Transition to School

Choosing a School can be very difficult for families of children with additional needs. Staff work together with families to explore the Schooling options available. When children are approximately 4½ years old a referral will be made to the DECD Guidance Officer who will observe the child and write a report making recommendations about the most appropriate future school placement. Families are supported to visit school options and enrol their child. Plans for transition visits and support will be made through the Negotiated Education Plan process.

Inclusive Preschool Program

‘A program for children with additional needs.’

Session Times:
Mondays (Even Weeks)
Tuesdays and Wednesdays
9am-3pm

Acacia Kindergarten
12 Bailey St
Mount Gambier SA 5290
Ph: (08) 8725 7373
Fax: (08) 8724 9383
Email: Kimberley.Crowe206@schools.sa.edu.au
Acacia Kindergarten, as part of the Inclusive Pre-school Program provides a specialised program for children eligible to access full-time sessional pre-school, who have significant global developmental delay including a significant cognitive delay.

**Preschool Program**

The program provided at Acacia Kindergarten in Mount Gambier is based on the Australian Early Years Learning Framework “Being, Belonging, Becoming” with knowledge of individual child and family needs.

The curriculum is implemented within a play based learning environment, which is designed to support the access and participation of all children. Activities are planned based on observations, anecdotal recordings and staff discussion of individual children and a current knowledge of early childhood education, growth, development and methodology.

In addition, a focus for the program continues to be centred around sensory based learning. Children access a variety of equipment including hammocks, vibrating cushions, weighted vests, chewy tubes etc to meet the children’s sensory needs which allows them to remain in a calm, alert state.

The staff at Acacia work within a multi-disciplinary team framework. Therapy staff from other agencies come into the centre by negotiation and work alongside preschool staff to provide input that ensures a balanced and consistent curriculum for all children.

**Negotiated Education Plan**

All children who attend the program will have a Negotiated Education Plan that is relevant, appropriate and reviewed regularly. This process allows parents, staff, and other agencies to meet together to consider the program in place for the child and to negotiate and document relevant educational plans for their future.

**Health/Access Services**

In addition to a range of developmentally appropriate preschool activities, staff implement structured programs to assist children’s independence with toileting/self care and eating/drinking. Children with complex invasive health care needs can be assisted by Health support Officers as needed. These children have a Health Care Plan that is followed to support access and participation for all children at the centre. Other health care needs are managed by the DECD staff with a documented Health Support Plan.

**Parent/Family Involvement**

Parent/Family input is always valued in all aspects of the child’s program. Involvement is also encouraged through participation on the Preschool’s Governing Council, attendance at family days and special events and fundraising activities etc. Continuous sharing of learning achievements through communication books and portfolios.

**Transport**

Families are encouraged to transport their child to and from Acacia Kindergarten. To facilitate this, a car allowance from DECD may be applied for, to help pay travel costs. Taxi transport may be available upon application from DECD Transport Services.

**Referral and Enrolment**

The Inclusive Preschool Program at Acacia caters for children who have a significant global developmental delay including a significant cognitive delay. All children are encouraged to attend pre-entry at their local pre-school. During this term, options for full time sessional Kindergarten (4 sessions) can be discussed. A visit to the Inclusive Preschool Program is welcomed and a referral to the program can be made. Referrals may be made by the Director of the local pre-school, families themselves, other agencies eg Disability SA, Autism Assoc. etc, Doctors, and DECD Support Services and Disability teams.

Families interested in enrolment need to provide information about their child with the referral. An intake panel comprising of the Director, District Student Support and Disability Co-ordinator consider the information and use it to determine if this program is the most appropriate placement for the child. Families are then informed whether placement is recommended or not. Intake occurs each term, dependent upon current placement provision.