

BERMAGUI PRESCHOOL



5.10 The Preschool Program – A Guide for Parents and Guardians

Written By

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Aim

The preschool program aims to:

- Prepare children to be competent learners
- Provide a happy and productive learning environment
- Develop a satisfactory level of skill in areas of cognition, social interaction, gross motor and fine motor activities
- Provide a sound knowledge and appreciation of culture through music, dance language and art
- Develop positive attitudes and values within the context of society, including tolerance of individual differences and respect for authority

Strategies

To achieve these aims, the preschool staff will:

- Promote the development of the whole child
- Provide a variety of learning experiences
- Consider individual differences
- Encourage parent participation
- Be non-threatening
- Be non-competitive
- Give children power and choice in decision making
- Facilitate language and thought
- Help children to see themselves as competent learners
- Provide a learning environment which will encourage each child to:
 - Develop as a member of a peer group
 - Successfully interact with peers and adults
 - Develop those abilities conducive to further learning
 - Use self expression and develop effective communication through language, dramatic play arts and crafts
 - Develop positive attitudes towards self and others
 - Develop confidence in self
 - Feel happy safe and loved
- Develop an understanding of the differences between people within our community

Implementation

The preschool staff do this by:

- Helping children feel comfortable in our centre, trust their new environment, make friends, care for each other and feel that they are an important part of a group
- Helping children experience pride and self-confidence, develop independence and self control and have a positive attitude to life
- Helping children to be confident learners by letting them try out their own ideas and experience success, and by helping them acquire learning skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions and use words to describe their ideas and feelings.
- Helping children increase their large and small muscle skills and feel confident about what their bodies can do.

The activities we plan for the children, the way we organise the environment, select toys and materials, plan the daily schedule, and talk to the children, are all designed to achieve our aims. Sensitive and thoughtful planning, intervention and participation by the staff members enhance the learning potential of the children.

Play

Play is the characteristic manner in which children exercise their physical and cognitive resources. It provides opportunities for physical activity, the development of skills for social interaction, flexible use of material, use of language and expression of ideas and feelings. Observation of children at play provides a basis for planning to meet the developmental needs of individual children and to promote specific interests and skills.

Some of the free play activities take place indoors. These include painting, playing with manipulative and constructional toys and blocks, collage, drawing, home corner, modelling with clay and looking at books.

Other free play activities take place outdoors, and these include climbing, water and sand play, woodwork and finger painting. The playground develops muscular control and co-ordination, and encourages creative play.

The activities available to the children are varied as much as possible from day to day, so the children will have the opportunity to try a variety of different things, thus enriching their experiences.

Experiences

As part of the preschool experiences, we will be providing for the child's physical, creative, intellectual, social and language development, through play. The preschool environment will provide the opportunities children need to develop their ideas and skills, through play. Children build on the foundation of real experience in their play, and with a rich background, their play will become more purposeful. The staff will foster and enhance the children's experiences and learning development. A strong link between the home and the preschool is important to your child. Families can share in the child's experiences at preschool by talking about their day, participating in their activities and admiring the work they bring home.

Learning

A very important goal of our early childhood program is to help children become enthusiastic learners. This means encouraging children to be active and creative explorers who are not afraid to try out their ideas and think their own thoughts. Our goal is to help children become independent, self confident, inquisitive learners. We are teaching them how to learn, not just in this setting, but all through their lives. We are allowing them to learn at their own pace and in ways that are best for them. We are developing good habits and attitudes, in particular, a positive sense of self, which will make a difference throughout their lives. Children learn a lot more things than can be seen on the pieces of paper that they take home. Therefore, if your child has not produced a great work of art by the end of the session, do not despair, as we can certainly guarantee that he or she has not been sitting idle. A lot of valuable learning, for children to the age of 5, occurs through the processes of observation, exploration and experimentation with new materials and ways of doing things.

Development

A child's early years determine much of his/her future development. Extensive educational research and experience have confirmed that the first five years in the life of a child, are the formative years and that experiences during this period have lasting and far reaching effects.

Preschool education is concerned with the growth and development of young children during this important period. We aim to help each child to achieve to his/her potential, and to find ways for the children to use their creative ability.

Environment

The centre is aiming to provide a home-like atmosphere within a caring and stimulating environment for each child. The staff are aiming to build a trusting and secure environment for both children and parents. The children need an environment which fosters a deep sense of security, basic trust and acceptance of themselves and others. They need adults who respect them as individuals and who foster their abilities.

We aim to provide a warm, cosy, family environment, in which all children are treated as special individuals. They need an environment which provides genuine care, concern and affection. They need an environment which encourages exploration, curiosity and a desire to learn.

We should ensure the child feels happy and secure at all times, by providing (within reason) a cuddle, a lap to sit on, a security toy or an opportunity to be a helper or just an adult ready to listen.

Choice

Children are free to choose the areas of interest in which they will participate throughout the day, both as individuals and part of a group. The centre might look disorganised and casual, and this may worry you. However, the staff carefully plan and supervise the program.

We believe that children learn self discipline while being able to choose their own play activities. Sharing and co-operating with other children is encouraged by the staff.

The activities each day will generally include painting, pasting, play dough, blocks, construction equipment, puzzles, music, storytelling, books, sand and water play and other outdoor equipment.

Your comments and suggestions are important in making any changes. Parents are welcome to participate whenever possible, by reading the children a story, playing and sharing their skills with all the children at the centre.

Information about what is happening is available on the noticeboard, in newsletters, at a parents meeting or by talking to staff members.

Conclusion

These are all inter-related. One helps the other. All the activities are a means by which the children explore and come to understand their world, an essential part of healthy development

Relevant Legislation

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
National Quality Standards 2010

Resources & References

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
The National Quality Standard 2010
Being, Belonging and Becoming: The Early Years Framework for Australia 2009

Relevant Documentation

This policy is displayed in the Preschool and will be provided as part of Bermagui Preschool Induction Procedure.

Date Adopted:

January 2017

Review Date:

January 2020