

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

Our program plan is built upon the experience and knowledge of our educators; alongside the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. The framework identifies five early years learning outcomes for children. Planning considers each child's individual age and stage of development, as well as the context of their community and family. Literacy and numeracy learning experiences are embedded within our program through the year. These experiences may be spontaneous and informal (i.e. counting, singing, rhymes) as well more structured experiences. We utilise a variety of different resources and teaching techniques. We share many stories with our children, further extending the learning through art, discussion (i.e. recalling what the story was about, talking about the characters, how they are feeling, predicting what they are going to do next) and drama (role playing and acting out a story). Mathematical learning experiences cover a variety of concepts including measurement, volume, classification, numeration and problem solving.

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

At Munro Avenue Preschool we strive to attain a balance between offering flexibility in our program whilst providing the security of a predictable routine. We need to be flexible in regards to the weather, individual needs, group dynamics, set goals and catering for special events. We provide a routine that is predictable to the children, which encourages them to feel safe and secure within their preschool community by knowing what comes next. A typical day would proceed as follows: arrival at 9am, free play inside, group time, morning tea, outside free play, lunch, outside free play, group time and then departure time at 2pm. If there are changes to our routine, then the children are involved in a discussion about this and questions answered in an age appropriate manner.

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

Each year we reflect and review the incursions (when special events happen at the preschool) and excursions (where we leave the preschool to visit somewhere else). The educators together consider what events to include. Considerations include; was the last event successful? I.e. enjoyed by children and work towards further developing the children's learning outcomes. Some of the events we book include Native Animal visit (Wild Action), African Drumming, Responsible Pet Ownership (how to live safely with dogs), and a visit to Road Traffic school in Wangaratta via bus. We also facilitate visits from community organisations such as Victoria Police, North East Water, Dental Van (includes free dental checkup) and St John First Aid Training for Preschool Children.

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

Each case is individually considered; for example, age and stage of development, family context and culture. If a child experiences separation difficulties, we work with the individual child and family to determine the best approach. This may take the form of selecting a range of strategies and resources that can be utilised. We can meet with the family to formulate a plan; we can also refer to other professionals who may also be able to assist (i.e. Preschool Field officer, NDIS providers, early intervention services, family support). When working with families whose children have additional needs we would employ a similar technique. Collaboration and communication with the family would usually begin before the child attends preschool. We are also in some cases able to access intervention through SCOPE in the form of Kindergarten Inclusion Support. Please feel free to call the preschool for further information - we are happy to help 😊