Henley Community Kindergarten

Philosophy Statement

‘Because children grow up, we think a child’s purpose is to grow up. But a child’s purpose is to be a child.’ (Tom Stoppard 2002)

Children have a right to a childhood where they can dig in the dirt, jump in puddles, explore, create and quite simply – to just BE.

We believe that learning and development is a holistic process and that children’s emotional, social and spiritual* development are integral in physical and intellectual growth and the ability to develop the skills necessary for life long learning.

We value the knowledge and experience of families as their child’s first educators. We believe that children, families and educators all need to feel a sense of belonging both within their immediate environment and the wider community and that this is crucial in forming relationships. The nature of being in a group provides opportunities for mutually beneficial interactions and teaches us about cooperation and being positive contributors to our kindergarten community.

Our kindergarten welcomes all families and shares their lives, skills and interests supporting and encouraging them to take an active role in their child’s education and learning experiences.

We aim to provide a child friendly, home-like environment with quality resources that are primarily open-ended and made from natural materials where possible.

Educators programme for generous periods of time for uninterrupted play both indoors and outdoors every day. ‘Play expands children’s thinking and enhances their desire to know and learn promoting positive dispositions towards lifelong learning’ (EYLF 2009). We provide opportunities for children to develop deep connections with nature through interactive and adventurous free play in natural outdoor environments.

‘Nature play allows children to experience nature and can have physical, cognitive, and emotional benefits such as risk taking, discovery, exploration, imagination, sensory, physical, team work and cooperation. Increasing urbanisation and smaller backyards have significantly reduced children’s daily contact with the natural environment and their connection with it’. www.natural resources.sa.gov.au

We promote the right of every child to a high quality childhood which includes trusting children as capable and competent self-risk assessors. We endeavour to provide a safe yet challenging environment that promotes independent choice and a sense of freedom. We believe that accidents will happen and young children will come home with bumps and scratches as they learn from their mistakes. Adults support children in undertaking self-chosen risks in a supervised environment to develop their self-esteem and self-confidence.

We believe in taking responsibility for the sustainability of our world and we support the children to develop the ability to make choices and decisions to influence events and to have an impact on one’s own world.

*Spiritual refers to a range of human experiences including a sense of awe and wonder, and an exploration of being and knowing.

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