



## **Welcome to Echunga Preschool**

### **Located in the Fairy Wren Building**

Welcome to Echunga Preschool. We look forward to getting to know you and your child in their preschool year and trust it will be an exciting and enjoyable learning journey for all of us.

#### **Acknowledgement of Country**

We acknowledge that the land the Echunga Preschool is built upon is the traditional ancestral land of the Kurna people. We acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of the Kurna people to this land and their ongoing custodianship. We also pay respect to the cultural authority to the Aboriginal people visiting from other areas of South Australia or Australia present here.

#### **Enrolment**

The enrolment process starts in the year preceding a child's entry into Preschool and is as follows:

- Families with eligible aged Preschool child/ren for the following year, are asked to fill out an Expression of Interest Form, available from Merridee in the front office (forms can be posted, emailed or collected in person). Eligible children must be 4 years old by April 30th in the year they commence Preschool.
- In August, Round One offers are sent to families in the local catchment area with acceptances due by a requested date.
- After this, Round Two offers are made for any remaining vacancies to families outside of the catchment area with an acceptance date to confirm a child's place.
- Once an offer has been made, Enrolment forms will need to be completed and signed by the Principal. On enrolment of your child, we need to sight one of the following: birth certificate; passport; or official Centrelink documentation.

#### **Term Dates**

For SA school term dates go to the Department for Education (South Australia) website.

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/south-australian-state-schools-term-dates>

## **Parent Communication**

**Emails** - Families receive regular Preschool information electronically as well as the Echunga Primary School newsletter emailed in weeks 3,6 & 9 of each term. Please see Merridee in the front office if you haven't received a school newsletter by Week 4.

**Information pockets** - Each family will have an information pocket located in the kitchen area. Please check these regularly.

**Parent noticeboard** - Our parent noticeboard is located just inside the front door and has a variety of health and community information.

**Change of phone/address/email** - Please inform Merridee and Preschool staff as soon as possible if there is a change to any of your contact details, especially phone/email.

## **Fruit, Lunch & Water**

Please send morning and afternoon fruit ready for your child to eat (pre-cut in a container or labelled if necessary). Fruit is placed on the trays in the morning. Fruit time is set aside for a nutritious fruit or vegetable snack, no sugary foods please (ie lollies, cakes or roll-ups). Please send a named full water bottle along with a healthy lunch for your child. In line with the school, we promote sustainable and healthy food choices and encourage re-usable containers to minimise packaging (often referred to as 'nude food'.) The Right Bite Manual is a great source of nutritious and tasty lunch ideas and can be found on the Department for Education website.

[Right bite ready reckoner](#)

## **Clothing**

Please send children in clothing that is easy for them to manage, protects them from the sun (and cold in winter) and allows them to be able to play without being unduly worried about getting dirty. Children need to have shoes that they can independently take off and put on (Velcro is good!). Shoes need to be secure and safe for climbing and running.

Please send a change of clothes including socks and a plastic bag for any wet items.

Rubber boots, jackets and warm hats are required items for outside play in the winter months. Please label all clothing with your child's name.

## **Sun safety**

To protect children from skin damage from exposure to the sun we:

- \* Encourage children to wear protective clothing for outside play
- \* Set up activities and encourage play in shaded areas
- \* Alter the routine by having outdoor play outside of peak forecast "very high" and "extreme" UV levels.

When the predicted UV Index is 3 or above parents are encouraged to apply sunscreen to their child prior to the start of the Preschool day and to ensure that children have a non-corded broad brimmed hats which is compulsory for outside play. We provide sunscreen for reapplication after lunch and staff will assist children in re-applying as required. We use a broad spectrum Sunscreen SPF 50. Please see staff if you have any concerns about the use or brand of sunscreen used.

### **Siesta**

Each afternoon we have a quiet time, which we call Siesta, where children are encouraged to lie down and listen to relaxing music to help them self-regulate and recharge. Each child needs to bring a plain **small square shaped** cushion that will be kept at Preschool. We will supply a blanket for children to use. Blankets will be laundered on a regular basis through the parent washing roster.

### **Settling routine**

If you believe your child may have difficulty separating from you, it is a good idea to develop a plan with your child beforehand, such as you will help them to unpack, read a story or do a puzzle, then 1 hug and say goodbye. You are welcome to contact us to find out how your child is settling, if needed. We will contact you if your child experiences ongoing distress. Staff are happy to assist children and parents in the separation process and this can also be a part of your routine.

### **Toys from home**

We welcome the sharing of interesting finds from nature such as rocks, shells, nests etc or contributions to a topic, but we ask that you leave toys at home. It can be very upsetting for a child to have a toy break or for a small piece to be lost (sometimes in the sandpit).

Toys from home also become problematic when some children are given permission by the owner to be played with and others not.

We will have special days, for example soft toy day, wheels day, dress ups or teddy bear's picnic when everyone can bring along a toy.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are a special event in a child's life. When it is your child's birthday we will celebrate this with a special activity, decorating a paper lantern. Children will receive a card, have "Happy Birthday" sung in both English and Spanish, and share a group birthday story. At the end of each term we will have a special activity, in which the "birthday children of the term" will celebrate their birthday with the rest of the group. Due to food allergies and our Healthy Eating Policy ***please do not send birthday cakes.***

### School Library

We visit the library during Preschool time and borrow books to take back to our library shelves in the Preschool.

Families are welcomed and encouraged to borrow from the library with their children to assist them with the selection of books suitable for their age and interest. Children may borrow 2 books at a time as often as you/they wish. Library borrowing times are 8:30-9:00am and 3:15-3:40pm Mon-Thurs.

### Fiesta Playgroup

Our Spanish themed playgroup links with the Preschool and school Spanish programs. It provides an entry point for families and children to connect and build relationships with the Preschool. More information is available on the Echunga Primary School website and there are flyers on the Community Noticeboard. *¡Nos vemos pronto!* (See you soon!)

### Arrival, Departure and Changes to Collection

There is a large amount of setting up to be done before each session and we would appreciate families not arriving before 9am.

If you know there will be a change to the collection of your child please let us know so we can record it on the attendance form. Please remember to tell your child if somebody different will be collecting them. It is essential for us to have an **accurate** list of "authorised" persons to which we can refer. Your list of authorised persons can be amended at any time and new information deleted or upgraded. Please see staff if you need a form to do this.

### Child Absence

We would appreciate being informed if your child will be absent (phone Merridee 83888306 from 8am or let us know in advance for planned absences).

### Medication and Illness

If your child is required to take any medication during the day, it is mandated that we have a **written plan** from a doctor. Staff must follow a strict procedure to administer and record any medication given. For ongoing medical conditions such as an allergy or asthma, staff will regularly check quantities and use-by-dates on medication.

Children with a medical condition (such as asthma or an allergy) require a Health Care Plan from a doctor.

We are required to inform families of the outbreak of certain infectious diseases. For more information about infectious diseases see 'You've got what?' on the SA Health website.

<http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/>

## **Immunisations**

Department for Education early childhood services currently ask parents to show that their child has received the [scheduled childhood immunisations](#) during the enrolment process.

This means that families with children enrolled in a department preschool are asked to provide immunisation evidence to their service by the end of Term 1.

Please bring one of the following at enrolment:

- SA Child Health and Development record (known as the "Blue Book")  
or
- Australian Immunisation Childhood register (ACIR) history statement.

If your child is not up to date with their immunisations and there is an occurrence of a vaccine preventable disease at the service, then your child will be asked to stay away from the service for a period of time, known as an exclusion period.

If we do not have evidence of your child's immunisation status and there is an outbreak of vaccine preventable disease, your child will be treated as not up to date with their immunisations and excluded.

Please inform Merridee in the front office as your child receives any immunisations throughout the year. Current information about immunisations is available from your doctor, local council, or Child & Youth Services (Ph: 83913922). Further information is available on [www.decd.sa.gov.au](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au).

## **Injury and First Aid**

If your child receives any first aid while at Preschool, we are required to record the details in a permanent register. If your child becomes unwell or has an injury of concern during the day we will contact you straight away.

For minor injuries, we will also inform you of how the injury occurred and your child's first aid treatment. A red card in your child's newsletter pocket will indicate there is written information about your child's injury and first aid provided.

## **Allergy Awareness**

If there are any food allergies at our Preschool (children or staff) we will notify all families in writing of necessary food precautions and/or restrictions.

## **Child & Family Health**

A free 4 year old health check, including vision and hearing, is offered for children during their Preschool year. You will be invited to attend an appointment with your child to meet with a qualified nurse who will conduct the screening. The screenings are held in a room in the school office area.

## **Special Services**

We have access to the following services provided by the department who assist and advise on specific programmes for children with needs:

- Speech Pathologists
- Psychologists
- Social worker/Family Support
- Special Educators

## **Preschool Program**

In planning for children we offer a comprehensive play based program using the National Curriculum Framework and The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), "Being, Belonging, Becoming".

Being, belonging and becoming are the big ideas that form the basis of the EYLF.

### **Belonging**

To belong is to feel included. It is to feel connected to what is going on around you. Belonging helps to give children the security and confidence to explore their world. By building a sense of belonging, children also build identity, wellbeing and the ability to learn.

### **Being**

Being is about having the chance to be yourself - to do the things that you want to do, and to do them in your own time. The idea of "being" is a reminder that life does not have to be hurried, and that childhood should be a time of joy, wonder and exploration, rather than one of pressure, haste and stress.

### **Becoming**

Becoming highlights our role in helping children achieve their potential. Becoming is about having all the possibilities of life in front of you, all the choices open to you, and how we help children to make the most of these choices.

The 5 Learning Outcomes are designed to integrate and develop the complex learning dispositions, skills, and knowledge of Preschool aged children. EYLF's learning outcomes are broad, long-term accomplishments. They are:

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

Our program is flexible and allows children to:

- ✿ Develop their social skills through interactions with peers and staff in a safe play environment
- ✿ Use their imagination, problem solve, question, contribute to discussions, develop thinking skills and to articulate them
- ✿ Engage and develop areas of personal interest
- ✿ Become independent, self-motivated learners
- ✿ Learn to manage their own time and learning
- ✿ Have opportunities to explore a wide range of learning experiences through play

We use Program Achieve (which focuses on building social and emotional skills) to support children with developing learning dispositions such as

- ✿ Getting along
- ✿ Persisting
- ✿ Confidence
- ✿ Resilience
- ✿ Organisation

We assess and record children's progress through observations, work samples, questions and conversations (individual as well as group) including input and regular feedback from families.

### **Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum**

It is a Department for Education responsibility under the Children's Protection Act (1993) and the Child Protection in Schools, Early Childhood Education and Care Services policy to ensure that effective abuse prevention programs are implemented and that all children and young people have access to the approved child protection curriculum.

Child protection and safety are an important part of the Early Years Learning Framework. Fundamental to the Framework is a view of children's lives as characterised by belonging, being and becoming. Aspects of child protection and safety are embedded throughout the 5 learning outcomes in the Early Years Learning Framework.

There are 2 main themes to the Keeping Safe curriculum:

- We all have the right to be safe
- We can help ourselves to be safe by talking to people we trust

## **Mandatory Notification**

Staff are legally obliged to notify Department of Child Protection of any suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child has been abused or neglected.

## **How can families be involved at Preschool?**

We welcome and value all parent participation.

Some ways to be involved include

- ✿ Contributing time (one off visits or regular volunteering) with a skill/talent eg music, playing an instrument, cooking, sewing, pottery, art, craft, gardening
- ✿ Assisting to plan for your child's learning by providing information when your child commences and throughout the year
- ✿ Providing regular feedback about the program and centre, and making suggestions for improvements
- ✿ Joining the Echunga Primary School Governing Council and being directly involved in decision-making regarding both the Preschool and school.
- ✿ Reading stories, especially first thing in the morning
- ✿ Coming on excursions
- ✿ Preparing collage materials and helping with repairs to resources etc
- ✿ Cleaning toys and equipment (at Preschool or taken home)
- ✿ Taking a turn on the washing roster

## **Echunga Primary School Governing Council**

Preschool parents are welcome to join the Governing Council and it is a good way to meet other Echunga Primary School parents, contribute to decision making, learn more about the school and have a say in School Governance matters.

The AGM, where elections take place, is held in the first term of each year, allowing new families into the school the chance to be involved. Meetings are held twice per term on a Tuesday evening.

Sub committees allow for people with particular interests and/or expertise to contribute their skills such as in areas of finance, fundraising, grounds development (including sustainability), OSHC (before and after school care) etc

## **Community Volunteers**

We often welcome volunteers from the community into the Preschool and acknowledge the rich contribution they make to our site. Volunteers require specific documentation and a clear understanding of their role and expectations. Contact staff for further information.

### **Your child's final term**

Being a Preschool on a school site we are regularly involved in activities and events with the school.

In your child's final term, children going on to Echunga Primary School will be involved in further transition activities, especially with the Junior Primary Rosella class.

At the end of the year you will receive a Statement of Learning Report that shows your child's strengths, interests and progress during the year. With your permission, this information will be shared with your child's new teacher and a copy of the report will be held at your child's school. For children going on to other schools, we will liaise with appropriate staff providing information to ensure continuity of learning for your child.

### **Emergency Planning**

Echunga Preschool has plans in case of emergencies such as internal or external fire, bushfires or threatening situations. Each term we have a safety drill/practice and record the event (the sheet is located behind the front door). Our bush fire drills are practised with the whole school at least twice a year.

Throughout bushfire season, please take note of information in the school's newsletter. If the Preschool is directed to close due to catastrophic fire conditions, an instant messaging system for contacting families is also used the day before the closure. Please refer to information provided at the time of enrolment.

### **Photography of your child and their work**

At enrolment we will seek permission for your child to be photographed by staff while at Preschool. Our Preschool newsletters regularly contain photographs of events and children's learning. Please note that photos are not to be shared or re-posted to any social media platform (for example Facebook) as not all families give permission for their child's image to be shared.

### **Accounts**

Accounts are issued each term and all money needs to be paid to Merridee at the School Office, for which a receipt will be issued. The Echunga Primary School Governing Council sets preschool fees and money received is used to directly resource the Preschool. Fees for 2019 will be \$85 per term. Excursions, specialist programs and in house performances will be invoiced separately. Main excursions, such as to Adelaide, are usually around \$30 (max of 2 per year), specialist art program (4 sessions), around \$20, performances, science workshops, puppet shows/workshop around \$12. These are usually spread throughout the year.

## **Policies**

Parents are able to view our policies at any time on the school and/or Department for Education website. Policies are also available for your viewing in the Preschool Policies folder, located on the kitchen bench, or ask us if you require a hard copy to take home. Each policy has a review date and we will seek parent input at this time. Site-specific policies are ratified by the Echunga Primary School Governing Council.

## **Out of School Hours Care (OSHC)**

Out of School Hours Care (Before School, After School and Vacation Care) is available to a limited number of Preschool children from their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday. If you are interested in accessing this service please ring Jodie, OSHC Director on 83888563.