

Philosophy Statement 2016

PLAY, LAUGH, LOVE, LEARN, NURTURE, GROW, INSPIRE

Lobethal Community Kindergarten is a unique and caring Learning Environment with a strong focus on Nature Play, both within our 'traditional' Kindergarten site and as part of our 'Nature Connect' Bush Kindy program.

Our image of the child is that they are capable, competent, creative, curious learners who are full of potential.

We believe children learn best when they are engaged in a stimulating, challenging, high quality, play based learning program. We believe children thrive in an environment where they have a strong sense of belonging, and their ideas, interests and questions are explored, valued and responded to.

We value building strong, inclusive, **reciprocal relationships** with children and their families, respecting the diversity and uniqueness each and every family bring to us. We want children to feel a sense of ownership, where their 'voice', their culture, identity and life experiences are represented and reflected in their Kindergarten experience.

The voice of our Family

Our families contributed words describing family values and desired learning dispositions to guide the development of our 2016 philosophy statement:

Support, Curiosity, Exploration, Creativity, Respect, Individualism, Friendship, Expression through Play and Discovery, Nurturing, Relaxed, Increasing Resilience, Inquisitiveness, Tolerance, Satisfaction, Compromise, Capable, Outdoors, Confidence, Joyful Engagement, Encourage, Explore, Belonging.

Belonging Tree Project 2016

The voice of our Children

Our children also contributed words about how they feel about our Kindergarten:

"We learn being nice and doing your 5 Ls"

"I like to play with my friends"

"Well it is about learning and how to do something, to learn for when you are a grown-up"

"Well I think my Mum sends me to have fun with my friends. I learn nice stuff like being kind and always take care of your friends"

"I feel happy"

"Kindy makes me smile"

"I love to cuddle at Kindy"

"Kindy is about learning. Learn to build. Learn to make"

"I am happy at Kindy. I love playing with my friends"

Children's brainstorming session as recorded in our floorbook 2016.

We strongly value '**Children's Voice**' as an integral part of our ongoing planning and reflective practice, actively encouraging their ideas, theories, wonderings, dynamic risk assessments and **risk taking**, reflection and **initiative** within our curriculum.

We provide opportunities for all children to grow and learn at their own pace, to initiate and resource their own learning journeys. We encourage **learning dispositions** of inquisitiveness, curiosity, resilience, collaboration, cooperation, problem solving, purposefulness, and creativity. We promote the development of Executive Functions - cognitive flexibility, working memory and impulse control. We encourage children to be reflective in their learning, to validate current learning and we seek to empower them as 21st Century Learners.

Our Curriculum is guided by the Early Years Learning Framework, the Literacy and Numeracy Indicators, observations of each child (both as an individual and within a group), and children's interests, theories and ideas.

All staff are involved in reviewing our curriculum daily, and actively engage in an **'Every Child, Every Day'** approach to reflecting and recording. We aim to stimulate children's thinking and build upon their existing knowledge and skills to enrich learning.

Staff have a strong belief in themselves as **life-long learners**, keeping up to date with current research and engaging in professional development, reflection and dialogue, to extend and increase current skills, knowledge and interests. Our staff team have a passion to provide a high quality learning environment in which children are given time and space to engage in critical inquiry, participate as reflective problem solvers, test theories and entertain possibilities in an environment where intellectual risk taking is valued and encouraged. We want children to feel empowered and confident to experiment, explore, hypothesize, take risks, create, imagine and wonder.

Lobethal Community Kindergarten has a strong commitment to our **'Nature Connect' Bush Kindy program**. We value the rich and authentic learning that can be achieved by spending full days in nature, and also acknowledge the depth of learning that can occur by revisiting these experiences over the Kindy year. We believe our Nature Connect Program promotes learning dispositions to create and build powerful learners.

Sustainable practices are embedded in the kindergarten operations and consistently promoted in the everyday program.

We aim to share information respectfully with families about their child's learning journey and collaboratively set goals during their kindergarten year. We will make each child's **learning visible** by collecting work samples, photos, observations and learning stories in their Learning Journey Book.

We value the importance of effective **transitions** for children and their families and have developed a range of partnerships with local schools and childcare facilities. We aim to enable seamless and effective transition for our families.

Our Kindergarten plays a strong and important role within the **Community** as does the community within our Kindergarten. We are strongly interwoven. Our Kindergarten provides a place where young children and their families come together regardless of social, cultural or economic status. It is a place of connecting, learning, and belonging for all. We aim to be sensitive to the changing needs of our community. We aim to network and participate in a range of community groups, to share resources and develop a range of support networks for families. We endeavour to make direct links with local businesses and community groups by visiting them with the children as part of our program. Our community links enable us to share information, reach goals, and promote the value of quality public education within our community.

Our **Statement of Philosophy** underpins all aspects of our decision making and practice at our centre. We believe it should be embedded and reflected in all that we do. We believe that a Statement of Philosophy evolves as new insights are gained and practice evaluated. We will review our Philosophy statement regularly, including input from children, families and educators.

Our Philosophy statement was developed during the period March - October 2016 with input from staff, families and children and the LCK Philosophy Statements 2010, 2013, 2014; Belonging, Being and Becoming - The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2009; National Quality Framework 2011; DECD Preschool Literacy and Numeracy Indicators.