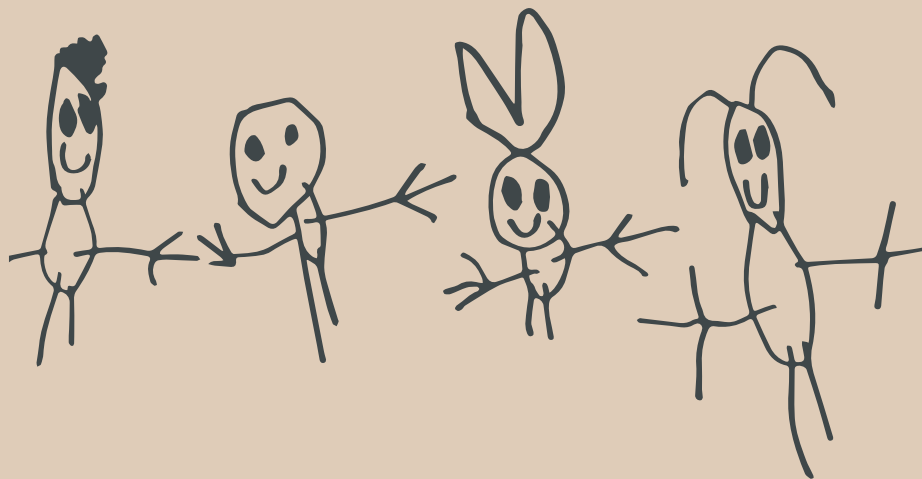


Kardinia

EARLY LEARNING

FAMILY HANDBOOK



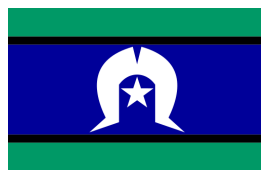
"EVERY PART OF THE JOURNEY IS BEAUTIFUL"

KARDINIA EARLY LEARNING ARE COMMITTED
TO THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF ALL
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.
OUR SERVICE HAS A ZERO TOLERANCE
TO CHILD ABUSE AND ARE COMMITTED
TO PROVIDING SAFE, RESPECTFUL AND
TRUSTING ENVIRONMENTS FOR ALL.



Acknowledgement

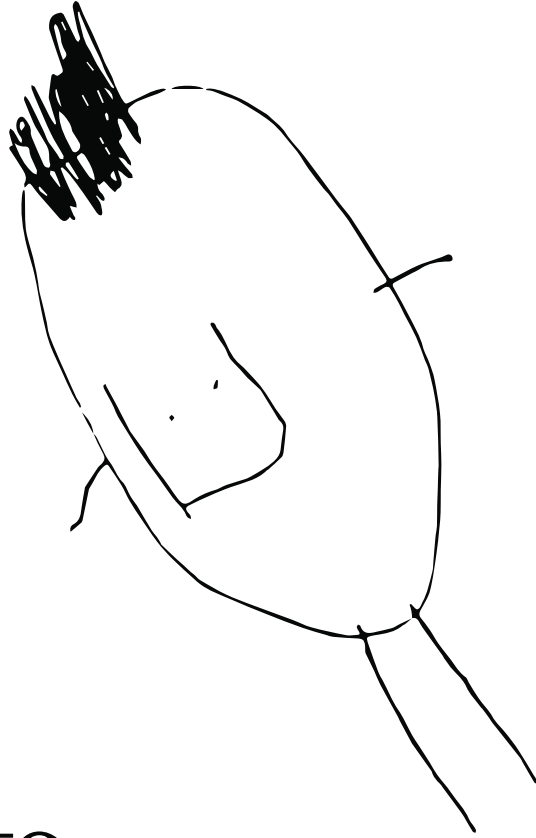
Kardinia Early Learning honours the way in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, past and present, have cared for and nurtured the waterways, skies, and lands we gather on for millennia. We extend this acknowledgement to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders people, connected to each of the hundreds of countries that make up the continent that is now-called Australia. We pay respect to Elders and knowledge keepers past and present, finding strength and wisdom in their survival for over 60 thousand years.



“The relationships [with children] were ones that gave me goosebumps - authenticity and appreciation for every child as unique, and the ability for educators to really know children on a deep level.”

- Barwon South West Areas, Authorised Officer





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Our Story

“EVERY PART OF THE JOURNEY
IS BEAUTIFUL”

In 2006, Kardinia Church set out to provide a centre to their community that placed children's needs first, staffed by people that believe in the values of family and supported the potential in each child. Their belief is that every child is a miracle of God, and their desire was, and still is, to create an experience for children that will promote a love for learning and life.

Our approach to early childhood education and care is eclectic, drawing inspiration from pioneers in our field such as Maria Montessori, Loris Malaguzzi (Reggio Emilia), Emmi Pikler and Magda Gerber. We aspire to ensure every child experiences differentiated learning environments that promote many ways of learning, knowing and being.

People matter to us and as such, we stay attuned to the learning needs of not just our organisation but to each individual within it. Some of Kardinia's specialist team include our Outdoor Teacher, Environment Design Coordinator, Learning and Diversity Advocate, Resource and Sustainability Advocates, Music Program Coordinator and Chaplain.

Our doors are always open, as we want you to feel at home and part of the Kardinia community. Partnership is a joint venture so your input and feedback are essential in the quality improvement process. Please feel free to contact us at any time if you have questions, queries or comments.

Vision

A COMMUNITY DEDICATED TO OFFERING
OPPORTUNITY FOR CURIOSITY, WONDER,
BELONGING AND RESPECT.

Mission

TO MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE TO
EACH CHILD BY BUILDING AUTHENTIC AND
GENUINE RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN,
FAMILIES AND OUR COMMUNITY.

Our Philosophy

Building authentic and genuine relationships with children, families, team and community are central to how we approach decision making. It's not just the relationship itself but the quality of relationship that matters most to us at Kardinia Early Learning. Attunement is foundational to how we approach relationship, developing strong connections with children through consistency, responsiveness and honouring individuality.

Our educational programs are underpinned by an emphasis on both care and education as equally vital to children's learning and wellbeing. We do not see these as separate parts but rather a holistic and integrated way of approaching guidance and learning.

EDUCATION IS CARE. CARE IS EDUCATION.

We are responsive to occasion and provide programs and opportunities that continually innovate to allow all people to grow, learn and reflect. People matter to us and as such we stay attuned to the learning needs not only of our organisation but to each individual within it.

Our philosophy is expressed through many parts that are individually important but the most impacting aspect of each part is their interconnectedness with each other.

Each part of our philosophy is made visible through our shared values that are woven in our everyday practice.

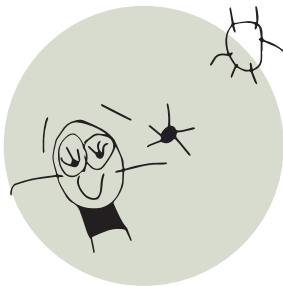


Our Values



CONSISTENCY

Consistency brings unity, stability and security. Families, children and team thrive when response, approach and expectation are reliable.



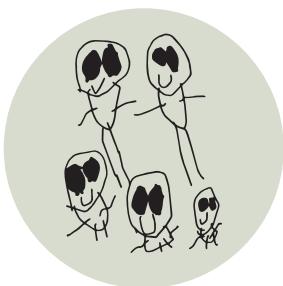
RESPECT

We strive to value and protect all people, places and things. Our culture of respect is founded by relationships and actions that are inclusive, respectful and reciprocal.



COURAGE

We show grace when under pressure. We are brave enough to confront our fears and step outside our comfort zone in order to advocate for children, each other and the community.



TRUST

All people matter to us and are at the heart of what we do. We are therefore consistently open, honest, ethical and genuine.



PASSION

Passion is an intrinsic motivation that drives us to do our absolute best. It is a dedication to advocating for best outcomes for children and their world.

The Educational Program

We believe that children learn and develop through active and constructive involvement in play. Children will experience a 'hands on' approach where they are challenged to explore, investigate and discover. Children are decision makers in our educational program which engages them as co-constructors of the curriculum.

We practice what's referred to as an 'Inquiry-based approach'. This reflects our view of your child as a constructor of their own knowledge and learning, instead of being a passive recipient of someone else's.

Children are curious learners who naturally investigate, inquire and engage in the world around them. Time, space and people influence how children approach learning and how they see themselves as learners. Through such conversations we are able to enrich and guide children's thinking and learning as they gain new understandings of themselves, the learning process and the topic at hand.

The joy in exploring meaningful interests for the children comes in the journey of discovery, not just the accumulation of knowledge. Children learn to challenge their own thinking, listen to others ideas, become researchers, be present in the moment and enjoy the process.

We focus on the key characteristics of effective learning; helping children create a growth mindset, where they are encouraged to be involved and engaged learners, to develop life skills that will support them throughout all of life's adventures and to instil a love of learning.

Our curriculum is guided by and influenced by the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) and the National Quality Framework.

“Curiosity and an open mind are surely amongst the most powerful and important dispositions to nurture not only in our learners but in ourselves.”

- Kath Murdoch

NATURE BASED CURRICULUM

Acknowledging the fragile state of our world, our programs support children to care for their environment and build awareness of their footprint on our earth, inviting them to explore and develop their sensitivity to sustainability. We nurture physical spaces that honour the natural world and allow for children to get dirty, use real tools and be a part of the construction of their own learning spaces.

Our outdoor environments are large, open spaces where children can explore nature and all its wonder. Filled with loose parts and opportunities for children to get messy, as they engage in play that encourages them to take and manage risks. We know children learn by experience, they are intrinsically motivated to push boundaries in order to assess what they can and cannot do. We provide risks, not hazards, for children in a controlled environment.

Because we understand the benefits of time outdoors for children, we ensure we keep our doors open all day, every day.

CREATORS, NOT CONSUMERS:

Our values in economic and environmental responsibility have many outworking's, including specialised roles and opportunities for community involvement. Our Environment Design Advocate, REmida Materials library and advocacy group, and Community Shed all work together to ensure consideration and consciousness around our sourcing and treatment of resources and materials.

Having people who create, rather than consume puts our values into action; they are the bridge that transform our ideals into actuals.

ATTUNED CARE AND EDUCATION

A child's brain develops significantly during the first 1,000 days (from conception to 2.5yrs), more than any other time in life.

During this stage of development, all learning happens in the context of relationship. The way a child's brain adapts to it's environment, contributes to the sort of person they will grow into. To best support children in this stage we have embedded specialised practices, particularly within our infant classrooms.

Influenced by the work of Dr Emmi Pikler, Magda Gerber and theory of circle of security, our approach is based on responsive and attuned care.

We understand that care is education, and education is care; relationships are the foundation of everything we do.

The more we know someone, the more attuned we become to them and their needs, creating an ability to respond to them as unique individuals. Moving from task-based to relationship-based care supports children's foundational need for secure attachment in an out-of-home setting.

FAMILY ANCHOR

In response to our understanding of children's need to form secure attachment, we have a primary care based model we refer to as a child's 'Family Anchor'. The Family Anchor builds and maintains strong relationships with a child and family, learning about the child's daily rhythms and rituals at home. They are involved in the majority of care moments, creating consistency, predictability, and familiarity. The Family Anchor is the first point of contact for the family and shares all relevant information with the whole team.

'YES' SPACES THAT SUPPORT FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT:

We understand children as being capable and competent. We offer the opportunity to move freely, trusting in their innate drive to explore their world and themselves, and develop skills in their own time.

The furniture and resources in our environments are deeply considered to offer children ownership, invite and empower play, learning, creativity, agency, and a strong sense of self. Everything in the space is designed for the child; this accessibility and lack of restriction says 'yes' to the child's biological, physiological, cognitive, emotional and developmental needs.

This means we don't include some 'traditional' furniture in the design of our spaces, such as cots, bouncers and high chairs.

As children gain mastery of their movement and start exploring different parts of their physicality, Freedom of Movement translates into opportunity for risky and courageous play.

A COMMUNITY CENTRED APPROACH

We're big on community and searching for new ways of developing it. The connections a child has both to the world and to the people who are part of it become embedded within them, helping shape their inner being, their character and their world. But a community is more than a location; it involves the quality of relationships that connect people across places. Connecting with our community is a reciprocal relationship that enhances everyone's wellbeing and sense of belonging.

Working with a diverse group of people within our community enables children to understand their place in our community. Learning to value and respect diversity encourages children to see differences amongst individuals as both common and positive.

We place high value on social justice in our curriculum, supporting children in embracing the notion that we can challenge biases and stereotypes, while promoting inclusiveness and equity within our extended communities. This happens in our classrooms everyday as the children learn respect and empathy, and explore similarities and differences in people, accepting each other for who they are. This is also emphasised in the social justice projects we take part in. Over the past years we have supported many charities and local community groups through fundraising and creating awareness.

Valuing community and recognising its benefits for children means we seek out regular opportunity to connect with our community, and for our community to connect with us.

Important Information

HOURS OF OPERATION

The centre is open from 6:30am-6:30pm, Monday - Friday, 51 weeks of the year. We will be closed on public holidays, and closed over the Christmas break.

ACCOUNT

- *\$100 bond per child (capped at \$200) & 2 weeks of fees are to be paid upon commencement of care*
- *For daily and weekly fees please contact your nearest centre location*
- *It is the Centre's policy that fees are to be paid 1 week in advance at all times*
- *If your child is collected from the centre after 6:30pm, you will be charged a late fee of \$15 for the first 10 minutes + \$1.50 per minute after 6:40pm*
- *Accounts more than 2 weeks in arrears can result in cancelation of care*
- *Debit success is our preferred method of payment*
- *The bond payment will be refunded to families if all accounts are paid in full and no amount is outstanding when the child leaves the Service*

WHAT TO BRING:

A named bag that contains:

- 2-3 changes of clothing that is weather and play appropriate, and easily washable
- A hat - Wide brimmed or legionnaire style as per sun safety policy
- Gumboots, beanie and coat in cooler/wet weather

Please ensure all belongings are named

PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

We operate an open-door policy, where parents and families are welcome into the centre at any time. Parents are the experts regarding their child, and as such, collaborating with families is central to supporting positive learning outcomes for all children.

Families are invited and encouraged to play an active part in our community, with opportunities such as:

- Special events such as Family breakfasts in honour of Mothers & Father's day,
- Excursions
- Sharing special skills with the children, such as gardening, wood work, music etc
- Contributing to meetings/interviews/ transition statements
- Sharing cultural and religious celebrations
- Provide feedback about the current curriculum through discussions or email

"MY SON LOVES IT THERE AND THE STAFF ARE GREAT AT COMMUNICATING WITH ME, LISTENING AND RESPONDING TO OUR NEEDS AND SIMPLY GIVING ME A CALL IF NEED BE. NOTHING IS EVER A BOTHER AND WE ALWAYS FEEL SO WELCOME. IT HAS SUCH A WARM AND FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE"

- ELLIE MAY, PARENT

ENROLMENT

A link to an online enrolment form will be sent to you via email when you have been offered a position. Hard copies are available at the service if you don't have online access.

Enrolment details must be completed prior to commencement.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Our centres are closed on public holidays. Fees apply for all public holiday closures that fall on your usual day of attendance. CCS will not be paid for public holidays if 42 absences have already been used.

ABSENCES

As with most early learning centres and preschools, your child's place is reserved when they are away so the day still needs to be paid for. Each financial year, the Family Assistance Office will pay your child's CCS entitlements for the first 42 absence days. These absences can be for any reason, including public holidays. These initial 42 absence days must be used before any additional absences can be claimed.

"EVERYONE AT KARDINIA IS SO WELCOMING AND FRIENDLY. THE ENVIRONMENT IS CALM AND THE STAFF ARE SO WARM, KIND AND CARING. IT HAS A GREAT COMMUNITY FEEL AND FAMILIES ARE REGULARLY ENCOURAGED TO ENGAGE WITH THEIR CHILD'S LEARNING EXPERIENCE."

- ANNIE ROSE, PARENT

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY (CCS)

Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is a payment paid directly to the service from the government to provide financial assistance for those families that are eligible, CCS will then reduce your weekly fee accordingly. To learn more or apply for CCS visit the website www.familyassist.gov.au. Until your CCS has been approved and commenced we will require full payment of your child's fees.

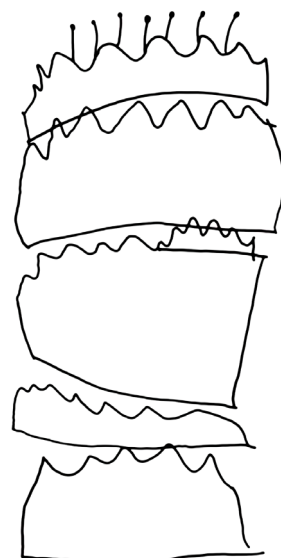
COMMUNICATION

Communication is a vital ingredient to the success of our partnership with families, and we welcome and encourage you to share your aspirations for your child, and feedback around the program at any time. The main platforms we use for communication are email and the Seesaw Family app, on which you will receive important information from your child's classroom as well as our administration team. It is the parent's responsibility to read these notices and ensure they are aware of current issues and events in the centre. Please feel free to contact the centre at any time via phone or email, to make a time to discuss your child's progress, relationships, interests, and experiences.

BIRTHDAYS

Your child's birthday is a special event in his/her life. To celebrate your child's birthday we will make a special time for all the children to sing happy birthday and recognise how special it is that they are growing up.

Though we do not celebrate with birthday cakes due to our health and nutrition requirements, we will ensure that your child has a wonderful time with their friends.



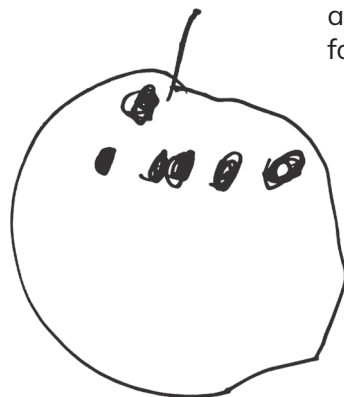
REST & SLEEP

We define 'rest' as a period of inactivity, solitude, calmness, or tranquillity, and can include a child being in a state of sleep. Considering the busy and energetic nature of children's day, we feel that it is important for children to participate in a quiet/rest period during the day in order to rest, relax and recharge their body. Your child may wish to bring a comfort item, or blanket to have at rest time. Please feel free to discuss your child's rest needs with our educators, we aspire to honour a child's experience of rest and to create an environment that they're familiar with.

To support children in free movement, all children are offered rest time on floor beds. A low bed empowers autonomy by inviting the child to initiate rest and the opportunity to wake naturally and get up when they are ready.

INCLUSION

Kardinia offers an inclusive service for all children, including those with additional needs. We have been recognised for our excellence in offering an inclusive program, winning the HAPI award (Helping Achieve Positive Inclusion) on 2 occasions. Our aim is to provide each child, regardless of their needs and abilities, with a supportive and inclusive environment that allows each child to fully participate in the program. Educators will remain positive, open-minded and honest at all times when working with families and external support professionals to positively meet the additional needs of each child being educated and cared for at the centre.



NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL

It is our policy that parents must give two weeks written notice before they withdraw from the Centre or reduce days. If notice is not given, 2 weeks of fees will be added onto your account. Children must attend their first and final session in order to claim CCS entitlements. If children do not attend their first or final session full fee will apply.

"WE HAVE BEEN A PART OF THE KARDINIA EARLY LEARNING FAMILY FOR ALMOST 10 YEARS NOW. WHAT I LOVE MOST IS THE FACT THAT I CAN DROP MY 2 YEAR OLD OFF TO SMILES AND FRIENDLY FACES WITH THE MAJORITY OF STAFF STILL REMEMBERING AND ACKNOWLEDGING MY 10 & 6 YEAR OLDS."

- MELANIE ALISON, PARENT

NUTRITION & MEAL TIMES

In addition to any bottles provided by you, all of your child's food and drink is provided by the centre. All children are provided with nutritious balanced meals, with a focus on fresh, healthy foods. Vegetables and herbs from our gardens are gathered and cared for by the children.

Meal times are considered important rituals; a time for rich conversation as we gather together in small groups as a community. We value children as competent and capable in making choices, therefore offering progressive meal times that allow children to choose when they eat rather than following a schedule.

Safety & Support

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

It is extremely important you approach one of our early learning professionals to let us know your child has arrived or is about to depart for the day. Only parents/guardians and authorised nominees are permitted to collect your child. If you're unable to collect your child, please contact us to provide the name of the person who will be collecting your child. To ensure we release your child into the care of the correct person, this person must be an authorised nominee on your child's enrolment form. Photo identification will be requested from any authorised nominee unknown to our educators so we can ensure the safety of your child at all times. If your child is not collected from the centre and we're unable to contact you, we will contact the authorised nominee listed on your child's enrolment form.

COURT ORDERS

Parents must notify the centre if there is a court order affecting residency of their children and a copy is required for the centre. Without a court order we cannot stop a parent collecting your child.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

To ensure appropriate identification and management of children with medical conditions, we will implement best practice and risk minimisation strategies. This includes the provision of suitable first aid training for all staff to ensure a rapid response in the event of a medical emergency. If your child has a medical condition, you will be asked to complete a medical management plan to be followed in the event of an incident relating to the specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition.

EMERGENCY & EVACUATION PROCEDURE

In the event that the service needs to be evacuated, we aim to conduct this in a rehearsed, timely, calm and safe manner to secure the safety of each person using the service. An evacuation may be necessary in the event of a fire, chemical spill, bomb scare, earthquake, siege, flood etc. Regular fire drills are necessary for regulation purposes. If you are present at a fire drill you are required by law to participate. Regular emergency procedures give the children an opportunity to become familiar with the routine and planned evacuation.

SUN SAFETY

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Research has indicated that young children and babies have sensitive skin that places them at particular risk of sunburn and skin damage. Exposure during the first 15 years of life can greatly increase the risk of developing skin cancer in later life. Early Childhood Services play a major role in minimising a child's UV exposure as children attend during times when UV radiation levels are highest.

Our Sun Safety Policy has been developed to ensure:

- From October to March, sun protection is required at all times.
- Extra sun protection is needed between 11am and 3pm and during this period, outdoor activities should be minimised. Minimising outdoor activities includes reducing both the number of times (frequency) and the length of time (duration) children are outside.
- From April to September (excluding June and July) outdoor activity can take place at any time. However, from 10am – 2pm sun protection is required.
- In June and July sun, protection is not required. Extra care is needed for all children who have very fair skin.
- Sun protection measures will be considered when planning excursions and incursions.
- All babies under 12 months are kept out of direct sun when UV levels are three and above.
- For more information, see our Sun Safety Policy.

"KARDINIA IS A VERY WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE CENTRE. THE EDUCATORS ARE TRULY WONDERFUL AND SUPPORTIVE OF ALL CHILDREN AND THEIR UNIQUENESS."

- ANNA KOTARAC, PARENT

IMMUNISATION

No jab No play Legislation

Prior to enrolment you must provide us with a current Immunisation History Statement from the Australian Immunisation Register this statement must show that your child is up to date with all the vaccinations they are due/able to receive.

Once your child is enrolled, two times a year, you will need to provide us with a current Immunisation History Statement that shows your child is up to date with immunisations.

Kindergarten

Lead by university trained teachers, our 3 and 4 year old Kindergarten programs are designed to support children in preparation for the next step in their learning journey; primary school. Each class meets weekly for 15 hours, over two consecutive days, with additional access of care included before and after the sessions.

SCHOOL READINESS

'School Readiness' is a gauge of the behaviours and skills that support a child in making a smooth and successful transition into a primary school environment.

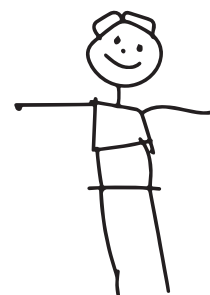
This is not just about the consideration of academic skills like reading, writing and counting, it's about the whole child.

During their time in a kindergarten setting, we support children in the development of transferable skills like emotional regulation, concentration, self care, physical skills, language skills, and play and social skills, alongside academics.

We aspire to engage children in focused learning using their ideas through an integrated curriculum. This means mathematics, science, literacy, arts and technology are woven through our practices and everyday learning.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Kindergarten sessions run from 8:45am-4:45pm, over two consecutive dates. Before and after care is included in your fee at no extra cost. The centre is open from 6:30am-6:30pm, Monday-Friday, 51 weeks of the year. We will be closed on public holidays, and closed over the Christmas break.



KINDERGARTEN FUNDING

Both three and four-year-old kindergarten are government funded. This funding enables us to offer the very best learning experience for your child in their crucial years leading up to commencing primary school. In stand-alone kindergartens, low income families can access this funding to assist them financially in covering the cost of their child's kindergarten year. For kindergartens that operate within a long day care setting, families have access to the Child Care Subsidy to assist with the cost of kindergarten. This payment will be paid directly to the service to reduce the fees. Low-income families that would be eligible for access to government funding in stand-alone kindergartens will be eligible for the Child Care Subsidy and this will reduce their daily fee accordingly. Kardinia Kindergarten operates within a long day care centre, and therefore uses the Child Care Subsidy to assist families with the costs of kindergarten. Families will need to complete a Child Care Subsidy assessment online to check eligibility and entitlements to CCS which needs to be done through the myGov website.

SECOND YEAR OF KINDERGARTEN FUNDING DEFERENT (WITHDRAWAL FROM KINDERGARTEN)

All children are eligible for one year of four-year old kindergarten under funding provided by the State Government, unless the child meets the strict eligibility criteria to repeat four-year-old kindergarten. Your child's kindergarten teacher will consult with you if they feel that your child may not be ready for school the following year. It may not be that your child has any developmental delays that would satisfy the eligibility criteria, it may simply be that your child is younger/ less mature and would therefore be advantaged by the additional time needed to meet their optimal outcomes. It is your decision as a parent as to when your child starts kindergarten. We recommend that your child start kindergarten (and school) at an older age. This means that your child is more socially and emotionally ready and able to cope with different or challenging circumstances more readily. By deferring, children are given an extra year to naturally develop their skills and abilities and build the maturity expected for primary school entry over the Christmas break.

WHY SHOULD CHILDREN HAVE A SECOND YEAR OF KINDER?

If a child is identified as having developmental delays in two or more areas (for example, speech and social relationships), a second year of four-year-old kindergarten may be of significant benefit. Kindergarten Teachers have the professional expertise and experience in early childhood to recommend a second year of kindergarten for a child with identified learning or developmental concerns. The teacher will work closely with the parents and may recommend further medical or relevant professional assessments. An Early Childhood Specialist or Preschool Field Officer referral is an option that may be appropriate. An application will include reports from both the kindergarten teacher and any other professionals that have been involved with the child.

FOOD AT KINDERGARTEN - TERM 4 LUNCHESES

All meals (including breakfast for children who arrive before 8am) are included in the cost of kindergarten. In term four of four year old kindergarten, we ask parents to send a lunchbox to kindergarten with their children.

Having the opportunity to open packaging, choose what food to eat and when, is a practical way we support children in their transition into a primary school environment.

Our kitchen staff will pack a healthy lunch for each of the children in their lunchboxes to enjoy together in a group setting.

EXCURSIONS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

We recognise that excursions and events are a worthwhile extension to the educational program and provide children with opportunities to be involved in the broader community.

Engagement with the local community can add so many learning opportunities and are a regular part of the kindergarten experience. Drama performances, wildlife encounters, visits to the library, bus trips to museums and walks in our local community add colour to the program as we meet new people and have new experiences; learning more about ourselves, the world around us and the place we hold in it.



EVERY PART OF THE

JOURNEY IS BEAUTIFUL.

In loving memory of
Bonnie Gilbert 25/04/63 - 16/10/18
(Centre Director - 10 years service)



Kardinia
EARLY LEARNING

www.kardiniaearlylearning.com