

SINGLETON HEIGHTS PRE-SCHOOL INC.



PHILOSOPHY

RELEVANT LEGISLATION / LINKS:

ACT: Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010: Section 323

REGULATIONS: Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 73, 155, 162, 166, 168,

NQS: 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2

Our Centre Philosophy is a theory, or attitude, that acts as a guiding principle for behaviour, in an environment which honours and is committed to the rights of all children, child protection and child safe practices.

Play

We see play as being the "heartbeat" of our Pre-School programme. The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia defines play-based learning as "a context for learning through which children organise and make sense of their social worlds, as they engage actively with people, objects and representations".

Within the context of play there exists a myriad of learning opportunities. Children explore social relationships, contribute ideas and take on the ideas of others. Play provides the opportunity to experiment, explore, discover, to solve problems. As children play there are opportunities to talk, to listen and to explore language. There are also opportunities to relax, to have fun, to experience and to express joy.

Our teaching team plays an important part in supporting children's learning within the context of our play-based programme. We provide resources which support children to form connections, to explore, create, construct and solve problems. We maintain a balance between experiences which are initiated by the children and those which are supported or facilitated by thoughtful and intentional teaching.

Relationships and Communication

We see one of the key elements of our Pre-School programme as supporting children in developing the tools, knowledge and insights of communication and how to initiate, develop and sustain positive relationships and social connections. In terms of having a sense of belonging, relationships are pivotal. We endeavour to place an emphasis on communication, positive relationship building and also on learning within the context of groups and social contexts throughout our Pre-School day. We place a value on supporting and fostering positive and respectful relationships and communication between Pre-School staff and families, and within the Pre-School staff team.

Fun, Exploration, Creativity and Engagement

We believe that preschool should be an enjoyable and fun place for children to be. We see children as being active participants in their own learning and recognise that this will happen best in an environment which provides fun, enjoyable and engaging experiences and where children are supported and encouraged to be creative and to think creatively. They are given time to explore their setting, test out ideas, investigate, ask questions, and express curiosity and wonder in their world.

Learning, Education and Transition to School

We support all areas of the curriculum through our educational, play-based programme. Foundations of literacy, numeracy and other pre-academic skills are learnt both in the context of play, and through responsive and intentional teaching. In practice, we look for opportunities to engage with children about text and meaning, language, rhyming, ordering, counting, matching, while developing emotional regulation, social skills, coordination, dexterity, independence and responsibility in a natural play-based context.

Our programme aims to equip children for a positive transition to school, and we pay attention to research that suggests that emotional and social preparedness are key drivers in terms of being ready for school. Further, we pay attention to the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia which reminds us to focus on a child's "being" as well as a child's "becoming". That is, a recognition of the here and now as well as future development and transitions.

Inclusion, Respect, Social Justice and Acceptance

Singleton Heights Pre-school acknowledges, embraces and respects the uniqueness of each child and their family, culture, structure, language, beliefs and customs. We acknowledge that children learn within the context of their family and extended community and that they bring this knowledge and a wide range of experiences, with them to preschool.

We place a value on ensuring that our programme is accessible and meaningful for all children, that it includes and supports children and families with diverse abilities and alternative perspectives. We extend this attitude of inclusion, respect and acceptance to visitors, students, and Pre-School staff members.

We acknowledge that the Pre-School stands on the land of the Wanaruah people and the deep feeling of attachment and relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have to their land. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the thousands of years of learning that has taken place on this land and are committed to the principles of Reconciliation.

Caring and Nurturing

We place a value on providing a caring and nurturing environment for children, their families and for Pre-School staff. If people feel cared for and nurtured, this supports healthy emotional, physical and mental development and engenders a sense of belonging, self-worth and connection.

We are committed to children learning about our environment and the continual improvement of sustainable practices within the Pre-School. We also endeavour to promote practices with families and our local community, which care for and nurture our environment.

The Learning Environment

Research tells us that the environment has a crucial and formative impact on the way children's brains develop. We believe that our learning environment should support the development of children who can make choices, think independently, accept challenges, explore ideas, appreciate beauty, appreciate diversity, ask questions, feel nurtured, safe, and well cared for. It should invite curiosity and be a source of pleasure and enjoyment within a social play-based context.

We aim to place an equal value on the learning through play that takes place both indoors and outdoors. We believe that a gentle rhythm to the day and routine, help create a sense of security, however, we also believe in an environment that is responsive to children's own rhythm, interests, ideas and contributions.

We believe in the capacity the environment has to influence thinking, mood, behaviour, learning and emotions. With this in mind we aim to establish an environment that is aesthetically pleasing, with an emphasis on a home like setting, de-institutionalisation, high quality materials, use of natural and found objects, and acknowledgement of sustainable practice.

Early Childhood Education is Important

The early childhood years are crucial and formative years. What takes place during these years plays an important part in determining the way a person feels about him or herself, the way a person relates to others, their capacity to solve problems, the way a person thinks and learns.

At Singleton Heights Preschool we recognise the tremendous importance of these early childhood years and the subsequent importance of our role as early childhood educators in supporting, nurturing and facilitating growth and development of children.

With this in mind, we believe that it is important to establish a professional culture of reflective practice, one where ongoing professional development for Educators is supported and encouraged, an environment where there are high expectations for the quality of the educational programme and a mutual respect between families and educators as we work together to ensure a positive start in the early years for pre-school children.

Singleton Heights Preschool acknowledges that qualified and committed educators are a core factor in the quality of a service. We believe adults, in our preschool, bring with them their own sense of being and are encouraged to share information in relation to early childhood development and teaching pedagogy.

Community and Connections

We recognise that all children, their families and staff are part of a wider community. We place a value on building connections between a child's home, family and the preschool. Supporting these connections helps children develop a sense of belonging and self-worth if they know that their teachers and families have a shared interest in what's happening in their world.

We believe that community and connections within that community are essential both individually and collectively and help contribute towards a healthy personal development and a healthy society. We endeavour not only to nurture and foster a healthy community within, but also to look outwards and to form connections with people and places outside the preschool.

We believe that it is important for children (and adults) to have an understanding of what it is to belong to a community and we endeavour to help children understand what it is to "belong" in a number of contexts. We believe that children are citizens in their own right and as such have the opportunity to participate, contribute and engage meaningfully within their various communities.