

Within the kindergarten's play-based curriculum how is the development of early learning, particularly within the literacy and numeracy domains, supported?

The learning environment at Appin Park Kindergarten invites children to engage in numeracy and literacy reflective of each child's learning style. We consider the interests of all children and reflect on ways we can offer a rich learning environment that is holistic to the development of children to reach their fullest potential. Some of these experiences include; a vegetable garden which exposes children to mathematics, science and literacy. Making labels to identify what is growing makes links to literacy as the children draw or write the signs. Estimating growth and working with the seasons invites children to the world of science. Following a recipe when we cook with our home grown produce allows the opportunity for children to become familiar with recipes, talking about amounts, measuring, time and temperature. Our outdoor kitchen extends opportunity for some wonderful creations full of mud, gum nuts, sand, flowers and whatever else nature provides the children.

What does the kindergarten program look like in regards to routine/s and flexibility?

Supporting children to develop and understand ways to work and live within a community are important to the educators at Appin Park Kindergarten. Supporting each child's sense of agency means we consider each group's dynamics into our routine structure. We display the daily routine in what we call our "map of the day". The map allows each child to develop strong self-regulation skills as they can assess where we are in our day. This assists children to manage emotions accordingly. It allows children to have a sense of structure, comfort and security knowing what is happening next. Many decisions are made as a group as we often take group votes. An example of this is whether we go outside if it is wet. This may incorporate an indoor/outdoor approach as we can use our wet weather gear, or change the format of our day.

What type of excursions/incursions are included and how are these experiences linked to the kindergarten program?

Opportunities to engage with our community are important to us. We believe it is through these experiences that children gain a greater sense of belonging to their local community and the world around them. This means we welcome experiences into the setting as well as go out to them. This includes;

- The Reptile Encounter – our evening event
- Dental, eye, and general healthy living screenings and educational visits are included on multiple occasions throughout the year
- Pet safety and care
- Drama experiences where children learn through educational programs
- We like to visit the local park (opposite the kinder) regularly, the library, and surrounding shops
- We take a trip to Beechworth Bakery to visit some of the region's iconic places
- Road and water safety are important to community living in Wangaratta so we make regular visits to the Apex Traffic School and invite Water Wise to talk about being safe near water.

How does this kindergarten support the needs of children who are experiencing difficulty separating from their parent and/or the additional needs of children?

We recognise each child and family that enters our kinder come with their own story to tell. Spending time getting to know every child, family and carer is important. Aiming to create a collaborative approach between child, family and ourselves is imperative to helping each child be the best they can be and have a strong sense of self. Staggered starts at the beginning of the year, creating take home books of all the children in the group, creating social stories and sharing stories via photographs, messages on our sharing tree - all assist in making the transition to

Kinder smooth. We offer individualised interviews so families can share what is important to them inclusive of their child's needs and interests.

All children need individual care and support in their learning journey. Appin Park Kinder has prided themselves on creating an inclusive environment and are willing to make each child's transition a successful one.