Welcome Brochure

Holden Hill Kindergarten

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WELCOME TO HOLDEN HILL KINDERGARTEN

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
Early Childhood Worker: Heather Hodgson
Occasional Care Worker: Celina Jarco
Bi-lingual and preschool support: Zofia Kulesza

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 (up to 15 hrs per week):
Monday and Tuesday (all day) plus Wednesday morning

Session Times:
Monday and Tuesday: 8.45 am to 2.45 pm
Wednesday: 8.45 am to 11.45 am.
Staff preparation and Planning time: Wednesday afternoon

Children are entitled to attend up to five half day kindergarten sessions per week, four terms before starting school. In order to meet the needs of families, we have combined 4 half day sessions into two full days, with the 5th session on a Wednesday morning. This enables parents/carers greater flexibility with work etc. We also ask families to please confirm with the Kindergarten which school their child is intending to go to so we can update our enrolments records and communicate with their school.

Children cannot start sessional kindergarten before they are eligible in accordance with the “Same First Day” policy and Enrolment Policy. Early 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 their date of birth. A “Same First Day” policy from the Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) outlines this in more detail. It is the parent/carer’s responsibility to enrol their child at school.
Starting Preschool:
If your child turns 4 years old before the end of April, they will start Kindergarten at the start of that year. If your child turns 4 years old from the 1st May onwards, they will start Kindergarten at the beginning of the following year. This is the same policy across Australia. This means that all children will have a whole year of kindergarten, and all children will start school at the beginning of the year after their preschool year. This means that we will have a wider age range of children attending kindergarten, but there will be greater continuity as well.

Occasional Care:
Each week we offer two Occasional Care sessions, Monday and Wednesday mornings. This is for children who are 2 years old and over, but not yet at kindy.

Occasional Care Session Times:
Monday and Wednesday morning: 8.45 am to 11.45am

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. At times, staff may allocate sessions to children to generate fairness when Occasional Care is in high demand.

Please read the Occasional Care Policy for more information.

Special Services Support may be organised through DECD 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 DECD support services, which can include:

- Bilingual Support
- Speech Pathology
- Psychologist
- Social Worker
- Special Educator
- Aboriginal Community Worker
Holden Hill Kindergartens’ Philosophy:

At Holden Hill Kindergarten, we aim for all children to become confident and involved learners, who grow and develop in their own time.

We provide flexible, open ended play based experiences which foster a sense of belonging, being and becoming. Our program enables children to make choices and decisions and have an impact on their world, in a safe and secure active learning environment. An active learning environment is one where children are encouraged to explore and interact with the environment to make meaning and knowledge through their experiences, social interactions and negotiations with others.

We believe educators need to be engaged with children and their play, encouraging and supporting them to discover deeper meanings and make connections amongst their ideas and concepts, and where the adult and the child can learn from each other. We believe that children’s wellbeing is essential for involvement. Wellbeing includes happiness and satisfaction, effective social functioning and the dispositions of optimism, openness, curiosity and resilience.

Our intent is to ensure that all children’s experiences are valued, and that all children have access to equipment and resources allowing them to participate in quality, rich learning experiences. We also endeavour to provide opportunities for children to demonstrate their learning and appreciate and value difference.

Holden Hill Kindergarten’s Values

The following values represent the key ideas that underpin what the Centre believes are important to teach and foster to the young children within our care. It is also vital that staff, Governing Council members and parents model these values so there is continuity and consistency across the Centre. We believe it is never too early to begin to teach children about values. It is also our belief that values promote a sense of moral purpose, help all of us to co-exist with others in the community and develop skills and attitudes that lay the foundations for life.

Value: Independence
Operational Definition: which includes the ability to confidently make choices, be resourceful and self-reliant, demonstrate self-help skills and initiate their own learning.

Value: Connectedness
Operational Definition: which includes, developing a sense of community through friendship, care, cooperation, acceptance, belonging and sharing.

Value: Growth
Operational Definition: which includes, developing across all areas of learning and development in ways which are measurable or observable and demonstrate improvement over time.
Value: Resilience  
**Operational Definition:** which includes being able to recognise and manage emotions, nurturing optimism, persistence and a positive state of wellbeing.

Value: Participation  
**Operational Definition:** which includes being actively involved/engaged in a variety of learning experiences which are purposeful and meaningful.

Value: Respect  
**Operational Definition:** which includes demonstrating care, consideration, thought and tolerance towards self, others, belongings, equipment and the environment.

Value: Confidence  
**Operational Definition:** which includes demonstrating a positive sense of self and a sense of belonging, taking considered risks and trying new experiences, accepting new challenges and developing a ‘have a go’ attitude.

## Kindergarten Fees

Holden Hill Kindergarten is a Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) 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. Internet banking is also available for those who wish to pay via bank transfer.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Cost</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-entry</td>
<td>$35.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sessional Kindergarten</td>
<td>$65.00 per term for 2 full days (4 sessions)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>+ $10 fundraising levy per term</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$70 per term for 2.5 days (5 sessions)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>+ $10 fundraising levy per term</td>
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**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.
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.

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 2.55pm (Monday and Tuesday), and 11.55am Wednesdays or for morning occasional care. Another $5 for every 10 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 12.00pm, you will be charged an initial $5, for being after 11.45am, plus another $5 for the next 10 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.

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 a reduction in 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:

- Carry and hang up their own bag
- Remember to bring their sun safe hat each day (Terms 1 and 4)
- Open their own drink/snack containers independently
- Go to the toilet and then wash hands
- Put on their own socks/shoes
- Recognise and be responsible for their 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. Using upper case for all the letters actually makes letter writing and recognition harder for them, so use lower case.

Other services
- The School Dental Service has a Dental Clinic at Wandana Primary School, Cowra Avenue, Gilles Plains that you are entitled to use.
  - Bi lingual Support
  - Speech Pathology
  - Social Worker
  - Disabilities Coordinator

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 in Term 1 and 4. 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. Read 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, a separate lunch in a labelled container, and a piece of fruit for shared fruit in the afternoon each day.

4. **A drink bottle** filled with WATER ONLY.

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 on the trolley inside. This helps to prevent children from eating all their lunch at morning snack time.
- Place a piece of fruit on the tray just inside the door for shared fruit in the afternoon.

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. 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 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.

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 days 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

Each child has a Communication note 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 also.

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

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