We welcome you to Somerton Park Kindergarten and we trust that you will enjoy your kindergarten experience with us.

Your teachers are:

Marie Cullen: Director: Monday-Friday
Paul Ellmers: Teacher: Monday - Friday
Honi Fontain: Teacher: Tuesday & Wednesday
Sue Warland: Early Childhood Worker: Mon, Tues all day and Friday morning
Helen Bruijn: Early Childhood Worker: Wed, Thurs all day and Friday morning
Julieann Sutton: Support Worker and Playgroup coordinator
Leonie Smith: Finance Officer
Francie Bourke: Administration Officer.

Term Dates

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Playgroup

Playgroup is held on Friday from weeks 1-9 at 11.30-1.30pm and children are welcome at any age.
Fees are $20.00 per term or $4.00 per visit.
Please supply a hat, drink bottle with water and a piece of fruit for your child/children.

Kindergarten

Priority for enrolment is given to children who live in the Somerton Park area.
Children can access 5 sessions of kindergarten when they are 4 years old by April 30th
Schools will commence a single intake system in 2014.
Children will need to turn 5 by April 30th to commence school at the start of Term 1.
*All kindergartens now require proof of date of birth at the time of enrolment either with a current passport, birth certificate or official Centre link documentation with the child’s name and date of birth

Attendance schedule

A group: Monday full day (8.30-3.15)/ Tuesday full day (8.30-3.15)/ odd week Friday (8.30-11.30am)
B group: Wednesday full day (8.30-3.15)/ Thursday full day (8.30-3.15)/even week Friday (8.30-11.30)

Kindergarten fees are $170.00* per term from 2014 which includes an excursion/incursion levy.

*under review
Starting kindergarten

Some children commence their kindergarten experience by starting in playgroup and then moving into sessional kindergarten. Other children come to the kindergarten for the first time on their orientation visits. Some children will have been to child care, others will have had little experience with other children and adults. Whatever your child’s particular experience has been, we will be ready to welcome them in to our kindergarten and help them settle in.

On the first day parents and children may experience a variety of emotions. Some will be excited, others anxious and some may have had children through kindergarten before and be quite relaxed. All of these emotions are normal and the teachers will work with you and your child until you are both feeling comfortable about leaving. There may also be some separation issues later in the term. This is also normal. Never leave without saying goodbye and if you are experiencing difficulties ask a teacher to help. Please assist your child by being positive about being at kindergarten and when you do decide to leave, say a quick goodbye, and leave promptly. If you are concerned after you have left please give us a ring when you get home.

Communication

There are communication pockets in the locker area with your child’s name on. Please check it frequently as this is one of the ways that we will keep you informed about what is happening in the kindergarten. They are sorted alphabetically according to your child’s first name. We also write messages on the whiteboard outside. We also use email to send out newsletters.

As you arrive

As you come to the white board there is a magnetic board with the children’s names on it. Please assist your child to find their magnet name and place it on to the board next to their name when they arrive.

Dropping off and collecting your child

Please have your child at kindergarten between 8.30-8.45 am. When you bring your child to kindergarten you must stay with them until the sessions starts unless you have made an arrangement with the Director. Please do not leave children unattended in the playground when there is no supervision by teachers. Please understand that the teachers do need time to set up before sessions and often have meetings to attend at the end of the day and this is made difficult if parents are early or late.

At going home time we have 2 pickup times. The first one is at 2.50pm and the second is at 3.15pm. This is to enable families who need to collect children from nearby schools to do the kindy pickup first. Please ring us if you are late so that we can reassure your child.
Clothing

Please ensure your children are dressed comfortably and in clothes which will survive the odd spills of paint, glue etc. The children are encouraged to wear smocks for all messy activities but sometimes they forget and accidents happen.

We ask that parents support the policies of the centre by:

- Ensure children have a change of clothes in case of accidents.
- Children want to be independent. Please help your child by dressing them in clothes which are quick and easy to remove when they need the toilet- please avoid tricky buckles/belts/overalls etc.
- Providing sandals or closed shoes-no thongs or crocs please as they do not stay on children’s feet easily and are dangerous when climbing and running.
- Providing a sun smart hat-(legionnaires, bucket or wide brim-no caps) everyday. The kindergarten has a “NO hat, play in the shade policy” in Terms 1 and 4
- A jacket or a jumper needs to be in your child’s bag each day as our shady trees are very cooling even on warm days.
- T-shirts or dresses with short sleeves in the summer for the girls - no shoe string straps or singlets as they provide no protection against the sun
- Named hats, lunch boxes (named on the top please) drink bottles, bags and shoes.

The lost property is on top of the lockers.

We have clothing available with the kindergarten logo – T-shirts, hats, jumpers and beanies. A price list is included in your parent pack.

Borrowing books

We have a variety of great books which are available for loan near the lockers.

Our Read Aloud programme at the kindergarten involves all of our families in reading to their children.

The children will bring home a wedge to record the stories they have shared with their family. When the wedge is full they can return it and take a new one. The wedge will be placed in our reading rainbow in the locker area.

This is very important part of our literacy programme at Somerton Park. We know how important reading to children is- it is one of the most important factors in children developing a love of language and consequently a desire to read and write.

A folder is available for recording book loans. Please take care of our books and return them within a week as other children will be waiting to borrow them.

Please report any damage or loss to the teachers.

Last updated 01/08/2013
Lunch, Snacks and Drinks

Each child needs to bring to kindergarten a bottle of **water** for drinking. Please ensure that your child can manage opening and closing the bottle.

We ask that parents support our healthy food policy by sending nutritious food to kindergarten.

We have a fruit time at kindergarten in the morning and the afternoon so please send two pieces of fruit or cheese on full days. We sit together as a group and eat our fruit after we have washed our hands.

At lunch time we sit together at tables. The children are encouraged to assist with the routine of setting up for lunch. Please check that your child **can open their lunch box**. Thank fully with the newer type of lunch boxes these days there is no need to wrap sandwiches.

For lunch we ask that the children bring a healthy lunch- sandwich with a healthy filling, pasta or rice salad and some dried fruit/fresh fruit etc.

**Please do not send**

- Nutella, jam, peanut paste or food containing nuts.
- Sugary snacks, cakes, chocolate, biscuits and sticky buns.
- Cakes, biscuits or **anything in a commercial wrapper** - food that has been commercially produced-muesli bars, fruit bars usually have traces of nuts and we will not allow children to consume these on the premises as we often have children with life threatening allergies to nuts and nut products.

**Birthdays**

We do acknowledge children’s birthdays with a birthday song and blowing out of candles on a special kindy birthday cake. We focus on the child’s milestone rather than special food. **Please do not send any birthday food.**

**Medication**

Should your child require the administration of medication during their time at kindergarten please ensure that you have a **signed and completed health care** plan from your doctor. Please do not place any medication in children’s bags.

In order to ensure the good health of everyone in the kindergarten, and for your child’s benefit, we ask that you do not send children who are obviously unwell to kindergarten.

Please see our Health sheet for more information.
**Parent Involvement-how can you help us??**

We value your involvement. All parents are offered the opportunity to spend a day at kindergarten with their child. A calendar and stickers with your child’s name are available at the beginning of the year for you to select your day. This will give you the opportunity to read, garden, do puzzles, play games with your child and will make it a special day for them. We also go on excursions and requests for help will accompany permission forms when they come home. Often during the holidays we need parents to volunteer to water our gardens. Occasionally we also have parent meetings with guest speakers- you will receive notification about this in your newsletter.

From time to time we have fundraising events where we may need your assistance. We also have working bees to help maintain our centre and save on the cost of employing people to do the work.

We have a Governing Council, elected annually at an Annual General Meeting in March to assist in the decision making in the centre and to support the staff in their work in the kindergarten. They will also need your support.

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**Children’ Programme**

The staff team plan a programme of activities and highlights each week. This is placed on the display board. We plan our programme based on the national curriculum framework “Belonging, Being Becoming” and we work towards the Developmental Learning Outcomes as determined in the framework. We focus on numeracy, literacy and education for sustainability in our programme including well being and the development of life skills.

To help us learn more about your child we ask you to fill in an information sheet which gives us additional knowledge and helps us to understand your child’s needs.

**Assessment and Reporting**

The primary purpose of assessment is to improve children’s learning.

Our discussions with families as well as information collected from the Initial information sheet which parents are asked to complete enable us to see each child through multiple perspectives. In collaboration with families, we can identify each child’s skills and strengths and plan accordingly to enhance their learning journey.

**Reporting to parents will be done in a variety of ways.**

Educators observe children as they play and interact in the programme. Sometimes these observations are written in the form of a simple learning story and sent home to be shared with the family. Other times the observations may be done in a photo, work samples, learning stories or simple written anecdotes. Educators will share information with families verbally informally and formally. These observations will be added to each child’s folder. Times will be made for discussions about your child’s progress and any concerns will be addressed immediately.
Additional Needs

As we are funded by DECD [Department of Education and Child Development] we have access to Speech Pathologists, Psychologists, Social Workers, Aboriginal Workers, Special Educators and Bi-lingual support. At times we also have access to Physiotherapy assessments. If you would like to access any of these services please speak to the Director.

All children will be offered the opportunity to have their 4.6 years Child and Youth Health screening during their kindergarten year at the nearby Glenelg clinic.(at the rear of the Glenelg football oval)

If you wish to use the services of the School Dental Service they are situated at GP Plus Healthcare centre Marion adjacent to the Marion Cultural centre and Domain Medical Centre.

How else can you help us????

By supporting us in our work with your child. This means supporting all of our policies- especially around hats and food and it especially means keeping us informed about any changes in your family which may be impacting on your child.

It also means supporting us in our activities i.e. the Read aloud programme which we design for children and parents as well as being interested in what your child is doing. We use a variety of methods to communicate with you- newsletters, the whiteboard, special notes, slide shows, learning stories, email and a sticker which your child may wear home.

From time to time we have parent evenings with guest speakers.

You can also help us by: helping at working bees/ and supporting our Governing Council with their fundraising activities as well as helping out at the different functions we have from time to time.

Any questions?????

The teachers are always willing to have short discussions with you but if you need a longer time please make a time as we really do need to be focussed on teaching the children while they are at kindergarten.

Sometimes issues may arise concerning your child or family situation and we are always ready to offer support in any way we can.

It is very important that these discussions do not take place in front of your child.

If we all work together we can build a wonderful future for our children.

“*It takes a village to raise a child*”

We look forward to welcoming you and your family to the community of Somerton Park Kindergarten. We hope you enjoy your time with us.

Thank you.
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