Welcome

Welcome to Uraidla and Hills Community Kindergarten — a safe, caring and exciting environment that maximises each child's potential and where children and families gather together, get to know each other and share in the teaching and learning of our children.

This booklet provides you with information about the centre, how it operates and how you can be a part of it.

Our current staff members are:

- Helen Linggood — Director
- Diane McCarthy - Teacher
- Cher Litchfield - Early Childhood Worker

Philosophy

Uraidla and Hills Community Kindergarten provides a warm, welcoming and nurturing setting that respects and values each child, their family and our environment.

Together we are a community of learners working in partnership to share our skills and knowledge with each other.

We believe all children are capable, competent learners, rich in potential. Each brings their own unique experiences and perspectives to our preschool.

We value staff diversity and recognise that all our staff members are passionate, dynamic and professional early childhood educators.

Play is how a young child learns. Skilfully guided play ensures the growth of children’s knowledge, skills and dispositions for lifelong learning.

Positive relationships are the foundation for children to develop a sense of ‘Belonging’, ‘Being’ and ‘Becoming’.
Relationships

Relationships are the foundation of all that we do in our kindergarten environment.

Developing and maintaining positive relationships with the child, their family and the kindergarten community is fundamental in understanding the child and their context.

Only then can we ensure that we provide learning opportunities to support the individual child to reach their full potential.

Learning environment

Our learning environment is welcoming, creative, challenging and inclusive.

To meet your child's developmental needs the centre is well equipped with an extensive range of tools and equipment to provide for emotional, physical and cognitive learning. Our outdoor area provides numerous areas for your child to explore, discover and create.

Children are involved in learning experiences that encourage the development of self confidence, problem solving, social and life skills, resourcefulness, positive decision-making and independence.

The kindergarten curriculum

Our learning programme, which encompasses all the interactions, experiences and routines that make up each child's day, is based on the National Curriculum for 0-5 year olds; Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Belonging, Being and Becoming. This is designed to promote the development of essential life skills and competencies.

Early Years Learning Framework – Belonging, Being, Becoming

As educators with children from birth to five years, we support the principles and practices of this document and use the learning outcomes as a central part of our engagement with children and as the basis of both planning for and reporting achievement.

Through the learning areas of EYLF, learners are introduced to new information. In this way they develop the inquiring habits of mind and actions, skills and values that are so fundamental to living in a post-modern world and to become lifelong learners.
EYLF’s learning outcomes are broad, long-term accomplishments and include the following:

- Children have a strong sense of identity.
- Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
- Children are confident and involved learners.
- Children are effective communicators.

The Learning Outcomes, together with the supporting evidence, provide educators with reference points to monitor and assess children’s progress.

Assessment and reporting

We assess your child’s progress through observation, questioning and individual learning plans. We inform you of your child’s progress through:

- **Informal and formal conversations**: Staff are always willing to talk about your child’s progress. Although staff are busy at the commencement and conclusion of each session, you are welcome to arrange a suitable time for longer discussions.
- **Children’s individual folders**: These are taken home at the end of each term and are a record of your child’s time at kindergarten. This includes work samples, photographs, observations by staff members and interviews with your child. They are available for your viewing at any time.
- **Parent/Teacher meetings**: Throughout the kindergarten year, we invite families to join with us to develop some agreed goals to support your child’s learning. Together we consider your child’s interests, strengths and areas of need or concern. Strategies are developed to enhance the child’s learning. This process may happen once, twice or as needed or requested by either the parent or the educator.
- **Summative reports at the completion of kindergarten**: In your child’s last term of kindergarten, a report on their interests and strengths and their progress in literacy and numeracy is developed. This will be included in their portfolios and should be shared with your child’s first school teacher.

Occasional Care and kindergarten

Occasional Care

Uraidla and Hills Community Kindergarten will try to provide an opportunity for children to spend some time at the kindergarten prior to the beginning of the child’s eligible year. This is only available if our kindergarten has not reached its capacity and we have the staffing available for this. Governing
Council will determine the availability of this program each year. Occasional Care provides an introduction to kindergarten, our staff and routines, and an opportunity to socialise and participate in a range of play experiences. Families must book into this service on an irregular basis. Sessions run from 9am to 12 noon and cost $30 per session. This program is not funded by the government.

**Pre-entry**

Pre-entry is a series of orientation/transition visits to the kindergarten during term 4 prior to starting the kindergarten year with us. They are offered during weeks 5, 6 and 7. Children arrive at 9am and then stay until 11.30. Once a week for the three weeks. Staff will keep you informed of dates when this time arrives.

**Kindergarten**

Children spend four terms in sessional kindergarten prior to starting school. All children begin kindergarten in the January of the year and must be 4 years or older on or before the 30 April. They are entitled to five sessions of kindergarten per week. This means that all children have access to two full days and one half day. Any other arrangements must be discussed with our Director.

Please adhere to session times when delivering and collecting your child. As late collection can be stressful for children, please advise us should an emergency arise so that staff can reassure your child.

DECD’s Enrolment Policy is available in our policy folder or by accessing our website.

**Pupil free days and closure days**

All public kindergartens are entitled to pupil free days. At this site we choose to spread these days over the year. We do endeavour to have them on different days, but this is not always possible. These days affect all children and no child is able to make up the sessions lost on other days.

**Session times**

Our session times are:

- Tuesday and Wednesday 9 am to 3 pm.
- Thursday 9 am to 12 noon
Lunch care

Lunch care is a part of the kindergarten’s programme. Staff support the children as they eat their lunch. This is followed by a relaxation time for all children. Parents are responsible for providing a healthy lunch for their children and fruit at fruit time.

Staff ensure that high levels of hygiene are maintained before all cooking experiences / fruit and lunch times. Tables are kept clean and hand washing is ensured and monitored.

2017 term dates

Term dates for 2017 are:

- Term 1 30 January - 13 April
- Term 2 1 May - 7 July
- Term 3 24 July - 29 September
- Term 4 16 October - 15 December

Fees

Your fees help to support the financial structure of the kindergarten. The State Government provides funding for the teaching staff, but the money needed for water, cleaning, maintenance and children’s resources needs to be raised from parent contributions.

If you are having difficulty paying your fees, or have questions about our fee structure, please see our Director.

The following fees are proposed for 2017.

- Occasional Care $30 per session
- Kindergarten fee $235 per term

The kindergarten fees include;

- A named hat that remains at the kindergarten for the kindergarten year
- An excursion in term 2 and term 3
- A visiting performer in term 4
- A book for families about preparing your child for school in term 4

Accounts

Accounts are issued at the beginning of each term. All monies collected by the kindergarten need to go into an envelope clearly labelled with your child’s name, the correct amount and what the payment is for. Alternatively monies can be paid online. Please ask staff for details. Staff cannot handle money or provide change. The kindergarten’s finance officer handles all money and works at the front office of the school.
Communication

Confidentiality

Staff respect the confidentiality of all matters relating to your child and family. We are obliged to withhold the release of address and telephone numbers unless we have written or verbal consent from the party concerned.

Floor-books

The current program is displayed in our floor-book. Our plans are flexible and change as the term progresses as we work around the children’s current interests and learning needs.

Parent noticeboard

Our parent noticeboard is located inside next to the front door and has essential and interesting news about kindergarten, local schools and community events.

Newsletters

Families receive a newsletter informing you about kindergarten activities, meetings, curriculum information and parenting support. This are distributed electronically and hard copies are available through the kindergarten.

Notice pockets

Each child has a notice pocket located inside the kindy into which all notices are placed. Please check these regularly.

Change of address

Please inform staff if there is a change to any of your contact details as current records are essential in an emergency.

Safety and security

Arrival and departure of children

On arrival please accompany your child into the kindergarten and greet a staff member. This ensures that staff are aware of your child’s presence and provides an opportunity to share information that is relevant on the day. Please sign for your child when arriving at kindergarten. The sign in register is located on the sign in desk. Please note any changes to regular collection procedures in this register.
Leaving kindergarten

It is important that staff know who is collecting your child each day and that each child is farewelled by a staff member at the end of their kindergarten session. If, on any given day the routine for collection should change, please indicate this in the sign in register. When collecting your child from kindergarten please sign the register to indicate that the child is now in your care.

Absences

Please phone the kindergarten if your child is absent due to illness. If you know in advance that your child will be absent, please record this in the sign in register also.
Should you intend to terminate your child’s attendance before the end of term, please advise staff as soon as possible.

Out of School Hours Care (OSHC)

This is a service provided by the school that our children are welcome to attend. Bookings are made through the school and there is a cost involved. This service is available before and after kindergarten on Tuesday and Wednesday’s and before kindergarten on Thursday mornings.
If using this service please ensure that staff know. OSHC staff bring the children to kindergarten in the mornings and kindergarten staff take the children to OSHC in the afternoons.

Daily requirements for your child

Essentials

Please ensure that your child wears practical, easy-care clothing (as well as a spare set in their bag) and shoes that are safe for active play (not thongs or Crocs) as well as a:
- fruit (and lunch if appropriate) in a container that is easily opened;
- water bottle containing only water. We recommend water bottles with a sipper cap to support independence. Water bottles with separate lids become easily separated;
- kindergarten bag that is easily opened;
- change of clothes.

Please label all personal items. Each child has a labelled locker for their belongings. We have a lost property box inside the front door. Please check this for missing items.
What to leave home

While children are encouraged to share things they find (e.g. shells, nest, insects), please leave all toys at home. This avoids the loss or destruction of a loved and valuable toy which is upsetting for all of us. If your child needs a security toy, please discuss the matter with staff.

Parental involvement

We are aware of the many demands on your time and energy, and appreciate that while you are interested in your child’s kindergarten experience, you will choose your own level of involvement. There are many ways to be part of the kindergarten and we encourage you to participate in whatever way you can.

You may choose to:

- stay and play a game, do a puzzle or read a book to your child;
- donate boxes, collage materials, paper;
- take home an odd job (sewing, toy repairs);
- join Governing Council;
- attend family functions;
- demonstrate a craft, play a musical instrument, help with cooking or gardening;
- provide support for excursions;
- assist staff in developing resources;
- pick up supplies and shopping or help with washing;
- help with end-of-term jobs (cleaning tables, chairs, fridge);

Kindergarten management

Parents form our Governing Council and are elected each year at the Annual General Meeting to manage and coordinate centre operations in partnership with staff. Governing Council assists in decision making concerning services provided, social activities and parent talks, policy making, community activities, facilities maintenance and improvement, and fundraising.

We encourage your participation at this level as the quality of our kindergarten relies on the support of the families who use our service. Governing Council meets twice each term, and all parents are invited to attend meetings. Joining Governing Council enables you to actively participate in our kindergarten and get to know other parents and staff. No experience is needed. We welcome your comments, suggestions and concerns.
Health and safety

Rest and Relaxation

The kindergarten day can be long and busy. Following our lunch time all children are taught to rest and relax for a short period of time before a story and then continuing on with their day. Children are taught various techniques for relaxation and a range of resources (music, candles, lava lamp, sensory object, fragrant plants etc.) are utilized to support children to rest. Staff welcome your suggestions at any time to support this time.

Sun protection

The kindergarten's comprehensive Sun Protection Policy is available in our policy folder located above the lockers

To protect children from skin damage from exposure to the sun:

- we encourage children to wear protective clothing for outside play
- play in shaded areas
- The kindergarten provides a named hat for each child and these are worn in terms 1, 3 and 4 when the ultra violet rating is 3 or above.

Parents are encouraged to apply sunscreen to their child's exposed skin prior to arrival at kindergarten. Staff will apply sunscreen to all children after lunch if parents have given consent for this.

If children are sensitive to particular sunscreens we ask that parents supply the sunscreen for their child.

Allergy Aware, Nut free site

As some children suffer from an acute allergic reaction when exposed to nuts, we are a nut free kindergarten. Peanut butter, Nuttela, muesli bars and other nut products are restricted.

Please view our Nut Free Policy and Allergy Awareness Policy available in our policy folder located above the lockers

Nutritious food

We recommend that children bring nutritious food such as:

- fresh or dried fruit
- cheese and dry biscuits
- vegetables (raw carrot should be grated)
- sandwiches with healthy fillings
- rice crackers and rice cakes.

Sweets, chips and high sugar foods give short bursts of energy, which do not sustain your child's learning levels. Please do not send them to kindergarten.
Drinks

Rainwater is available for the children to drink at all times during the day. Please send only water in your child’s drink bottle. Juice and cordial do not quench thirst as effectively and contribute to tooth decay and low energy levels.

Birthday celebrations

The kindergarten celebrates each child’s birthday in our own special unique way at group-time.

Sometimes parents would like to add to this by giving the other children a small gift of some kind (a balloon, a sticker or bubbles, etc.). This is, of course, very welcome, but is not expected; it is each family’s personal choice. For any other arrangements please speak with the Director.

Illness and injury

If your child is unwell it is in the best interest of other children to keep them home until they have fully recovered. Please inform us when your child has an infectious disease or skin infection, such as:

- Chicken Pox
- Measles
- Mumps
- School Sores
- Head lice
- Conjunctivitis
- Slap Face Syndrome
- Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease.

In the event of your child becoming ill or having an accident at kindergarten, we will contact you or your indicated emergency contact person. In an emergency, staff will not hesitate to call an ambulance.

First aid

All kindergarten staff are trained in first aid, asthma and anaphylaxis first aid and supplies are available within the kindergarten. Standard precautions are adhered to at all times.

Immunisation

It is recommended that children be immunised. Information is available at the kindergarten. Alternatively, call the Immunisation InfoLine on 1800 653 809.
**Mandatory reporting**

Staff are legally obliged to report any indication of or incidence of child abuse.

**Smoke-free zone**

The kindergarten premises (buildings and grounds) are a smoke-free zone.

**Allergy awareness and medication**

Parents and caregivers need to notify the kindergarten staff if a child is at risk of an allergic or anaphylactic reaction, either at the time of enrolment or as soon as possible after a diagnosis is made. Medical advice is that any child who has been diagnosed as requiring an epipen should not attend the centre unless an epipen is provided by the child’s parent or carer.

If your child has been identified as being at risk of an allergic or anaphylactic reaction, we will work with you to complete an individual health-care plan, which includes:

- clearly identifying the child (photo displayed);
- documenting known triggers;
- documenting the first-aid response, including any prescribed medication;
- identifying the doctor who has signed the action plan (and contact details);
- providing up-to-date information on changes to allergies or medication.

The staff’s responsibilities include:

- obtaining medical information and a health care plan completed for those children at risk;
- child’s photograph displayed (clearly labelled with identified allergen);
- maintaining up-to-date, relevant first-aid training at all times (including epipen training);
- thoroughly supervising all eating routines;
- enforcing ‘no sharing’ of food;
- maintaining high standards of hygiene;
- enforcing specific ‘allergen free’ policies relevant to the child’s allergy for the duration of that child’s attendance at the centre;
- continuing age-appropriate education of children with severe allergies with the aim of positive, long-term self management.
Behaviour management

At Uraidla and Hills Community Kindergarten we:

- believe that everyone has the right to feel safe
- teach children to take responsibility for their own actions
- provide a supportive environment
- model and encourage positive ways of behaving
- provide explicit behaviour guidelines.

The kindergarten’s comprehensive Behaviour Management and Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy is available in the policy folder or by accessing our website.

Briefly the policy discusses:

- immediately managing inappropriate behaviour;
- calmly discussing the inappropriate behaviour with the child/children involved;
- an adult supporting the child with ‘time in’ at the activity or social situation;
- when inappropriate behaviour continues to occur, after discussion and supported ‘time in’, then ‘time out’ away from the activity may be necessary;
- when necessary, and with parent support, the development of an individual learning plan to help teach a child appropriate behaviour at kindergarten.

Parents can support the code by working in partnership with the kindergarten staff through:

- reading our Behaviour Management Code
- discussing with staff any concerns (and changes in the child’s home life)
- supporting staff by adopting similar expectations at home.

Evacuation plan

The kindergarten has an emergency evacuation plan posted at exit points in the building. Please make yourself familiar with its detail. The evacuation plan is rehearsed regularly.

Briefly, the evacuation plan entails:

- Person who notices emergency immediately notifies staff.
- Staff sound warning signal. Phone emergency services.
- Inside staff member collects roll and children, take to evacuation point and check roll.
- Other staff member collects first aid box; double checks play areas to ensure no children are left behind.
Bushfire Safety

On a catastrophic bushfire day the kindergarten will be closed. On all high bushfire risk days, parents are encouraged to:

- consider keeping your child home with you;
- leave a contact phone number with staff if you are not going to be at home;
- listen to the radio (ABC radio AM891) during the session for updated weather reports;

Please note that on days of a Total Fire Ban any excursions planned may be cancelled at the discretion of the Director.

When a fire has occurred adjacent to or is threatening the kindergarten

- Children and adults will be kept inside the kindergarten building.
- The Director is responsible for decision-making regarding the safety and movement of children and staff, unless Police and Emergency Services personnel intervene directly.
- The Director remains responsible for the children until they are collected by their parents or emergency contacts.
- Children will only be released to those indicated as emergency contact people on the child's enrolment form or where the kindergarten has written permission from parents to release children to an alternate carer in a bushfire emergency or verbal permission at the time.
- Parents or emergency contacts must sign their children out before taking them.

Staff will stay with the children and remain on site until all children have been collected.

Please do not put yourselves at risk to collect your children. Parents are welcome to view both our Invacuation and our Evacuation Procedure. They are available in the policy folder located above the lockers.

Visitors to the kindergarten

Under occupational health and safety (OHS) guidelines, you are considered a visitor to the centre if you stay longer than ten minutes. You are welcome to stay to read a story or help with an activity. However, if you are staying, please sign the visitors' book and sign out when you leave.
Volunteers to the kindergarten are required to undergo Child Related Employment Screening checks and attend Reporting Abuse and Neglect training arranged through the kindergarten and paid for by the kindergarten.

**What services are available for my child?**

**Available support services**

Children who have additional needs (e.g. speech and language, developmental delays, identified disabilities, high intellectual potential, English as a second language), may be able to access support. Support may include additional staff support to enable your child to attend, speech pathology, special educator support, psychological assessment and bilingual support.

**Children, Youth & Women’s Health Service (CYWHS)**

CYWHS conducts medical checks on children from the age of four-and-a-half. Included are hearing and eyesight tests. For further advice about your child’s health and development, please contact CYWHS on 8398 6600.

Parents are required to attend this appointment with their child. The nurse will discuss any areas of concern and, if required, a referral to appropriate professionals will be arranged.

**Dental care**

The Mount Barker and Magill dental clinics provide dental treatment for all children up to and including Year 7 school students. This is not a free service, but is subsidised by the State Government. Enrolment forms are available at the kindergarten.

**Parent library**

There is a range of books available for borrowing (located near the notice pockets). If you have suggestions for material, please let us know.

**Mobile Library**

The Adelaide Hills Council’s Mobile Library visits our site on alternate Tuesday mornings from 8.45 am to 10.00 am. Parents are encouraged to visit the library with their children when they arrive at kindergarten to borrow and return books. Staff and children will then visit the mobile library for a library lesson from 9.15 am. Please return your enrolment form for your child to Darryl in the Mobile Library who will issue a membership card.
School transition

We work closely with neighbouring schools to ensure children have a happy and smooth transition into school. Transition visits, which occur in the last few weeks of kindergarten, enable children to become familiar with their new school, staff routines and expectations. We liaise with school staff to ensure they have an understanding of the individual needs of each child. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure their child is enrolled at the school of their choice.

What if you have a problem?

At times, families may have grievances or concerns that need to be resolved. Usually a simple discussion within the kindergarten staff will clarify the situation.

Please discuss concerns with a staff member in the first instance. Staff will deal with your concern in a confidential manner, and we ask that you do the same.

If you feel that the situation has not been resolved, we encourage you to take the following steps:

- Arrange a time to talk to our Director.
- If you feel the issue is still unresolved, please arrange a time to discuss the issue with DECD Mt Barker Office telephone 8391 4705.

In the unlikely event that the matter has not been addressed to your satisfaction, you can contact the DECD Parent Complaint Unit www.decd.sa.gov.au/parentcomplaint or email DECD.parentcomplaint@sa.gov.au. There is also a Freecall number 1800 677 435.

Uraidla and Hills Community Kindergarten has a comprehensive Parent Complaint Policy and this is available in our policy folder or by accessing our website.

We look forward to meeting with you and sharing in the learning journey of your child.