



SMALL FRIENDS
—CHILD CARE & EDUCATION—

Policies and procedures

PHILOSOPHY

“For a child play is work and work is play.” (Young Children Explaining and Learning – Lindberg & Swedlowk (1985)). Our philosophy is developed on this belief. Too often this important learning process is belittled and goes unrecognised.

Small Friends Playschool is a reflection of the child’s home where they feel warmth and security. Each child is known as an individual and accepted and planned for as such.

They feel respect and ownership of the playschool. Their work is displayed at their level, and they are encouraged to change the displays. Ideas are discussed and encouraged; this has a bearing on the program.

Children work from learning centres using open-ended activities. All resources and materials are accessible to encourage the children to make problem solving decisions and creative choices to enhance their ideas.

There are private and group areas to allow time for reflection. Although we have a timetable and routine it is flexible allowing the children time to finish or leave and return to later developing their areas of learning. All transitions are pre- warned, and time is given to move confidently.

The children are encouraged to care for their playschool and join in all the organisation of activities that educators have to undertake.

Role-play is a major focus with a variety of ideas and involvement with the community. Parents are encouraged to participate and understand the process of their child’s learning. They are also encouraged to feel the playschool is theirs as well.

Our outside environment reflects our ideas with a variety of learning centres that can be extended or modified. The children help with the planning and are encouraged to make changes. Their senses are an important focus using plants, textures, animals, trees and sound in a creative environment promoting imagination.

We recognise play as an important facilitation of learning. Play for each child is intense, purposeful and serious. We will recognise individual needs through observation and offer the life experiences required to advance through play.

“Play is in essence untouchable, a private experience, a unique and novel and fascinating part of childhood without which it may be impossible to reach adulthood.” Otto Weininger

Teacher & Teacher Assistant Within Learning Centres

Firstly, we must ensure that the environment is safe and hygienic. The centres are arranged to promote independence through self-selection, and it is their responsibility to return the items.

Play is our major focus and here we act as facilitator and listener. Time is given to discuss and finish tasks. The children will work independently or in small groups. Activities will promote problem solving and investigation and here the children and adults will scaffold together.

Time will be given for observations and conferencing to see if the centres are producing the required skills. Children will be involved in the planning and change of the centres. Their individual needs will be taken into consideration.

A variety of concrete materials will be introduced in meaningful contexts. The open-ended activities will accommodate everyone's different rate of learning.

The adults will be supportive and nurturing of the child's self-concept.

We trust in the power of play and will listen, observe, document and interpret when to intervene in the children's play.

The staff and children have a sense of belonging and worth and are given recognition and praise for their efforts.

All staff are encouraged to develop their own knowledge in areas that they feel are needed. Workshops will be frequently organised.

OUR BELIEFS

Gender Equity

We believe that our environment will be free from sex roles and stereotypes.

From a young age child notice gender differences and we will value these differences and nurture their growing sense of self whilst providing equal opportunities for both sexes.

In practice:

- All educators will be aware of their body language and facial expressions.
- There will be no activities for one particular sex.
- Children will see their educators performing non-traditional tasks and respecting each other in an equitable way.
- The environment will encourage both sexes to participate in all activities.

Cultural Diversity

Australia is made up of a diverse cultural society. Each has different and sometimes similar values. We believe these values should be recognised and respected. The children will be able to play in an environment free of racial prejudice.

In practice:

- We will use role-play equipment demonstrating all cultural backgrounds and differences (i.e. food, dolls, crockery)
- Cooking will be both traditional and non-traditional
- Puzzles will depict other races
- Language will not be restricted to Australian
- Rhymes and stories from other countries will be offered
- Children will be helped to recognise any prejudices they may have

Children and Educators with Additional Needs

We believe that children and educators with disabilities should be able to access our centre. They will integrate with the other children/adults learning from each other.

In practice:

- Our environment will be designed to cater for a child/adult with a disability.
- The disability will be discussed with the child/adult and they can help plan for their needs.
- An individual program will be developed with the help of the parents and long term and short-term goals decided.
- Extra educators may be required, and certain agencies involved.
- We will work as a team for the benefit of the child/adult integrating them within our centre.

Resources

We believe it is very important to have an extensive variety of good quality equipment. Children's learning is done through firsthand experiences, so resources need to be easily accessible and safe. They need to be interesting and stimulating actively engaging the child's interest.

In Practice:

- The resources will be multi-functional meeting the child's needs in their domains of learning.
- They will be creative and plentiful enabling group work.
- Some will be everyday items encouraging problem solving.
- The resources will be used when programming for individual or group activities.

Integrated Programme

Our programme will be flexible, meeting the needs of the individual child. It will integrate the areas of learning; cognitive, language, social/emotional, creative and physical. The children's interest will be used when planning the programme. All resources will be developmentally appropriate.

The Programming Process

Our programme will be based on our philosophy reflecting our centres environment and the children's development through the domains.

When planning, we will meet as a team to discuss individual needs especially children with disabilities, cultural differences, English as a second language and any family changes that maybe occurring.

Using the curriculum, first steps materials, student outcome statements and reference books we will then develop some long-term goals.

These will be broad objectives that can become more specific after assessing the children's interest and studying their observations. Any individual education plans will be reviewed at this time.

Our multi-aged grouping will be taken into consideration and most of the activities will take place at conversation times and in the learning centres.

The children will be given the opportunity to use concrete materials in meaningful contexts. The activities will be open-ended giving the children a sense of achievement.

Evaluation on the child, teacher and activity will happen at the end of each lesson. Evaluation is necessary to determine if the programme is meeting the child's needs.

Observation as an individual or group will be in the form of anecdotal records, checklists, time samples and conferencing focusing on their physical, creative, language, cognitive and social and emotional development.

The evaluation should be reflective and contextual ensuring that the children can develop to their full potential.

In practice:

- The programme will focus on learning centres where open-ended activities can take place.
- The children will be encouraged to think creatively and introduce changes wherever possible.
- The learning areas will be changed regularly with the children's input.
- Integration will occur across the subject areas as well as the domains giving the child a holistic approach to learning.

Multi-Aged Grouping

We believe children develop naturally in a multi-aged setting. They can learn and be assisted by their peers. Competition does not occur so readily. The children have more time to scaffold their learning.

In Practice:

- We have children from 2.5 years to 5 years old.
- The children help look after each other showing more tolerance.
- Focus times are divided on ability not necessarily age.
- Activities are age appropriate but open-ended.

Evaluation and Records

This must remain confidential. We will be observing and evaluating the children and regularly adjusting their individual programme on the findings.

In Practice:

- Each staff member will be involved in consultation and assessment.
- Anecdotal records, checklists, time samples and profiles will be kept.
- When appropriate, records will be discussed with parents and relevant agencies.
- Everything will be confidential and with parent approval. The parents will share outcomes for their children.

Parent Involvement

Parents are an important part of an early childhood setting. Their support of the centre and their child is an integral part of the programme. Parents will be able to access teachers at all times and matters will be discussed in utmost confidentiality.

In Practice:

- A parent roster will be established in 4th term.
- Parents will be encouraged to visit at any time.
- Their input will be important and a profile on 'Home to School' will be completed on starting.
- We wish them to feel the centre is as much theirs as ours.
- Communication through newsletters will be sent out termly or when needed.
- They will be encouraged to share their skills, culture and outcomes for their children with us.

We believe that each child should have the chance to develop as an individual in a stimulating creative caring environment. Our programme is based on the criteria in our philosophy meeting the children's needs in an individual or group activity. In making our centre safe and friendly we hope to nurture the children's positive attitude to learning and the parent's involvement.

Behaviour

We aim to foster sociably acceptable behaviour by using a positive approach. Children are made aware of the basic rules that ensure the happiness and well-being of all the children at Playschool.

We will contact you and discuss behavioural strategies with you via phone if we have any concerns or require your support. Our Behaviour Guidance Policy and Managing Anti-Social Behaviour policy is available to view in full in our centre or can be requested to be emailed to you.

Children learn to face a variety of challenges throughout their lives and through this develop not only self-regulation, but positive dispositions such as resilience and perseverance. Learning the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour assists children to regulate their own behaviours in different social and emotional environments when interacting with peers and adults. Behaviour guidance strategies implemented within our Service are appropriate to the child's age and developmental capacity. Children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves and are provided with opportunities for independence and self-regulation. Children are given the opportunity to make choices and experience the consequences of these choices when there is no risk of physical or emotional harm to the child or anyone else. They are acknowledged when they make positive choices in managing their behaviour.

Strategies may include using visual cues, prompting, redirection, re-teaching strategies, developing logical consequences and providing a 'cooling down' period with children. In the instance of adverse behaviour being persistently observed, educators will evaluate their program, room set up, supervision etc. to identify triggers and sources of inappropriate or challenging behaviour. Physically restraining a child will only be used in emergency situations if a child is:

- In a clearly unsafe situation – e.g., attempting to scale a fence or run onto a road
- Physically threatening other children or adults
- Behaving in ways that are destructive to themselves, other people, our pets or the environment.

In Practice we will:

- work collaboratively with educators and professional agencies when required in order to develop a broader understanding of the child's developmental level and share any recent events which may be influencing the child's behaviour
- when required request a parent or guardian collect their child from the service if anti-social behaviour is displayed

- consult with educators and provide consent when the Service is applying for Inclusion Support Funding
- work in partnership with educators and health professionals in the development of a behaviour guidance plan or Individual Support Plan to assist with the identification of challenging behaviour, the development of supportive strategies and the review of strategies implemented within a behaviour guidance plan where required
- create consistency in behaviour guidance strategies used at the service and at home

We offer home visits for support and strategies, please talk with us, we are here to help.

CENTRE ORGANISATION

Management of the Children

Small Friends Playschool enables children to experience independence in thought and movement. The children have a strong feeling of belonging and organisation of the centre and this shows in their care and respect of the equipment. There are limits set which the children feel safe and secure within.

If an area is finished with, they are encouraged to tidy it ready for the next person.

Safety is a major issue and running inside is not encouraged.

The multi-aged grouping encourages caring for others and themselves.

Any inappropriate behaviour is discussed between the offender and victim. The offender is asked how the victim is feeling and what they could do to make them feel better. The victim then decides what should happen (i.e. Continue playing with them or come and do a job with me).

The children are the ones in control of the behaviour. They are helped to resolve conflict situations if they cannot find a solution themselves.

Appropriate behaviour is always encouraged. Parents will be contact in events of anti-social behaviour.

Educators

The role of the Educator is a very important one. Children need complementing personalities to work with.

The Educator is there to provide support for the teacher and the programme. They often see things we may overlook so should be used in observing the children and gathering relevant information.

The team should have a healthy relationship providing a stable emotional environment for the children. Observing positive interaction between adults is a good role model for the children.

The Educator's main objective is to keep the programme and routine running smoothly for the teacher, undertaking a lot of the behind the scenes tasks. The general upkeep of the inside and outside environment of the centre is their responsibility.

They often work in small groups and encourage the children to join in with the daily routines.

Setting out and cleaning up is a team activity. As they are tasked in ensuring that the programme is running smoothly, we will meet every month and go out as a group once a term to discuss the centre's organisation.

Any skills an Educator has should be used with the children especially in the areas of music, art and drama. Training will be frequently available.

Communication should be kept open at all times and respect and support for each other shown. By working as a team, a warm and caring environment will be created, and this will benefit the children in their early years of learning.

The Role of the Parent

Parents know their child the best and should feel relaxed in the centre so that any change can be communicated with ease.

Their input is important with the planning of the centre as often they have valuable skills that can be used.

We have a roster where the parents can come in and join in with their child and the programme. Specific tasks are not given, as this is a time to observe and join in with their child in a learning environment. The children enjoy seeing their parents involved in their education. They are encouraged to stay and join in as they drop off and pick up their child.

Communication between the teacher and parents is very important. We are always accessible and encourage the parent to come to us with the slightest change in routine that could affect their child.

A regular newsletter is sent home as an update of the centre's activities and progress.

Families from other countries are encouraged to share their culture and language. If their child does not speak English, their help is needed.

These parents need to know they are welcome, and their input is valued.

We view our parents as partners in their children's education. Working as a team will be conducive to their child's development and confidence and we recognise the parent's importance in this process.

STAFF & EDUCATORS ACCOUNTABILITY

- To work with the owner, supervising officer and all educators, to ensure a high professional attitude and performance at the service.
- Follow and observe rules, regulations and instructions from the owner/supervising officer.
- To attend staff meetings, to ensure greater communication and sharing of ideas and information.
- To contribute in any way to meetings and discussions as all opinions and ideas are greatly valued
- To pass on any relevant or important information to the owner/supervising officer, that relates to the children or to the administration of the service.
- Refrain from discussing the children and their families in an unprofessional manner within the service and while in the community.
- To report any breakages of equipment or damage to the building to the owner/supervising officer so that appropriate action may be taken.
- To assist in the ordering, or buying, of any equipment or consumables when required.
- To notify the owner/supervising officer if you are unable to attend work at the earliest possible time, either the evening prior to the absent day or before 7am on the day.
- To be a non-smoker during work hours at the service.

TO THE CHILDREN

- To provide stimulating experiences according to the physical, emotional, intellectual and social needs of the children.
- Maintain a consistent positive and caring attitude to the children.
- Model appropriate language and behaviour for the children.
- To participate in all day to day activities and experiences with the children.
- To provide care and education.
- To maintain adequate supervision of the children at all times and be aware of all safety factors.
- To encourage independence in the children according to their developmental levels.
- Observational comment about children's behaviour should be professionally discussed and not personalised. Try to work with other staff members to positively reinforce good behaviour and not dwell on negative attitudes of children.
- To provide care for the animals and maintenance of the garden and general appearance of the building.
- To attend to changing of clothes when soiled or wet-according to the suggested procedure.
- To ensure all children have access to a drink during the day.

- To ensure that children are wearing appropriate clothing for climatic conditions.
- To maintain a safe and hygienic environment.
- To ensure that children stay within the bounds of the service and its fences.

TO OTHER STAFF MEMBERS

- To endeavour to work as a team.
- To share with other staff members all aspects of the job, working towards creating a balance of workload for all.
- To relay any relevant information from parents concerning children in your care to other staff members.
- To notify at least one person upon leaving the area where children are being cared for.
- Demonstrate initiative when you observe a job that needs to be done.
- Qualified staff to give coherent instructions to other staff members and help provide a teamwork atmosphere.
- All staff to endeavour to be considerate to the other staff members and respect their rights to their own thoughts and opinions.

GENERAL CLEANING AND DOMESTIC DUTIES

To ensure that the following duties are shared:

- Bathroom area to be cleaned and disinfected at least twice daily; especially after toileting accidents.
- Sweep or vacuum where necessary.
- Wipe marks off the walls where necessary.
- Wash, dry, fold and put away all laundry.
- Wash tables and chairs after use.
- Disinfect toys and equipment periodically.
- Disinfect children's mattresses when necessary.
- Wash paint post, glue post, brushes etc immediately after use.
- Wash dishes after meals and attend to general cleanliness of the kitchen.
- To undertake any other duties as required by the Owner/Supervising officer.
- To help make the centre a happy, fun, warm and loving place for all

RELIEF STAFF, VOLUNTEERS & STUDENTS ACCOUNTABILITY

- To work with the owner, supervising officer and all educators, to ensure a high professional attitude and performance at the service.
- Follow and observe rules, regulations and instructions from the owner/supervising officer.
- To pass on any relevant or important information to the owner/supervising officer, that relates to the children or to the administration of the service. Please do not take it upon yourself to consult with the parents.
- Refrain from discussing the children and their families in an unprofessional manner within the service and while in the community.
- To report any breakages of equipment or damage to the building to the owner/supervising officer so that appropriate action may be taken.
- To notify the owner/supervising officer if you are unable to attend work at the earliest possible time, either the evening prior to the absent day or before 7am on the day.
- To be a non-smoker during work hours at the service.

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- Wash paint pot, glue pot, brushes etc immediately after use.
- Wash dishes after meals and attend to general cleanliness of the kitchen

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Full copies of our Policies and Procedures can be viewed at anytime in our Playschool

✓REG – Required as per the Educational and Care Services National Regulations [Regulation 168, 169]

✓OP – Operational (Essential but not specifically stipulated in the regulations)

QA 1- Educational program and practice	REG	OP	RELATED PROCEDURES
Additional Needs Policy		✓	Additional Needs Procedure
Educational Program Policy		✓	Planning cycle
Multicultural Policy		✓	
Physical Activity Policy		✓	
Technology Policy		✓	

QA 2- Children's health and safety	REG	OP	RELATED PROCEDURES
Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy	✓		
Administration of First Aid Policy	✓		Administration of First Aid and Wound Procedure P
			Dental Accident Procedure
			Head Injury Guide and Procedure
			First Aid and Accident report form
Administration of Medication Policy		✓	
Adventurous Risky Play Policy		✓	
Anaphylaxis and Asthma Management Policy		✓	
Children's Belongings – Bringing Toys from home Policy		✓	
Child Protection Policy	✓		Child Protection Notification Procedure and Records

Child Safe Environment Policy	✓		Child safe Environment Procedure
Car Park Safety Management		✓	
Infectious Diseases Policy	✓		Exclusions
Death of a Child at the Service Policy		✓	
Death of a Staff member at the Service Policy		✓	
Delivery of Children to and from Service Policy	✓		
Diabetes Management Policy		✓	
Emergency and Evacuation Including Lockdown and Missing Child Policy	✓		Emergency Evacuation Procedure
			Missing Child Procedure
			Lockdown Procedure
Epilepsy Management Policy		✓	
Excursions/ Incursions Policy	✓		
Hand Washing Policy		✓	
Immunisation Policy		✓	Immunisation schedule
Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy	✓		
Medical Conditions Policy	✓		Managing a Medical Condition Procedure
			Minimisation form
Nappy Change and Toilet Training Policy		✓	
Nutrition and Food Safety Policy	✓		
Photograph Policy		✓	
Physical Environment Policy		✓	
Safe Storage of Hazardous Chemicals Policy		✓	
Safe Transportation Policy	✓		

Sleep and Rest Policy	✓		
Sun Protection Policy	✓		
Supervision Policy		✓	Supervision Plan and Procedure
			Supervision Audit
Water Safety Policy	✓		
Work Health Safety Policy		✓	

<u>QA 3- Physical environment</u>	REG	OP	RELATED PROCEDURES
Animal & Pet Policy		✓	

<u>QA 4- Staffing arrangements</u>	REG	OP	RELATED PROCEDURES
Code of Conduct Policy	✓		
Dealing with Complaints Policy (Staff)	✓		
Pregnancy in Early Childhood Policy		✓	
Responsible Persons Policy	✓		
Staff Sick Policy		✓	
Staffing Arrangements Policy		✓	

<u>QA 5- Relationships with children</u>	REG	OP	RELATED PROCEDURES
Behaviour Guidance Policy	✓		Managing Biting, Spitting, Swearing, Antisocial Behaviour Procedure
			Behaviour Observation ongoing record
Behaviour Guidance-Bullying Policy	✓		
Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy	✓		
Respect for Children Policy		✓	

<u>QA 6 - Collaborative partnerships</u>	REG	OP	RELATED PROCEDURES
Enrolment and Orientation Policy	✓		

Family Communication Policy		✓	
Open Door / Unenrolled Policy		✓	

QA 7 - Governance and leadership	REG	OP	RELATED PROCEDURES
Dealing with Complaints Policy	✓		Grievance Procedure Grievance Form
Governance Policy	✓		
Payment of Fees Policy	✓		
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy	✓		
Professional Development Policy		✓	
Record Keeping & Retention Policy		✓	Notification and Reporting Guide
Student and Volunteer Policy	✓		
Withdrawal of a Child Policy			

Under the Education and Care Services National Regulations [regulation 168] the approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place in relation to a range of matters under subregulation (2). Family Day Care Services are required to ensure additional policies and procedures are in place as per regulation 169.

The approved provider must also take reasonable steps to ensure policies and procedures are followed. [regulation 170].

Ensure you notify all families 14 days before any policy change that may have a significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the service or the family's ability to utilise the service. Notification must be made regarding payment of fees. [Regulation 172].