure the safety of children who have anaphylactic reactions to these foods.

As part of our centre commitment to environmental sustainability, parents are asked to consider the style of packaging used for children's food. Many highly packaged foods are very expensive and produce significant amounts of rubbish which must be disposed of.

Children are encouraged to drink water at preschool. Please send water in a drink bottle or provide a plastic cup for your child. Please ensure that bottles and cups are **clearly named.**

On Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays children will need to bring a packed lunch. We encourage families to help their children to put their **lunch** in the fridge.

Please organise your child's food for the day into **three separate containers**. Parents are encouraged to explain to their child that one container is for 'fruit-time' in the morning, one is for lunch and one is for afternoon 'fruit-time' and to remind them that their lunch has been placed in the fridge and that the teachers will get it out at lunch time.

GENERAL ENROLMENT INFORMATION

Completion of an enrolment form is a vital part of the preschool enrolment process for our centre. For the safety of your child it is vitally important that all information given to the centre is kept up to date at all times. If you change your address, phone number, emergency contact or any other information please advise us immediately.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents bring a wide variety of skills to our centre and we are always eager for you to share your talents with us. If you are able to undertake a task at home (eg sewing or repairing toys) or you would like to assist during a preschool session please talk with the staff at any time. If you are interested in being a part of our Governing Council please come along to one of our meetings which are held monthly.



ADDITIONAL NEEDS

As part of DECD, the preschool is able to access assessment and support services for children with a range of additional needs (eg Speech Pathology). Although there is often a waiting period for these services, they are offered at no cost, so please speak with staff if you have concerns at any time about your child's development.

ILLNESS

Children do not enjoy preschool when they are unwell and are best kept at home until they recover. Children must be excluded from the centre, under DECD guidelines, when they are suffering from some conditions (eg Chickenpox). Further information is available from the staff, upon request, regarding specific illnesses and exclusion times.



As part of the enrolment process, a number of questions are often asked regarding medical conditions. It is important that medical information about children (eg allergies) recorded at the centre is always kept up to date. Please note that no medication will be given or medical procedures undertaken by staff unless specific training, detailed management plans and specific written medical and parental authorisation has been given. Medication which is brought to the centre must be in its original container, clearly labelled with the child's name, dosage etc and placed in a sealed plastic bag. A daily permission to administer medication should also be signed. All medication should be handed to the Preschool Director on arrival for each preschool session. **Please do not leave medication in children's bags.**

SCHOOL DENTAL SERVICE

At the School Dental Service, dental care is FREE for all babies, children not yet at school and most children to age 17. The School Dental Service is a Child Dental Benefits Schedule provider. Your local clinic is Noarlunga GP Plus Dental Clinic (2 Alexander Kelly Drive, Noarlunga Centre, SA 5168).



PHOTOGRAPHS

Parents are asked to refrain from taking any photographs or video footage of children (other than your own children) within the centre. This is to ensure that we respect the rights of all families, and to ensure that the safety of children is not compromised through inappropriate distribution of photographs (eg via the internet).

OCCASIONAL CARE

DECD Occasional Care services are child care services for children under school age in community-based locations, including DECD preschools. Occasional Care provides 'short term' child care to enable parents/caregivers to participate in activities, fulfil work commitments, keep appointments, or have a break from their child/ren on an *occasional* basis rather than as a regular booking in a long day care centre. Occasional Care sessions operate alongside of regular preschool sessions.

Occasional Care is provided on a *sessional* basis and can be booked for a maximum of one term in advance. All fees MUST be paid on entry to each session. There are two fee structures. \$1.50 for the first child for families who have a current Health Care Concession Card and \$5.00 for families not eligible



for concession. Second and subsequent children attending in the same week are charged at half the cost for the first child.

Sessions available in 2017

Children Over 2 years of age

Mondays	12.10 – 03.10pm
Tuesdays	08.45 – 11.45am
Tuesdays	12.10 - 03.10pm
Wednesdays	08.45 – 11.45am
Thursdays	08.45 – 11.45am

Children Under 2 years of age

Tuesdays	08.45 – 11.45am
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QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

We all expect quality and expert family support, care and teaching for your child/ren in order that they achieve their potential. Working together will give us the best chance of solving a problem that may arise during the time you and child/ren attend programs at our centre.

We recognise that at times things may go wrong. If you have a concern or a complaint, we want you to let us know. It's important to learn from mistakes or misunderstandings so that we can improve experiences and learning opportunities for your family and your child/ren and also improve processes where possible.

The first step in working through a complaint is to talk to one of our teaching staff or program coordinators (if an issue relates to one of our community programs (eg Playgroup), and then the Director if you still are not happy.

About complaints or concerns

This information may be helpful in explaining what a complaint is:

A complaint may be made by a parent if they think that the centre has, for example, done something wrong or failed to do something it should have done or acted unfairly or impolitely.

Your concern or complaint may be about: the type, level or quality of services or the behaviour and decisions of staff or a policy, procedure or practice.

Sometimes a complaint is about something we have to do because of state or federal law. In such cases we are able to talk to you about the matter and help you understand the requirements and why they exist.

If you'd like more information please ring the centre on 8381 8005 or come and ask to speak with the Director. If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been resolved locally, further information is available on the department's website at

<https://www.decd.sa.gov.au/department/about-department/contact-department/feedback-and-complaints-about-school-or-preschool>. You can also email

DECD.EducationComplaint@sa.gov.au or Phone: 1800 677 435 (standard call rates apply for calls from mobile phones).

If your issue cannot be resolved through the previous steps you may choose to seek independent advice by an external agency. Information is available at:

SA Ombudsman

Toll free: 1800 182 150

Phone: 8226 8699

Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.sa.gov.au

www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au



COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

As a 'Children's Centre' we are fortunate to have a Community Development Coordinator (CDC), Family Services Coordinator (FSC), Speech Pathologist and Occupational Therapist employed as part of our staff team. The role of the CDC is to facilitate the development and implementation of programs which support parents and families. In our centre our CDC currently coordinates family and specialist playgroups and organises parenting programs as needed.

We are also fortunate to have a part time Family Services Coordinator (FSC) as part of our team. The role of the FSC is to provide targeted support to families experiencing challenging situations.

Our centre Speech Pathologist and Occupational Therapist can provide information, support, advice and programs to support healthy speech and language and physical development in young children.

Our centre offers regular 'Foodbank' services for families. 'Foodbank' is available in the front foyer. Families are encouraged to make a gold coin donation to ensure the viability of this program.

