PRESCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

Updated: 7.2.12

Centre number: 2614

Centre name: Elizabeth Grove Community Campus Children’s Centre

1. General information

- Director Education and Care: Catheirne Honeychurch
- Assistant Director: Sandra Holt
- Postal address: 20 Haynes Street, Elizabeth Grove, 5112
- Location address: 20 Haynes Street, Elizabeth Grove, 5112
- DECS Region: NAR
- Geographical location – ie road distance from GPO: 26 Km
- Telephone number: 82557515
- Fax number: 82876684
- Preschool e-mail address: kindy.director@elizgrovekgn.sa.edu.au

2. Enrolment/Attendance

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Enrolments

| 40 | 50 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 49 | 44 | 53 | 51 | 56 | 51 | na |

- **Co-located/stand-alone:** The Children’s Centre can be found on the campus of the Elizabeth Grove Primary School

- **Programs operating at the preschool**
  - Pre Entry: If your child does not already attend long day care at the Centre we are able to offer pre-entry in 2012
  - Sessional Kindergarten for eligible children: 15 hours of preschool each week
  - Lunch/Full Day Program: Available on request.
  - Long day care: We have 30 places for long day care for children birth- 5 years Long day care operates 7-6 p.m. for 50 weeks of the year.
  - Bilingual Support: Available for children who speak a home language other than English
  - Preschool Support: Children with additional needs may be allocated preschool support at this Centre

2. **Key Centre Policies**

- **Centre Priorities/Statement of Purpose**

  Elizabeth Grove Community Campus Children’s Centre offers integrated education, care, and health/family services for children birth to eight years of age. Our community is socially and economically diverse and includes a small cohort of Indigenous families and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The centre offers 9 weekly DECD kindergarten sessions with children accessing 15 hours of preschool a week. Our long day care program is supported by DECD and managed by parents via the Governing Council, and offers child care for children birth – 6 years. It operates from 7am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, 50 weeks of the year. In conjunction with the Wyatt Benevolent Fund the Centre offers child care scholarships to families experiencing hardship.

  Elizabeth Grove Community Campus Children’s Centre is an integrated site committed to the wellbeing, health, care and education of all children, families, staff and community members.

  Improvement Priority: To build leadership capacity and improve listening, responding and engagement at the Centre with a focus on Comprehension and Wellbeing.

OUR VISION

Elizabeth Grove Community Campus Children’s Centre is an integrated services site that is committed to the wellbeing, health, care and education of all children, families, staff and community members. We value, respect and promote a sense of ownership, collaboration and participation which will maximise positive learning outcomes for all people accessing the Centre’s services.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We believe that each child is individual, unique and important, and has the right to develop to their full potential by:

- providing a curriculum that allows children to explore, imagine, create, problem solve, develop independence, socialize, have fun, and play often
- providing a high quality, safe, welcoming, happy, supportive and accessible, care and educational environment that caters for individual children’s and family needs
- providing children and families with opportunities to become involved in campus programs and services
- providing children and families with opportunities to develop stable and caring relationships with staff and others
- respecting and valuing the cultural and social diversity of children and their families

We believe that parents and families are children’s ‘first educator’, and we aim to:

- welcome parents and family members with respect and sensitivity
- encourage communication between staff and parents / carers
- respond to individual family needs
- recognise and respect the diversity of families
- create, support and encourage involvement and participation
- provide information about other services available on campus and in the local community

We believe that staff are the Centre’s most valuable resource. In order to provide a high quality of program we aim to:

- provide job satisfaction
- value the skills and knowledge that each individual staff member brings with them
- respect the diversity of staff backgrounds and experiences
- encourage ongoing professional development opportunities
- maintain a safe and supportive working environment

We believe that the Centre is a valuable community resource, and as such we aim to:

- build relationships with all campus services
- build relationships with other community agencies
- provide an accessible, flexible, and high quality service in response to community needs

3. Curriculum

Framework used:
The centre promotes a balance between an educational curriculum and care program within the service that we provide. The staff team has professional educators, with a balance of qualified, trained and highly skilled people, ranging from many backgrounds. This complements the community needs by ensuring people are well-suited to their roles and responsibilities. The educational curriculum operates daily and is personalised according to the needs of the individual children in each room. The curriculum is based on The National Curriculum Framework Belonging Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework of Australia.

The planning cycle differs slightly for children attending sessional preschool and those attending child care. This is due to the length of time they spend in the Centre, the needs of children in long day care and the accountability requirements of DECS for 4 year olds. However the main aim of the planning cycle (observation, evaluation and planning) is to provide staff working with children the necessary information and tools to effectively plan for their successful learning and development.

1. Staff collect information from various sources e.g. parents, family members, other carers, outside agencies, observations.
2. Staff record information in individual observation notes.
3. Staff use the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia to decide which learning areas the observations and information best suit. (If many observations suit, they choose the area of concern or interest and prioritise e.g. settling/separation rather than feeding self/toileting.)
4. Staff use the planning sheets and Individual Learning Plans to carry out this process.
5. Routines are included as are self help skills e.g. hand washing, packing away toys, wiping tables etc. Also, small and large group activities, a balance of activities for inside/outside, and activities that develop thinking, physical and psychosocial development are planned for.
6. A daily evaluation plan for the overall program in the Ocean and the Hummingbird Rooms is considered best practice and every endeavour will be made to do this daily. Sessional Preschool evaluations are embedded in individual children’s Individual Learning Plans. An overall evaluation of the kindergarten/preschool program is carried out during the fortnightly programming cycle.

7. When programs are completed staff ensure it has a date on it before displaying at all entrances.

When the curriculum cycle is finished (end of the fortnight) staff write an evaluation and follow-up through planning. The next planning cycle begins at this stage.

Core Values

Children’s Learning and Assessment Protocol

1. Data collected is used to program for children’s interests and learning and filed using the Early Years Learning Framework outcomes.

2. Parents are actively encouraged to provide information about their child’s interests and abilities and have opportunities to talk one on one with educators. Parents’ input into the program is actively sought.

3. Children’s input into the program is actively sought.

4. Educators select targeted children and plan and record on children’s Individual Learning Plans in the planning cycle.

5. Educators work on National Quality Standards each planning cycle and evaluate accordingly.

6. Educators work with children to put examples of children’s learning into portfolios including Learning Stories highlighting the sites priorities of oral language, well being and play skills.

7. Primary Caregivers receive information and portfolios if children are moving from one room to the next. Once they begin kindergarten they have a new portfolio made and the old one is retained by the Centre until the child leaves.

8. Educators work with parents to identify a child with additional needs and refer to the Speech Therapist, Occupational therapist or appropriate agency.

Other protocols for kindergarten children:

9. Aboriginal children can start kindergarten at 3 years of age. When they start kindergarten they will be screened using the Northern Area Region Oral Language Screening for Aboriginal Children.

10. Pr-entry children will be screened using the preschool checklist and parents of new children to the room will be asked to fill in a questionnaire about their child’s interests.

11. Children in their first term of kindergarten will be assessed using Troll.

12. Parents will have a first term interview with a teacher and receive progress information.
13. Parents will have a third term interview with a teacher and receive progress information.

14. Children in their fourth term of kindergarten will be assessed using Troll.

15. Children in their final term of kindergarten will have a summative report written and begin transition to school. Where possible teachers and reception teachers will meet to discuss children’s transition needs.

SITE BEHAVIOUR CODE

At Elizabeth Grove Community Campus Children’s Centre we believe that:

- All children have the right to quality education and child care
- Children learn best when they can experience positive feelings of self and a sense of achievement.
- Children learn best in an environment that is supportive of their efforts, is safe to explore and experiment, and that caters for the needs of the individual and the group.
- Children learn best through play, and our curriculum should foster and promote this belief.
- Everyone has the right to feel safe all of the time, this includes families, children and staff.
- Children, families and staff should work together to build cohesive positive relationships, staff that aim to foster shared responsibilities and understandings of children’s development.
- Children and families experience varying family contexts and situations and these should be acknowledged, understood and celebrated when appropriate.
- Adults should model appropriate behaviour consistently, and support children towards developing positive and appropriate behaviour.
- Positive behaviour is any behaviour that is helpful, respectful, and cooperative, and helps to generate further learning.
- Negative behaviour is any behaviour that is unsafe (i.e. any behaviour that may potentially or does result in physical harm to oneself or others), and / or unacceptable (i.e. any behaviour that is unfair or disrespectful towards others).
- Children have the right to express their feelings, and may need adult guidance to express them in an appropriate manner.

The behaviours that we encourage at Elizabeth Grove Community Campus Children’s Centre are:

- Mutual respect and care
- Trust
- Cooperation and helping
- Care and empathy for others
- Positive social interaction with others and development of friendships
- Participation
- Enthusiasm
- Confidence
- Independence and taking responsibility
- Positive risk taking – ‘Having a go!’
Rationale

At Elizabeth Grove Children's Centre we believe in primary care giving practices and attachment theories where relationship between a child and primary caregiver enables the child to feel safe and free to learn and explore. We believe that the primary caregiver should wherever possible look after their primary child’s needs, taking a key role in feeding, sleeping, changing and playing with the child.

“Educators who are attuned to children's thoughts and feelings, support the development of a strong sense of wellbeing. Educators who give priority to nurturing relationships and providing children with consistent emotional support can assist children to develop the skills and understandings they need to interact positively with others. They also help children to learn about their responsibilities to others, to appreciate their connectedness and interdependence as learners, and to value collaboration and teamwork.

Learning outcomes are most likely to be achieved when early childhood educators work in partnership with families in genuine partnerships where families and early childhood educators:

• value each other’s knowledge of each child
• value each other’s contributions to and roles in each child’s life
• trust each other
• communicate freely and respectfully with each other
• share insights and perspectives about each child
• engage in shared decision-making.

[Early Years Learning Framework for Australia p 12]

Educators at Elizabeth Grove Children’s Centre work to create safe havens and a secure base for all children. Each child is encouraged to discover, explore, investigate and have fun in a stimulating and challenging environment that has positive role models.

Procedure

When your child starts at the Centre they will be assigned a Primary Caregiver. At this time a primary care giver will be allocated, a meeting arranged and a minimum of 2 visit days booked in prior to children commencing care. This educator will assist your child to settle in and spend lots of 1:1 time getting to know your child. Once your child has formed an attachment to their primary caregiver other educators working with your child will work on building secondary attachments with your child. This process allows your child to feel comfortable and happy with all staff in the room.

All staff work together in the room and Primary Care givers do not only care for their focus children. Educators have responsibilities for all the children and collective responsibility for maintaining the learning environment.

We are aware that a rigid system of primary care giving can work against the children’s best interests by creating delays in attention or by encouraging children to become too dependent on one caregiver. With this...
knowledge in mind staff form secondary attachments with all the children so that each child feels safe and secure when their primary caregiver is absent. If your child’s primary caregiver is on a rostered day off or on leave there is no need to feel concerned as the other educators working in the room are aware of your child’s needs.

**Keeping families informed**

Children will have opportunities to extend their interest through play and be able to look back at experiences with their primary caregiver and their family. Children will have lots of opportunities to be involved in the creation of the program and the direction it will take.

Parents will have opportunities to share experiences that their children have had whilst in care, and to discuss their child’s development, interests and needs with their primary caregiver. The staff will observe children through the use of photographs, learning stories and other assessment tools, in a way that is creative and interesting to all who read them.

Staff will ensure that each child has an appropriate amount of observations over each term period and they will discuss their primary care children’s portfolios with the child’s family and ensure that the children and their families know that they have open access to them at all times. Parents of children who are 4 years old and in kindergarten will receive regular and timely opportunities to discuss their child’s learning with their teacher (primary caregiver).

At all times we encourage families to share, discuss and celebrate their child’s care, development and learning needs with their primary caregiver.

Reviewed July 2011

Sourced Early Years Learning Framework, Lady Gowrie Child Centre, Circle of Security, Cooper, Hoffman, Marvin and Powell, Robyn Dolby Closure Day June 24th 2011.

- Joint programmes/special curriculum projects

At Elizabeth Grove we run community and family programs in conjunction with Good Beginnings, Kids n You(Health) and the Primary school. A term program is developed and distributed each term. These programs are run in conjunction with other partner agencies including the Smith Family, Centacare, Lady Gowrie Child Centre and Anglicare.

As part of Allied Healthcare Services the Centre has a .4 Speech Therapist and .4 Occupational Therapist

## 4. Centre Based Staff

- **Staff Profile**
  
  Director Education and Care 1.0  
  Assistant Director 1.0  
  Early childhood teachers 1.7  
  Support workers (preschool)  
  Children’s Services employees (a total of 15 full time and part staff)  
  Cook (25 hours)  
  Clerical Officer 1.0  
  Family Services Coordinator 1.0  
  Community Development Coordinator 1.0  
  Speech Therapist .4  
  Occupational Therapist .4

- **Performance Management Program**

  Performance Development Policy POLICY NUMBER 56a

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**RATIONALE**

Performance development depends on a culture of trust and support at our Centre. This allows feedback to be given and performance reviewed. It is a continuous process which benefits individuals by identifying expectations and providing support. It recognizes mutual obligation and is a two-way process between line-managers and staff, negotiated between both parties and focused on the achievement of agreed goals.

Performance management processes are consistent with the relevant legislation applying to each employee category in the Department of Education and Children’s Services including the *Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Act 1986*, the *Public Sector Development Act 1995*, the *Education Act 1972*, and the *Children’s Service Act 1985*.

**Key elements**

The following key elements make up Performance at our site:

- an explicit and up to date role duty statement, or job and person specification which reflects the skills and competencies required of the person and establishes the outcomes required of the position.
- effective induction processes which explain and confirm expectations and roles
- performance planning which establishes the link between the Centre’s goals and agreed indicators of individual performance
- a self evaluation against site priorities and a development plan which outline actions to be taken to develop skills and knowledge so that each staff person can best support the Centre’s to achieve its priorities as well as their own personal development.
- recognition which explicitly acknowledges achievement
  - feedback and review which enables staff and their line managers to identify areas for improvement and learning and development opportunities.
  - grievance procedures which enable employees to have addressed any matters of concern
- addressing underperformance which ensures that ongoing issues are identified and resolved.

**OUTCOMES**

- shared understanding of the Centre’s direction
- performance development processes which focus on the achievement of individual, Centre and department goals (including national standards)
- improved service delivery, pedagogy and learning outcomes for children and families
- recognition and valuing of individual’s contributions
- improved well-being
- a culture of continuous improvement and feedback

**Employees**

It is expected that all employees will take responsibility for improving their performance and perform their duties in a competent and efficient manner in line with Centre and legislative requirements.

Employees have a responsibility to:

- be actively involved in the performance development processes
- establish a documented process, in negotiation with their line manager, that reflects personal goals and Centre priorities and a shared commitment to achieving these
- negotiate an objective approach to monitoring performance against agreed outcomes
- be actively involved in the resolution of grievances that may result from the performance management process.
The Director and Assistant Director have additional responsibilities to:

- ensure staff have clear, up to date and explicit role or duty statements, or job and person specifications
- ensure effective performance management processes and plans are established
- incorporate a participative approach with staff in working through performance development processes and issues
- ensure employees who are new to a role or the worksite participate in an induction program
- ensure that structured and regular feedback is provided for all employees regarding the achievement of performance against agreed outcomes
- appropriately delegate the responsibility for performance development where necessary to ensure that all staff receive regular feedback and performance recognition
- ensure performance development processes conducted with each employee are documented
- actively address performance concerns as they arise
- support training where personal or professional developmental needs are identified
- provide fair and accurate performance assessments based on identified data collection processes
- promote and develop a healthy workplace culture that has regard for employees’ psychological well-being.
- model and encourage performance development practices consistent with the principles established in this policy, including seeking feedback on performance
- ensure that they have the skills necessary to implement the policy effectively
- conduct performance development practices in accordance with all relevant Acts, regulations, policies and guidelines
- report on the outcomes of the performance management process to the Chief Executive through the annual reporting cycle.

Process

Performance development is a confidential process, with access to any documentation resulting from the process normally only available to the employee and Director. Other departmental personnel may have access for legitimate purposes with the knowledge of the employee.

- Term 1 staff will set personal and professional goals for the year
- The Director or Assistant Director will make a time with the staff person to discuss and support that person in planning how they will work towards achieving their goals
- The Director/Assistant Director will give written feedback after the meeting
- The plans will be reviewed each term by individuals and their line managers. A meeting will be made in Term 4 for monitoring and reviewing the plans of individual staff and written feedback will be given.

NB Staff are encouraged to request a time to discuss their plans or any concerns at any other time with their line manager.

Sourced DECS Website Written by staff Closure Day 22.1.09

- Access to special support staff
DECD employees may access counselling services via the OHS staff representative.

5. Centre Facilities

- Buildings and grounds: Hummingbird Room (space for 10 children under 2 years), Ocian Room (space for 15 toddlers 2-3 years), Kindy Room (integrated care and preschool program for 3-5 year
olds). The Centre has small office spaces and 2 large outdoor play areas. The Group room is a community space in which many groups are run.

- Capacity: The Centre is licensed for 68 children
- Centre Ownership: DECD
- Access for children and staff with disabilities: People with Disabilities are able to access the Centre readily.

6. Local Community
- Parent and community involvement in the centre via the Parent Committee and Parent Advisory group, groups on campus and participation in the learning program are all encouraged.
- Schools to which children generally transfer from this preschool: Elizabeth Grove Primary School and Mary Magdelenes Primary School
- Other local care and educational facilities: OHSC is available as part of the campus
- Local Government: Elizabeth Grove is part of the Playford City Council