Welcome Brochure

Holden Hill
Kindergarten

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WELCOME TO HOLDEN HILL KINDERGARTEN

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This booklet is designed to introduce you to your child’s kindergarten. Please do not hesitate to talk to the staff if you have any queries.

Staff Team:

Director: Shelly Collins
Teacher: Maryann Halstead
Support / Early Intervention: Sonya Richards
Occasional Care Worker: Marie Hobbs

From time to time you may also see others at the Centre. They may include relief teachers, additional Early Childhood Workers, Preschool Support Workers, parent helpers, volunteers and work experience students and special services staff.

Services Offered:

Sessional Kindergarten: Monday and Tuesday (all day)
Session Times: 8.45 am to 2.45 pm, Monday and Tuesday
Staff preparation and Planning time: Wednesday morning

Children are entitled to attend up to four half day kindergarten sessions per week, four terms before starting school. Children cannot start sessional kindergarten before their 4th birthday due to the DECS Enrolment Policy. Early Entry to Pre-Entry is negotiable with the Director, if your child has special needs, but is also subject to availability of sessions and/or support. Your child’s entry date to kindergarten is dependent on each school’s intake policy. Please confirm your child’s starting date for school with the school you have chosen. At Holden Hill Kindergarten, in order to meet the need of families, we have combined the 4 half day sessions into two full days. This enables parents/carers greater flexibility with work etc

Playgroup: Wednesdays 9 a.m. – 11 am
Playgroup operates on Fridays and the cost is $2.50 per week per family, which helps to cover the cost of electricity, water, paper, paints, glue etc.

Playgroup is a great program for parents to play with their children aged 0-5 years old using the kindergarten facilities and resources. It is a good way for parents to connect with other parents too.
Occasional Care:
On Mondays, we offer two Occasional Care sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. This is for children who are 2 years old and over, but not yet at kindy.

Occasional Care Session Times:
Monday morning: 8.45 am to 11.30 am and Monday afternoon: 12noon to 2.45pm

Children who are eligible to use Occasional Care are those who are over 2 years old. The number of children is limited to 8 children per session. There are an additional 2 Emergency bookings for each session which are only to be used in emergency situations, and in consultation with the Director. Occasional care costs $5 a session per child or $1.50 for current health care card holders. Occasional care provides ‘now and then’ child care to enable parents/caregivers to participate in activities, fulfil work commitments, keep appointments or to have a break from their child/ren on an occasional basis rather than as a regular booking in a long day child care centre. Children are only allowed to access one occasional care session per week maximum. Bookings can be made by speaking with a staff member at any time, with one booking held for each child at a time. At your child’s occasional care session, you will be able to re-book for another session.

Please read the Occasional Care Policy for more information.

Pre-Entry: Tuesday mornings, 8.45 am to 11.30 am.
Pre-entry is a non-funded session, which means that the kindergarten does not receive any funding for the Education Department to support this program. However, the staff at Holden Hill Kindergarten value this program and do their best to make it available to children the term before they are eligible to start kindergarten for one session per week. Usually, children have their pre-entry session the term that they turn 4 years old. If the session time does not suit, other arrangements can be made with the Director.

Special Services Support may be organized through DECS as required. If you have a concern about your child, please approach a staff member to talk about what help we can help you access. At times, staff may identify a child who has a particular need, such as speech and language difficulties, and may approach you about seeking support from the DECS support services, which can include:

- Bilingual Support
- Speech Pathology
- Psychologist
- Social Worker
- Special Educator
- Aboriginal Community Worker

Holden Hill Kindergartens’ Philosophy:

“We aim for excellence in providing learning for all children.” We realise that the parents are the child’s first and most important educators and we work in partnership with families. Programs are planned to meet the needs of individuals and the needs of the larger group. The programs are evaluated on an ongoing basis and information based on planning and evaluation is provided to parents and the community.
**Kindergarten Fees**

Holden Hill Kindergarten is a Department of Education and Children’s Services (DECS) site and as such is partially funded by the State Government, and partly by fees and fundraising. Government funding is limited and so our fees are essential to assist with the payment of the cleaner, telephone, electricity, gas and water bills, grounds maintenance and consumable materials such as tissues, toilet paper, paint, textas, paper etc.

Fees are paid termly or by regular negotiated instalments. You will receive an account at the beginning of each term. When paying any money at kindergarten, please place it in a sealed envelope with your child’s name on it and put it in the red fees box on the wall just inside the kindy door on the left hand side. A receipt will be issued by the Treasurer.

**So what does it cost each term?**

- **Pre-entry** $25.00 (including a legionnaire style kindy hat)
- **Sessional Kindergarten** $65.00 per term

**N.B.** Preschools are not included in the School Card Scheme. We also cannot offer Child Care Rebate/Subsidy as a Child Care Centre is able to.

Please speak to the Director for confidential adjustments or arrangements to pay the materials and services charges, if necessary. Please read the Fee policy for further information.

**Late Collection Fee:**

In the event that parents/caregivers are late picking up their child from kindergarten at the end of the session, a late fee will apply. If a child is picked up late, not only can this distress the child, but it also inhibits staff from preparing for the next session, to attend meetings and/or to go home to their own families on time. We do understand that sometimes things happen which can cause you to be late, but a phone call can help reassure staff and your child that you are on your way. Alternatively, if you are going to be late, you can organise someone else to pick up your child on time, phoning the centre to let staff know who will be picking up your child that day.

The Centre will charge a $5 late fee if a child is not picked up by 3.15pm (Monday and Tuesday), or for morning occasional care and pre-entry children, at 11.45am. Another $5 for every 15 minutes, or part thereof will be added onto the initial late fee. For example, if you arrive to collect your child from occasional care on a Monday morning at 11.55am, you will be charged an initial $5, for being after 11.45am, plus another $5 for the next 15 minutes or part thereof, a total of $10. This late fee will need to be paid on the day or by the next kindy session. Please note, even if you do phone the Centre to say you will be late/to arrange someone else to collect your child, the fee still applies. Holden Hill Kindergarten is an educational community service and is not a child care centre offering extended care.

**Late fees apply to all children accessing Holden Hill Kindergarten, including occasional care, pre-entry and regular kindergarten.**
Occasional Care:
Full rate per session: $5 per child
Concession rate per session: $1.50 per child
More than one child in the same family per session: second child half price.

The Program:

Our Curriculum places great emphasis on play and conversation as the main ways young children learn and develop. Play is a process through which children learn life skills and make sense of the world around them. Through concrete experiences and active involvement at kindergarten, children are able to grow and develop. The daily program allows for investigation, exploration, social and dramatic play as well as planned group sessions e.g. music, movement, literacy and numeracy. Play is an essential aspect of learning for young children and planning for play is central to the development of a curriculum that integrates all areas of a child’s development.

Staff members in the kindergarten have a critical role in responding to children’s play ideas and establishing an environment which supports and extends children’s learning and development. We value diversity and we respect each child. This requires critical thinking and helps children to acknowledge differences and develop attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary for effective living in a complex and diverse world.

The core business of the kindergarten is the education and care of all children. The curriculum document used is The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia “Belonging, Being and Becoming”. The 5 learning outcomes are:

- 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

When programming, we incorporate the needs and interests of each child and develop our curriculum accordingly. This information is obtained through staff observations as well as through staff interacting with children as they play.

The kindergarten staff will also monitor and assess what children are doing, recognising children’s achievements, strengths and area that need strengthening and acknowledging their individuality and differences. We will provide families and the school with a written summative report for children as they make their transition to school.

You are welcome to informally discuss your child’s participation and progress with staff but if you would like more detailed information please make a time to talk to the Director or teacher.
Helping Your Child To Be Successful

**Attendance.** “Set the pattern now for your child’s future”. It is important that children attend kindergarten regularly. If your child is absent due to illness please let us know. Children’s regular attendance enables each child to gain maximum participation and to ensure continuity of learning. The kindergarten is staffed on child attendance, and staff members seek your cooperation to bring your child to all their sessions. For example, if children do not attend regularly, then this will be reflected in how many staff are appointed to the kindergarten, and may result in less staff. Regular attendance means that appropriate staffing levels will be maintained.

**Independence.** It is important for children’s development and confidence to be able to do some things independently as this gives your child a sense of success. It would be beneficial if you could help your child start to learn to:

- Hang up their own bag
- Remember to bring their sun safe hat each day
- Open their drink/snack containers independently
- Go to the toilet and then wash hands
- Put on their own socks/shoes
- Recognise their own belongings
- Being responsible for their own belongings, e.g. putting their hat away in their bag, not just dropping it on the ground.
- Helping their friends

**Writing their name.** To help your child to write their name, please teach them to use a capital letter for the initial letter, and lower case for remainder of name. Encourage them to start their name on the top left hand corner side of the page. We have name cards at kindergarten to help your child learn this skill at kindergarten.

**Other services**
- The School Dental Service has a Dental Clinic at Wandana Primary School, Cowra Avenue, Gilles Plains that you are entitled to use. Enrolment forms are available at the kindergarten.

- Bi lingual Support
- Speech Pathology
- Social Worker
- Disabilities Coordinator

**Are available free of charge through the Department of Education and Children’s Services...please speak to the Director about these services if needed.**
What Your Child Will Need to Bring

Please **name** all clothes and possessions, especially shoes, socks, hats and bags.

1. **A hat.** Children are required to wear hats while outdoors all year round. Children will be limited to indoor or veranda play if they do not have a hat. Hats are to be kept in your child’s bag. Approved hats are bucket, broad brimmed or legionnaire style, see our Sun Safe policy for more information. Please apply sun screen at home before you come to kindergarten each day. We will supply and apply sun screen at lunchtime for protection in the afternoon.

2. **A bag** which your child can easily open and in which each child keeps her/his belongings. Make sure it is clearly labelled to avoid confusions as some children may have the same type of bag.

3. **Food** for a morning snack, separate lunch in a labelled container, and a piece of fruit for shared fruit in the afternoon each day. If you want to pack a drink bottle, please fill it with WATER ONLY. We do provide fresh water and cups for drinking so you don’t need to bring a drink bottle, only if that is your preference.

Please assist us to help the children develop an understanding of the importance of a healthy diet, not only for growth, the prevention of disease and for strong healthy teeth. Diet also impacts on your child’s brain functioning and their ability to learn. Suitable foods include those low in sugar, fats and salt such as fresh fruits, dried fruit, raw vegetables, salad vegetables, cheese, dry crackers, hard boiled egg, etc. Please keep us informed of any food allergies.

Please read the Healthy eating and ‘no nuts’ policy carefully for your information.

To help with the daily organisation, please doing the following each morning:

- Keep your child’s morning snack in their kindy bag
- Place their lunch in a labelled container in the tubs just inside the door. These are collected and placed in the kitchen to prevent children from eating all their lunch at morning snack time.
- Place a piece of fruit on the white platter on the kitchen bench for shared fruit in the afternoon.

Pre-entry children do not need to follow this procedure as they go home before lunch, so they just keep their snack in their kindy bag.

Children’s clothing

It is recommended that your child wears play clothes. Smocks are provided but are not always sufficient protection for messy activities. Thongs and long skirts/dresses, can be dangerous on climbing equipment and awkward belts make it difficult for children to get to the toilet independently.

Please supply a spare set of clothes for your child, to be kept in their bag. Children prefer their own change of clothes should an accident occur. We do have some spare clothes, but they are limited.
General Information

Arrival and Collection of Children.

Please enter the kindy through the gate next to the Community Centre Car park, this brings you into the back yard of the kindergarten. We invite you to come in and join an activity with your child to settle them. **If you are early please stay with your child until the session begins at 8.45am.** The staff will need the time at the beginning of the sessions to prepare the activities and are not available to care for your child until the session starts. You are welcome to play with your child inside if you arrive early. If you or your regular carer will not be collecting your child, you must let the staff know at the beginning of the session or phone us. An adult must drop off and collect your child unless the Staff have been notified. Children will NOT be released to siblings unless staff have had prior notification. Remember we want your child to be safe. Also, be very careful NOT to let children other than those under your care to go out the gate so that our children are safe at all times, and ensure that you close the gates behind you securely.

Absence

If your child is unable to attend, please advise the kindergarten. Infections can be prevented from spreading if children are kept at home when they are unwell. Please let us know if your child is suffering from a medical condition that may be passed on.

Literacy Lit Borrowing

Children are encouraged to borrow Literacy Story Kits and books from the kindergarten library. Literacy is an important part of the program and early reading experiences have been shown to impact positively on children’s ability to learn to read, write and communicate in later years. Please keep the books and kits in a safe place and share this valuable experience with your child. Please inform us if any books etc. have been accidentally damaged or lost so that they can be repaired and replaced as soon as possible.

Settling your child

When kindergarten is a new experience for your child, please speak to a staff member about any concerns with helping your child to settle at kindergarten. You are welcome to stay to support your child’s transition to kindergarten if you like. Staff will support you as to how this can be managed best with your child’s needs in mind. While the staff are experienced in general patterns of behaviour, you know your own child best. If attendance is regular and routines consistent, most children will settle in quickly. You are welcome to call us for an update if you are worried that your child may not have settled.

Like wise we will contact you if your child is unwell or upset.
It is a requirement that preschool children are brought into the kindergarten at the beginning of each session, and not just let into the kindy gate. We will not allow children to go with anyone other than their primary care-givers unless we have been notified of alternative arrangements. Please keep us informed. If you do bring your child to kindy early, you must stay with your child until 8.45am when the session starts. Staff are still getting activities set up and organised before this time.

**Partnership with Families**

We are committed to working in partnership with families as we recognise, acknowledge and value the important role that parents and care-givers have and will continue to have as your child’s first educator.

Parents are always welcome. Your child will benefit from your interest and participation. Please share your skills and interests with us. By talking and working together, parents and teachers can help each other to appreciate each child’s special needs and characteristics.

**Your assistance** is gratefully received. Please arrange with a staff member for a mutually convenient time. Possibilities for help include reading stories to children, assisting with small group activities, cooking, gardening, preparing materials and resources, library, or helping to pack away the day’s activities.

A practical way you may be able to assist the kindergarten is by collecting materials for recycling. These may include items such as boxes from food items, fabrics, and ribbons.

You are welcome to join the **Governing Council** to participate in the governance of the kindergarten, plan special events, share ideas, and to get to know other parents. Governance involves setting the broad direction for the site through strategic planning, setting policy and supporting that direction through the appropriate allocation of resources. Meetings are held twice a term. The Governing Council also plans fundraising events in order to raise funds for projects for the kindergarten.

Each child has a **Communication pocket**. Please check each session for notices, newsletters etc. Newsletters are published regularly. They contain information about coming events, the curriculum, Governing Council meetings, requests for assistance, notes about our service etc.

Please read the **noticeboard** regularly.

If you have any concerns, please follow the steps in the kindergarten’s Grievance Policy.
Children’s Behaviour

Holden Hill Kindergarten Behaviour Code

At Holden Hill Kindergarten we believe in and strive to maintain:

**Respecting each person as an individual** – acknowledging everyone’s rights, decisions and opinions, backgrounds and values, abilities and development.

**Fostering caring and responsible behaviour** – by respecting other people, their property and our environment.

**Developing self-esteem and well being** – the dispositions of confidence, persistence, resourcefulness, resilience and optimism

**Guiding behaviour in a positive manner** – developing self-control, encouraging negotiation and democracy, a non-violent and non-competitive environment and educating for peace.

**Developing a staff team** with a focus on professional learning and skill development to provide high quality learning for children in a safe and friendly environment.

**Involving parents and care givers in the program and in decision-making** – supporting and working with families, providing parents with information, encouraging feedback and involvement in a range of ways including the Governing Council.

**Behaviour is:**

Purposeful

The way that children tell us how they are feeling physically and emotionally.

When a child is behaving inappropriately, we need to determine what the child is attempting to communicate, and teach the child more appropriate ways that they can use to have their needs met.

**The rights and responsibilities of members of the Holden Hill Kindergarten community (that is the children, families, staff and visitors)**

Being in a safe environment where each person and their belongings are respected and they respect others and their belonging

**Promoting understanding and consistency with the Behaviour Code by**

- Staff being consistent in their expectations and interactions with children
- Staff work in partnership with families to maximise children’s positive behaviours.
The behaviours we encourage at Holden Hill Kindergarten are:

- Communicating by speaking in a way others understand, or using signing
- Smiling
- Giving eye contact – where culturally appropriate
- Using an appropriate voice
- Greeting others
- Listening by giving eye contact to the person with your mouth closed
- Responding by saying something to or looking at someone when they talk to you
- Taking turns talking and in games
- Managing conflict – being able to express your feelings clearly, being assertive
- Sharing
- Including and accepting other children
- Observing a group of children before entering the play
- Walking inside and outside except for lawn area where children may run
- Being polite – using please and thankyou
- Waiting for a break in the conversation before speaking
- Each child to pack up the toys or activity they play with, before they move to the next activity.

Ways we maximise positive behaviours at Holden Hill Kindergarten include:

- Making sure the children understand what is expected of them and giving them reminders as needed
- Giving encouragement for appropriate behaviours
- Keep rules simple, use visual cues, and remind children of the consequences if the rules are not followed.
- Staff members have a consistent approach to behaviour expectations and are consistent in implementing them.

The behaviours which are not acceptable or appropriate at Holden Hill Kindergarten are:

- Hitting
- Poking
- Pushing
- Kicking
- Taking other's belongings or toys or activities they are using
- Destroying other's creations or work
- Shouting
- Continuous Squealing
- Running inside, or outside apart from lawn
- Pushing in front of others
- Taking a toy or a game from another child
- Using threats to other children, for example, I'll tell my dad and he will come and get you.
- Using verbal put downs, for example, You're coming to my birthday party, but you and you and you are not coming to my party (words underlined said with a very strong voice) and excluding some children.
Ways we will minimise challenging behaviours at Holden Hill Kindergarten include:

- We describe the child’s behaviour (for example, *Stop pushing*) rather than label the child (for example, *You bad child*)
- We assist the child to be successful by giving them the words to use, instead of inappropriate actions. For example, *Stop pushing, pushing hurts, say look, then point to the door, and say open,* when the child was trying to get the adult’s attention to open the door for a visitor.
- Providing plenty of high quality curriculum activities that engage all children in learning
- Withdrawing children from play to think about acceptable behaviours will be used when appropriate
- Using role plays between staff and use puppets and stories (followed by discussions) to reinforce to the children appropriate and not appropriate behaviours.

The staff members will inform children by:

- Discussing the behaviour code at the start of each term in group times, and whenever needed
- Giving encouragement for positive behaviours and using strategies to reduce inappropriate or unacceptable behaviours when they occur.

Families will be consulted and informed by:

- Newsletters, the notice board, at enrolment, individual talks with parents and at the meetings once a term for families new to the kindergarten.

Families can support the Behaviour Code by:

- Understanding and supporting the code by using
  - expectations,
  - rewards and consequences for their child’s behaviour that are consistent with the code.

  Also by parents:
  - reflecting the code in their own behaviour
  - leading behaviour by example

Staff members will be informed by:

- Induction process for new staff members
- Focusing on it at the start of each term, and as needed
- Displaying the code inside the kindergarten

Staff members can support the code by:

- Understanding and using it in their daily interactions at the site
- Being consistent in implementing the code

The Behaviour Code will be reviewed:

- Each year, or earlier if the need arises
- By a process managed by the staff, involving consultation with children, families and staff members
Safety in Cars and the Community Centre Car Park

- On every car trip, your child needs to travel in the back seat and in a child seat. There are regulations about restraining your child in cars so please be aware of these.
- When you park in the Community Centre car park, bring all children in the car into the kindergarten, when you bring or collect your kindergarten child from kindergarten. It is not safe to leave children in a car unattended.
- We need your cooperation to make sure that the Community Centre car park is a safe place for all adults and children. Unsafe driving in the car park is not acceptable and will be reported to appropriate authorities.

Starting School

Most children start school close to their 5th birthday, although the compulsory age is 6 years. Individual schools have different starting policies

Each child is entitled to 4 terms of sessional kindergarten. Please speak to the Director should you decide to start your child at school later than initially planned, eg change of school, with different starting policy.

To enable children to make a smooth transition to school, opportunities are provided by the school for the family to participate in a transition program involving a number of visits during the child's last term at kindergarten.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to enrol their child at school.

We hope that your child's time at the kindergarten will be happy and rewarding. If you have any queries or suggestions, please do not hesitate to discuss them with us.