



Government of South Australia

Department for Education



CONTEXT STATEMENT 2019

Introduction

Roxby Downs Children's Centre for Early Childhood Development and Parenting is an integrated early childhood service in which Early Childhood Educators, Allied Health, Community Development Professionals, families and the local community work together to meet the needs of families and children. Children's Centres support children's development, health, learning and wellbeing.

We offer a State funded preschool program integrated with a Commonwealth funded long day care for children from birth to school entry. Roxby Downs Children's Centre is located adjacent the Roxby Downs Area School on the main street of Roxby Downs. The Centre is part of the Far North Partnership of the Department for Education.

General Information

Director Early Childhood Education and Care: Brenda Murray

Centre number: 6646

NQS Service Approval Number: Preschool SE-00010866

NQS Service Approval Number: Long Day Care SE-00010865

Address: Richardson Place, Roxby Downs, SA, 5725

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Partnership: Far North

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Centre Programs

Long day care (birth to school entry) operates Monday-Friday 6.30am-6.00pm.

Sessional preschool – 2 groups - Monday/Tuesday 8.30-3pm with odd week

Wednesday half days 8.30am-12.30pm; Thursday/Friday 8.30-3pm with even week

Wednesday half days 8.30am-12.30pm.

Support for children with additional needs, bilingual support and transition to school program.

Parenting and educational programs to support children's development and health.

Health and nutrition programs including health checks by the Child and Youth Health Service.

The Roxby Downs Children's Centre works with the community to provide high quality integrated education and care services in a safe and accessible environment that meets the needs of children aged from birth to school entry and their families. We support children and families to achieve the best possible learning, health and wellbeing outcomes in a universal setting with targeted responses for children and families who require additional support.

We do this by:

- Focusing on the individual child and their family
- Assessing the needs of children and families and providing appropriate support
- Utilising community resources to build community capacity
- Providing access to a range of flexible and inclusive services
- Providing professional leadership
- Being a central focus for information to parents about parenting and local services
- Empowering community members to be involved in the Centre's decision making processes.

Outcomes for Roxby Downs Children's Centre

- Children have optimal health and development
- Parents provide a strong foundation for their children's healthy development and wellbeing
- Communities are child and family friendly
- Aboriginal children are safe, healthy, culturally strong and confident.

We have a range of policies that support the achievement of our purpose.

Curriculum

We use the national Early Years Learning Framework as the basis for planning, monitoring and reporting on children's learning. Our children's learning program is child oriented and play-based within a high quality learning environment that integrates all aspects of children's learning in a holistic approach. The Early Years Learning Framework acknowledges the quality of relationships between children and educators as fundamental to the quality of learning that occurs within early childhood learning environments. When children have supportive relationships they more readily explore their learning environments and engage in experiences that support their development. Our curriculum development process also recognises children as capable learners. Their ideas, interests and observations are of paramount importance in developing learning experiences (both planned and spontaneous). The Early Years Learning Framework supports children in developing the following outcomes:

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity.

Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world.

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners.

Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators.

Play is the central mode of learning and the experiences provided and developed contribute to the achievement of successful learning outcomes for all children, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

At Roxby Downs Children's Centre we implement a guardian caregiving model and believe that 'guardian caregiving' provides a consistent relationship for children and their families. A nominated 'guardian educator' is responsible for the care and education needs of each child. Circle of Security is a Children's Centre approved framework that helps further explain the caregiver and child relationship, where the primary carer is "a special person who is always bigger, stronger, wiser and kinder".

Roxby Downs Children's Centre encourages parents to actively participate in the care and education of their children. Sharing information about children is very important in helping us provide responsive care and learning opportunities. Throughout parent's time at Roxby Downs Children's Centre there are regular informal discussions about the progress and development of each child as well as formal 3 way conversations during Terms 1 and 3 for preschool families.

As communication between families and staff is so important guardian educators ensure consistency of communication with families on a minimum weekly basis and utilise a variety of methods to ensure this happens.

The curriculum guides the experiences that are implemented by the educators. It is designed by gathering information about each child's strengths and abilities from family members, observations, interactions, and learning stories. From these sources of information our highly skilled educators develop a series of personalised experiences that the child is interested in. The educators work with the children in a reciprocal manner taking turns to lead and follow in the play. The learning is documented and outcomes used for further planning to continue extending or 'scaffolding' each child's skills. Families can provide feedback or further information about their children by writing comments in the rooms' floor books, creating learning stories for their child's portfolio and send through photos via email to be shared with the child's peers and educators.

Intentional teaching is deliberate, purposeful and thoughtful. Learning occurs in social contexts and we acknowledge that interactions and conversations are vitally important for learning.

Educators actively promote children's learning through challenging experiences and interactions that foster high level thinking skills. Strategies like role modelling, demonstrating, questioning, speculating, explaining, engaging in shared thinking and problem solving are used to extend thinking. Educators plan opportunities for intentional teaching and for children to research and construct their own knowledge.

We provide accessible and equitable high quality learning and care programs for children and connect with a range of health and community services and programs. Our relationships, visiting and transition programs to Roxby Downs Area School and St. Barbara's Parish School provide ongoing continuity of learning for children into the first years of school

Assessment Methods

A variety of assessment methods are utilised by educators as recommended in current best practice. A learning story is a detailed communication of an event or experience that an educator has written about your child. It represents the learning outcomes your child has achieved, connected with the goals families outline when their child begins in the room, and provides direction for further planning. Often the story will focus on what we call a disposition or schema.

Floor books are utilised in all rooms at the Centre. The floor books showcase the children's daily learning and voices and provide information about the development of the children. It informs future planning and is used for reflection of the learning that has occurred. The information contained within the floor book has strong links to EYLF and is a crucial part of curriculum development.

The educators utilise a range of different techniques to document individual children's learning. These forms of assessment include learning stories, individual learning plans (ILPs), statements of learning and 3 way teacher/parent/child interviews. Throughout the year families can expect to receive an invitation to 3 way interviews and have learning stories sent home. Preschool children have statements of learning sent home at the end of the year which include links to the Indicators of Preschool numeracy and literacy.

Each child who attends the Roxby Downs Children's Centre will have a portfolio. This folder contains information about that child and their learning journey. The child's learning stories, photos, observations and some work samples are kept in their portfolio. We invite families to view their child's portfolio regularly at leisure with their child to recall past events and experiences. Families are encouraged to insert their own pages of information from home, special outings, holidays, new family members etc., to their child's portfolio as a record of home and family life during these early years.

NEP stands for negotiated education plan; this process is utilised where children may have additional educational needs. The process involves the centre hosting a meeting once per term with the family and any agencies that are providing services to the family. During this meeting all parties will develop learning plans for the child and develop strategies around how we can work together to support achieving the plan. Any child that is receiving speech therapy, occupational therapies, psychological assessments, support for vision / hearing impairments or any other disability will be offered the opportunity to have NEP meetings to ensure a co-ordinated approach to supporting the child's development.

Additional influences on curriculum development at Roxby Downs Children's Centre

Learning Dispositions relate to learning behaviours or attitudes that support children in learning new skills. We value characteristics such as persistence, curiosity, resourcefulness and courage which will support a child's ability to learn in a life-long manner.

Reggio Emilia influences – voice of child strong in learning programmes, strong sense of belonging, identity & connections

Our core values are reflected in the statement of philosophy as follows:

We value

- A rich, safe play-based learning environment that invites hands-on exploration, inspires engagement, provides opportunities to wonder and take considered risks
- Opportunities for all children to develop learning dispositions such as curiosity, creativity, confidence, communication, cooperation, persistence, enthusiasm, resilience and emotional intelligence
- A responsive, intentional and flexible learning environment which fosters children's wellbeing, learning, development, independence and sense of responsibility
- Opportunities for children to understand Australia's cultural diversity, and the importance of being inclusive and respectful to all.

Educators' voices

Belonging, community, creativity, curiosity, diversity, engagement, families/community, environment, fun, hands-on, image of child, inclusivity, inspiring, inviting, knowledge building, learning together, listening, love, joy, magical, whimsical, persistence, play-based, relationships, respect, wellbeing

We recognise

- That children are active participants in their learning, have individual strengths and abilities and are capable and competent learners
- The importance of reflective practices and that we are all lifelong learners and engage in these to provide quality teaching and learning
- That children have rights (United Nations Conventions of the Rights of the Child) and are active citizens from birth
- The environment as third teacher and the quality interactions between educators and children have a significant impact on quality learning outcomes
- That children need routines, time and space to be, retreat, rest, be unhurried, form relationships and develop a strong sense of belonging

Parents' voices (hopes for their child at kindy)

Caring for others, confidence, courage, creativity, curiosity, respect for diversity, educational improvement, emotional intelligence, empathy, encouragement, enjoyment, feeling safe, forming relationships, friendship, fun, growth mindset, hands-on learning, happiness, honesty, imagination, inclusivity, independence, integrity, kindness, patience, learning new things, listening, manners, persistence, play-based, problem solving, resilience, respect, responsibility, safety, sharing, social development, supportive, trust

We will

- Provide an inspiring and inclusive environment where children feel safe, secure and supported to be curious, and grow in confidence to explore and learn
- Work in partnership and build respectful relationships with families and children to foster a learning culture
- Embed sustainable practices into our curriculum to highlight our responsibility to care for the environment and promote respect for resources and each other

- Build upon the knowledge that children already have about literacy and numeracy and encourage positive attitudes towards these to promote a love for learning
- Listen to children's voices and encourage them to express their ideas and thinking and be responsive to these
- Provide support to children to develop social and emotional skills, friendships and positive dispositions for learning

Children's voices

What do you love about the Centre? *Playing, climbing the tree, swings, seesaw, playing with the babies, playing with my friends, playing with the dinosaurs, learning to read, reading books and playing with the Troll (from 3 billy goats gruff)*

How does the Centre make you feel? *Safe, happy, good, excited, surprised*

What do you want to learn about? *Writing, ABC, 123, how to make mud balls, climb the kindy tree, learn to make sand castles, painting, drawing, telling stories, following Centre rules*

Staff Profile

Director Early Childhood Education and Care

Assistant Director

Degree trained Early Childhood Teachers

Diploma trained Early Childhood Educators

Certificate III trained Early Childhood Educators

Community Development Coordinator

Administration Officers

Access to Health and Family Support Services

Access to support services for children with additional needs

Facilities and Children's Learning Environment

Roxby Downs Children's Centre is a modern facility with integrated long day care and preschool facilities, located adjacent the Roxby Downs Area School. The outdoor learning environment is supportive of children's needs and there are undercover areas and shade from mature trees. The building is air-conditioned. Car parking facilities are on Richardson Place. We are licenced for 120 long day care places and 66 preschool places per session and have access for children and staff with disabilities. The Centre is owned by the Department for Education.

Centre Operations

Roxby Downs Children's Centre Governing Council has oversight of the strategic directions of the Centre, the financial management of the Centre and the employment of long day care staff.

Centre staff work with the Governing Council and have oversight of the daily operations and management of the Centre programs and services. Volunteers are encouraged to support the programs and services of the Centre and to contribute to the decisions made about the Centre.

Local Community

Geographical location – i.e. road distance from GPO (km): 560 km (Olympic Dam – Adelaide).

General characteristics: Roxby Downs is an “industrial suburb / mining town” positioned in an isolated country location. It is not a rural town. The community is characterised by its youth, high disposable income and job opportunities.

Many families come from overseas, interstate and locally, with many in the early years from the Eyre Peninsula. The opal mining town of Andamooka is 35 kms away. Children come from a variety of backgrounds – Industrial (mining), agricultural (farming), city (urban and industrial), resulting in a varied population with some transiency. There are a group of residents who call Roxby Downs home and many more who stay from months to a few years. The challenges presented by the transience in this community are largely overcome by the relative youth and resilience of the population, having to establish themselves in a new community without extended families and acquaintances. The community is young and vibrant.