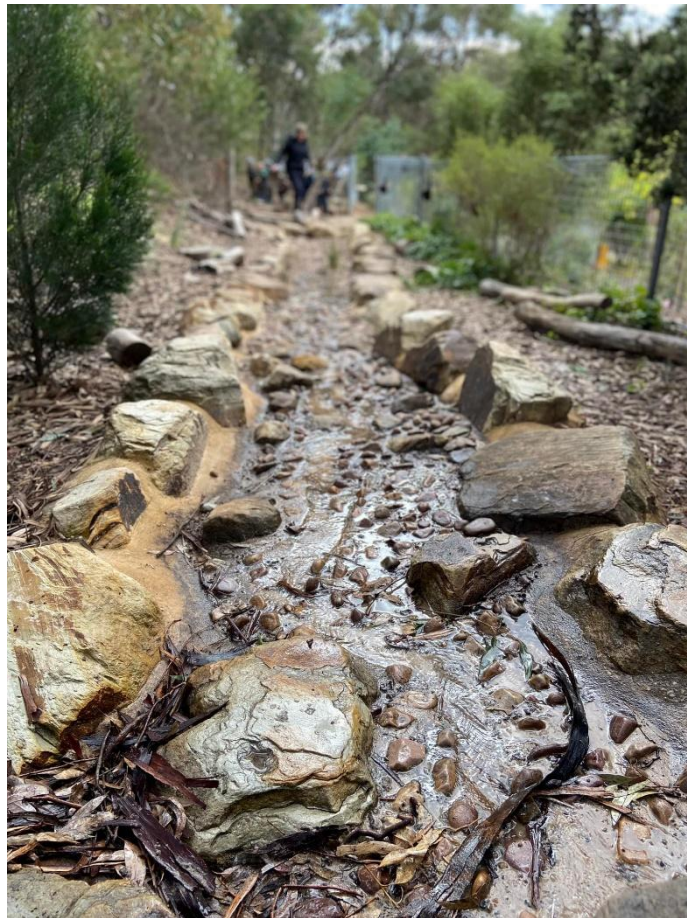




Information Booklet



Address: 15 Renwick St, Flagstaff Hill, SA, 5159

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Updated November 2023

Our Philosophy

Relationships, Nature and Sustainability, Play



Relationships

We value each child's connection with family, community, culture and place. We provide an open, welcoming and inclusive environment to develop secure and trusting relationships where we can learn and grow from each other. We utilise our connections with nature and our Bush Kindy Program to support children's understandings of the Kurna land where we walk and play, utilising texts, play based learning experiences and Aboriginal Elders to develop our knowledge collectively.

Nature and Sustainability

We encourage children to develop a sense of respect and responsibility for their learning environment through our Bush Kindy Program and walks to the Sturt Gorge. As educators, we intentionally plan for learning opportunities to support their understandings and purchase learning resources to strengthen this focus.

Play

We believe that children learn best through play with supportive and responsive educators. We provide opportunities to connect with nature, loose parts, real tools and open ended materials. Educators support and challenge children to be lifelong learners by developing their dispositions in inquiry, planning for their learning, persisting and reflecting.

Our Team

Director:

Clare Crew – Full time (admin days on Monday and Tuesday)

Teachers:

- **Emma Sexton** – Monday/Tuesday
- **Natalie Bunworth** – Monday/Tuesday
- **Clare Crew** – Wednesday/Thursday
- **Jade Hollick** – Wednesday/Thursday

Early Childhood Workers (ECW):

- **Toni Brown** – Monday/Tuesday
- **Shari Calaby** –Wednesday/ Thursday



Session times

We offer kindy sessions across two groups:

- **Gumnuts** – 8:30am to 4pm on Monday and Tuesdays
- **Gum leaves** – 8:30am to 4pm on Wednesday and Thursdays

Term Dates 2024

Term 1	29th January - 12th April
Term 2	29th April - 5th July
Term 3	22nd July - 27th September
Term 4	14th October - 13th December

Each term aligns with the South Australian school system, with a two week break in between (during which time kindy is closed).

Enrolment

If your child turns 4 years of age on or before 30th April then they are entitled to 15 hours per week of preschool for the year prior to starting school. If your child turns 4 between 1st May and 31st October, they are eligible to commence the mid-year intake of preschool in Term 3.

Orientation Visits

Two orientations will be offered in the term before your child commences preschool. This will be an opportunity to build familiarity with our physical spaces, as well as to meet the educators and children who will form their learning community. During one of the orientation visits, our Department Speech Pathologist will attend to listen to children speaking, advising of further support should this be required.

Special Services

Early admission or extension of time in preschool may be offered to children with additional needs related to disability, developmental delays, giftedness, speech/language issues, or health/medical conditions. Early admission will only occur following full consultation between the Director and parents, or where applicable, Department for Education staff or personnel from specialist agencies.

The Department for Education offers additional assistance through specialist support staff, including speech therapy, child psychology, social work, disability support and bi-lingual support. These services are free of charge.



Fees

Our funding is derived from:

1. Kindy fees from families
2. Government funding, determined by our number of enrolled children
3. Annual fundraising initiatives

We are dependent upon these funds to ensure the smooth financial operation of the Kindergarten, which includes site maintenance, equipment costs, staffing and the purchase of consumable materials.

Our Bush Kindy program is self-funded, meaning that we do not receive government funding to support the additional staffing required. Therefore for the continuation of this beneficial program, income from families is essential.

Kindergarten Fees:

\$200 per term

Fees include:

- The cost of incursions
- An additional educator to run our Bush Kindy program, to meet required staffing ratios

Additional Costs:

Hat charge: \$15 billed to your account in your child's first term of kindy

Playgroup: \$5.00 per session/per family each week, if opting to attend

Please note:

- Your kindy fees are payable within the first 4 weeks of each term
- Families can opt to pay a weekly/fortnightly payment across the full year
- If experiencing difficulty paying fees, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the Director
- We would prefer payment via Direct Debit into our kindy bank account. Details will be provided on your invoice (found in your communication pocket).
- Cash payments (if made) must be placed in an envelope and put into the fees box situated in the kitchen. Please write your name, the amount, date and what it is for on the front of the envelope.

Curriculum and the Preschool Quality Improvement Plan (PQIP)

Our curriculum is underpinned by the [Early Years Learning Framework: Belonging, Being and Becoming \(EYLF\)](#).

In addition to principles and practices that inform our teaching and decision making, the EYLF features five learning outcomes. Children...

1. have a strong sense of identity
2. are connected with and contribute to their world
3. have a strong sense of wellbeing
4. are confident and involved learners
5. are effective communicators

The [Preschool Literacy and Numeracy Indicators](#) are also used alongside the EYLF to inform, extend, track and monitor each child's learning through play.

The [Child Protection Curriculum](#) is a mandatory program used to develop children's understanding of their feelings, rights and protective practices. It is embedded throughout the year, visible in our interactions with children and during group times.

Our annual [Preschool Quality Improvement Plan \(PQIP\)](#) is a tool to continuously improve our leadership and teaching, while maintaining a focus on children's learning.

The purpose of the PQIP is to:

- Identify and celebrate what is working well
- Identify and plan against learning improvement goals that will improve learner outcomes and educator practices
- Monitor impact
- Review and evaluate the improvement goals each year

The Kindergarten will have 4 Preschool closure days across the year to work on our Preschool Quality Improvement Plan and access relevant training.

Communication



We strongly value the relationships we develop with families in our community. When parents, grandparents and carers feel connected, it supports your child to feel safe and confident at kindy.

Each family is assigned a communication pocket, located on the wall outside of the children's bathroom. Paper based communication is shared here, such as kindy invoices.

Daily messages are written on a whiteboard, affixed to an outside wall at the bottom of the path. Please check daily for reminders and updates about the learning that has taken place that day.

The site uses a private Facebook group to support communication pathways with families. Please look for 'Flagstaff Hill Kindergarten 2024' and sign up for this. If you are not on Facebook, all essential communication, such as newsletters, will also be sent via email.

We encourage you to discuss any issues as they arise. Educators are available for brief discussions before or after sessions, however if the issue requires more time or confidentiality, please request an appointment outside of our teaching times.

General Information



Delivering and Collecting Children

Please be prompt when collecting your child/ren at the end of the day, to avoid them becoming distressed and to support staff in concluding their working day.

In the interest of child safety, please come into the kindy building at the end of our session. We will farewell children when a recognised adult is there to greet them.

Please sign in/sign out your child on the daily attendance sheet. If someone other than yourself is going to collect your child, please write this next to your child's name. If they are not listed as having collection authority, presentation of ID will be required.

If you feel the kindy day will be too long for your child, or you are needing coordinate a school run too, you are welcome to drop off between 8:30am and 9:00am and pick up between 3:10 and 3:40pm (prior to our end of day group time commencing). Each family is different and we can be flexible to meet your needs.

Medical Requirements

Some children require regular administration of medication. In all cases staff are bound by the Department for Education policy of Administering Medication. Therefore we require parents to complete a number of documents in consultation with your doctor, before we are allowed to give medication. Please discuss your child's medical requirements with the Director.

Toys

All toys from home are discouraged as they often get lost or broken and also restrict children's equal access to materials. The Kindergarten has plenty of resources, which are changed regularly to extend children's learning.

Illness and accidents

If your child is unwell with symptoms such as a runny nose, cough, unknown rash or temperature, please keep them at home. This will help them to recover and assist in controlling the spread of infection.

If a child injures themselves at Kindergarten we will fill in an accident report for you to sign. Should the injury involve a fall, head injury or bite, we will ring you to inform you and if required, ask for your child to be collected.

Sunscreen

Sunscreen needs to be applied by you at home or upon your arrival in the mornings, if the UV index is 3 or higher (we will communicate this on our whiteboard). We will reapply sunscreen after lunch. If your child has allergies to sunscreen or requires their own, please supply the Kindergarten with a bottle/tube that can be left onsite. This will need to have a pharmacy label affixed. We ask that children have short sleeves in summer to protect their arms rather than tank tops/dresses with straps.

Children's birthdays

Due to our healthy eating policy and children's allergies, food cannot be supplied for children's birthdays. Our aim is to minimise our impact on the planet, so instead of supplying plastic gifts for children to take home, we will sing Happy Birthday as part of our group time.

Playgroup

Playgroup runs weekly during term time, on Friday mornings from 9:30am until 11am. We welcome children from birth to school age for these stay and play sessions, which are supported by an educator. Playgroup is \$5 per family and is an ideal opportunity to connect with other parents, as well as to support children's familiarity with our kindy environment ahead of starting their year at preschool.

Lunch Boxes

Our Kindergarten promotes safe, healthy eating habits in line with the Right Bite health food and drink supply strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools.

Morning tea:

- Fresh fruit or vegetables only

Lunch time:

- Sandwich/wrap/roll/quiche/leftovers etc.
- Additional snack such as yoghurt or a muesli bar

Afternoon tea:

- A filling snack such as cheese and crackers, muffin, yoghurt etc.

Additional Information:

- Please avoid nut spreads (Nutella/peanut butter), nut containing muesli bars or whole nuts. Children with severe nut allergies attend our kindy in both groups.
- We unfortunately cannot heat up children's food, however a thermos can be used for warm lunch options (e.g. chicken noodle soup, pasta and veg, baked beans).
- We encourage families to buy yoghurt in large containers, then pack in a small reusable container for lunch boxes. Eating yoghurt with a spoon develops children's hand-eye coordination and also cuts down on the waste created by squeeze yoghurt packages (which can't be recycled).
- Children's lunchboxes stay in their bags for the day. In warmer months we recommend that you include ice packs to keep their food cool.
- We ask that your child only has one 'special treat' or packaged item in their lunch box as this supports our healthy eating policy and sustainability focus. Please do not pack any lollies or chocolate in lunch boxes.
- Consider choosing lunch containers which children can open independently (we will help as needed but work towards the development of these skills)
- Water is only drink accepted at kindy. We refill bottles as needed throughout the day with filtered water.

What to Bring

Please pack a bag containing:

- Lunch box
- Water bottle (containing water only)
- Kindy hat (which will be here for you on your child's first day)
- Spare change of clothes & wet bag (include lighter/heavier clothing for warmth/coolness)

All items need to be named to ensure that lost items will find their way back to you.

What to Wear

- **Clothing:** Please dress your child in clothes that allow them to get messy and have unrestricted movement for climbing etc.
- **Footwear:** Supportive footwear should be worn for safety reasons (no thongs, crocs, ugg boots or heels).
- **Kindy uniform (optional):** If you wish to purchase Kindergarten clothing, we have a range of items with our logo such as t-shirts and jumpers. These are ordered by families online from EduThreads and can either be shipped directly to your home address or collected from kindy (site delivery runs once a term). <https://eduthreads.com.au/>



Bush Kindy



Belief Statement

We believe Bush Kindy supports children to develop a sense of belonging to the Kurna land and a respectful connection with the environment.

Children explore the interdependence of the natural environment and living things. Nature stimulates children's senses, sparks curiosity and challenges thinking.

Within a bush setting, children are presented with many opportunities for taking calculated risks and in turn, develop their resilience.

We believe Bush Kindy provides an ideal environment for collaborative learning and in turn, supports children's social and emotional development.

Location: Yeltanna Wirra (Our back garden)



In the language of the Kurna people, Yeltanna Wirra translates to 'dry airy place'. We are so fortunate to have this wild space within our kindy grounds, nestled amongst the Sturt Gorge.

It is important that we sustain, respect and embrace this area as a natural, untouched space for children to learn in and about indigenous culture. Our plantings in this environment connect back to the local region so that we can adopt sustainable practices that do not harm the Sturt Gorge.

We aim to connect with our local Kurna Elder each year, to deepen our understanding of the land we walk and play on.

Once we have settled into Yeltanna Wirra, we begin to spend part of our day walking and playing in the adjoining Sturt Gorge.

The Benefits of Bush Kindy



- Bush Kindy enables children to learn through play in an unstructured environment for long and regular periods of time without disruption
- Children are intrinsically motivated and actively involved in authentic learning experiences
- Time spent playing in the bush provides children with experiences and interactions that nurture their social and emotional development
- Children are faced with experiences that require risk assessments and in turn, make choices and decisions based upon their own judgments. This links into the Child Protection Curriculum where children are taught about warning signs, how to assess risk and to listen to their bodies. One of these risks will be understanding how to engage safely around our fire pit
- Bush play promotes physical challenges that involve both gross and fine motor development e.g. building dens with branches or whittling wood. We utilise a range of real tools such as whittlers, saws, files and mortar and pestles to support this learning. Through our time exploring in Sturt Gorge, children develop strong core muscles, balance and coordination. These are important muscles to develop their ability to sit at a table and engage in writing experiences at school
- When outdoors, children's minds are stretched through investigation and exploration with open ended materials that require imagination and creativity
- Children learn first-hand the importance of sustainable practices to care for the environment. We connect the learning with Aboriginal culture, language and the Kurna land that we live and play on.

Risk assessments

Together we conduct risk assessments of the physical space each session as a precaution. Children are empowered to develop the skills and responsibility for making choices that impact on safety. This connects with the Child Protection Curriculum of children understanding safe and unsafe risks and listening to the warning signs of their own body.

Emergency evacuation/invacuation

We regularly revisit and practice evacuation/invacuation procedures in the event of an emergency.

Extreme weather

In extreme weather conditions i.e. thunder and lightning storms, Bush Kindy sessions will cease and play will be moved indoors. Educators will check the weather each Bush Kindy day and use this information to make adjustments as necessary. The site also has an inclement weather policy to support decision making.

Hygiene and safety

Children will have access to the bathroom for toileting and handwashing. There are first-aid kits on site and all educators hold first aid certificates. A common sense approach prevails.

Snake awareness

Snake catchers of Adelaide visit the site to support our efforts in educating children about snake awareness. We run our Bush Kindy program through winter, intentionally attempting to reduce the likelihood of a snake sighting. We also make lots of noise during our sessions!

Bugs, slugs and creepy crawlies

Children are naturally inquisitive and we hope that within the Bush Kindy environment they will discover various creatures. Educators will support children in identifying those that are safe to handle and encourage respectful interactions. Creatures that pose a risk will be dealt with appropriately.

What you need for Bush Kindy

- Gumboots to keep feet dry and shoes to change back into after the session
- Waterproof rain jackets and pants or a waterproof onesie (whole body coverage needed). We recommend coveralls from *Nature Play SA*
- Layers of clothing underneath wet weather gear, to avoid overheating (easier to remove or add layers as body temperature and activity levels change)
- Beanies to keep warm
- Wet bag/plastic bag to put dirty or wet clothes in
- 3 sets of spare socks and clothing
- An additional snack is often needed - we get really hungry outdoors



Bush Kindy Routine



8:30: Kindy starts – An educator will greet children at the Yeltanna Wirra gate, located on Renwick Street (near the story circle). They need to be wearing their Bush Kindy clothing and footwear. Please sign in your child inside (as per normal) and place your child's bag in their usual locker.

Initially the weather may still be warm at the start of term 2 so we will inform you if sunscreen application is still required along with hats.

9:45: We will do a "cooee" so children can gather at the fire pit for group time. We will sing an Acknowledgement of Country and do a short group time, introducing Aboriginal language and texts or concepts relating to nature and sustainability.

10:00: Children will have morning tea (fruit/vegetable snack) under our mulberry tree

10:30: Play in Yeltanna Wirra OR going off site into Sturt Gorge (bush walk or visiting 'play spot')

12:00/12:15: Lunch time under the mulberry tree

12:30: Sunscreen applied if UV rating is 3 or above. Continue to play in Yeltanna Wirra

2:00: Pack up the learning environment

2:30/3:00: Afternoon tea under the mulberry tree, then transition into getting changed, book reading and relaxation time

4:00: Final group time of the day and 'Nukutha' (goodbye, see you soon)



During the Bush Kindy season, children have a regular day of kindy each week, followed by a day of Bush Kindy.

Gumnuts: Monday - normal kindy, Tuesday - Bush Kindy

Gum Leaves: Wednesday - normal kindy, Thursday - Bush Kindy

Bush Kindy will commence in the first week of Term 2 and conclude with a final session half way through Term 3. It runs for 15 weeks in total.

We will hold a family Twilight Kindy session in Yeltanna Wirra late in Term 2, as we prepare to farewell our mid year entry children.



Find our private Facebook group by searching:

'Flagstaff Hill Kindergarten 2024'

We also have a public page:

'Flagstaff Hill Kindergarten'