Welcome to
Highbury Preschool

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Or by post: PO Box 28  HOPE VALLEY SA 5090
Phone: 8263 3281
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The staff, children and families, would like to welcome you to Highbury Preschool. We hope you all enjoy your time with us, as we share in a very important part of learning. We are entering into a significant partnership with you, related to your child’s learning and look forward to sharing in this exciting journey with you.

Our Philosophy...

Preschool assists children in building the foundations for their future learning and should be viewed as a significant stage in a child’s development. It is based upon the philosophy that children learn through play and need to be given the opportunities to achieve this, in a non-threatening environment, where they feel comfortable to take risks associated with their learning. Children must also be supported in this and see what they are doing is valued by others around them. This is with particular reference to their families. Play is children’s work. All children are individuals and must be acknowledged as such, with different learning needs, strengths, areas requiring strengthening and challenging, interests, values, etc. Our program evolves around these factors.

Our philosophy also focuses upon the need to maintain a warm, caring and safe learning environment for all children and families who access services offered within the Centre. Children’s lives are enriched through their engagement in play and our program is based upon this solid belief. Children must be given the time and freedom to explore, experiment, draw conclusions and learn from their own experiences, whilst being supported on a variety of different levels by staff, families other children. Social awareness is an integral part of the preschool program and influential in a child’s life.

Our Focus for Improvement

As a part of the National Quality Framework, all Preschool sites, Child Care Centres and Out of School Hours Care Programs, are required to compile a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), reflecting areas for improvement, that are site specific. A Service Audit forms the basis for these plans.

Plans are due to be completed by the 30th April, 2012 and will be displayed within the Preschool.
**The Staff Team**

Director – 1.0  
Teacher 1.0  
Early Childhood Workers –2.0  
Occasional Care Worker –0.2

**Where are we located?**

The Centre is co-located with Highbury Primary School, however, is a separate identity with individual enrolment policies and management systems. Highbury Preschool is a Department of Education and Child Development site, otherwise referred to as DECD.

**What services are offered by the Centre?**

**Occasional Care**

Occasional Care is available for children aged between two and approximately five years. This program currently operates on the following times, however, will be reviewed during Term 2 of this year, due to capacity issues within the Preschool program.

**Session 1**  Fridays from 8:30am until 11:30  
**Session 2**...Fridays from 11:30am until 3pm

A staff member is employed to work within the Occasional Care Program, however, the children are fully integrated and all staff support them whilst at Kindy.

Occasional Care is for parents or caregivers, who would like to take a break to play sport, visit friends, shop, and attend appointments or simply to have some time to themselves! There is a charge of **$5.00 per session**. However, if you have a health care card and/or receive Social Security Assistance, concessional rates are available once evidence of this has been presented. The program is structured as a form of respite care primarily for non-working parents. Three places are offered for two year olds each session and five for three to four year olds. Two places are held for emergency situations, at staff discretion.

The Occasional Care program is fully integrated with sessional Preschool. That is, the children accessing this program actively engage with the same play experiences as the Preschool children. There are only two incidences throughout the session when the Preschool and occasional care children are separated and this is to allow structured group time experiences to occur that are more specifically targeted at particular age groups.

Once children are accessing another service including Pre-Entry or are accessing Occasional Care at another Centre, they are no longer eligible for a place in Occasional Care, unless the places cannot be filled according to the priority system developed by DECD.
Fees for late collection of children at the end of session have been introduced. This is at staff discretion. Please make sure you contact the Centre if you have encountered a delay. Fees are also charged for children who do not show up for their session, without contact being made by the families. Due to the high demand for places, it is imperative that we are notified if your child will not be attending, so the place can be offered to another child on the waiting list. We thank you for your support in this. For additional information, please speak with a member of staff.

Sessional Preschool

Sessional Preschool is the main program offered at Highbury Preschool. Children four years of age may attend four sessions per week from Monday through to Thursday. Each session's duration is three hours, as a part of the Universal Access Program. A full day program is available for eligible families, as outlined within our Lunch Care Policy guidelines.

Vacancies are determined through children leaving the Centre for different reasons, primarily commencement at school, so we aim where possible to accommodate parent requests related to sessions, however may not always able to achieve this.

The session your child commences in, after having attended Pre Entry, is likely to be where s/he remains for the duration of his/her stay at Kindy, unless previously negotiated with staff. This would primarily occur where we have not been able to meet your needs related to session attendance and where vacancies may occur later down the track. Children's friendship groups remain stable and they will attend school with children they are familiar with.

Preschool Session Times

Morning Session: 8:30am to 11:30am Monday to Friday

Afternoon Session: 12:00noon to 3:00pm Monday to Thursday
11:30am until 2:30pm (Fridays)

Fridays – Options for alternate Fridays from 8:30am until 3pm are offered as a part of the Universal Access Program. No lunch care fees are charged on this day, as this time is included as a part of the program.

Preschool sessions are offered for children four years of age and over, for the year prior to school entry. Children must be four to commence full-time Preschool, regardless of entry dates into school.

Lunch Care Program

A lunch care program is available at the Preschool and operates Monday to Thursday 11.30 – 12.00noon, to support many of families in accessing preschool entitlements, where they may otherwise be unable to do so. Access to this program is at the discretion of the Director.

An additional fee of $5.00 per day is payable when accessing the lunch care program. The lunch care fee for the entire Term, must be paid before the first full day children attend. Due to the popularity of this program, we are required to employ additional staff to supervise and release core members as
per their entitlements. Payment of this fee is imperative, to maintain your child’s place in the program. Failure to do so, may result in the cancellation of your child’s position. It is a highly sought after program and waiting lists often exist. As your child holds a place in this program please note that fees are payable even if your child is absent.

What are the fee structures?

Sessional Preschool - $65.00 per Term for 5 sessions per week
$52.00 for Term for 4 sessions per week

Early Entry - where negotiated $30.00 per Term

Lunch Care Fees - $5.00 per day

Information related to this is distributed during week 9 of each term, via the children’s pockets. Please place payment in a clearly labeled envelope, with your child’s name and post it in the white letterbox located on the end of the green bench near the kitchen. We would be appreciative if this could be done by the date noted on your account. Finance received, is used in purchasing the resources, including paper, paint, crayons, textas etc that all children use on a daily basis. These need to be continually replaced.

Enrolment Enquiries

We welcome enquiries about existing vacancies at Highbury Preschool.

Our Region is currently engaged in a process around developing a Priority of Access Policy, to support Centre staff and families in managing enrolments, where capacity is an issue.

Please phone the Centre 8263 3281, for information about enrolling.

What do I need to bring?

A bag for your child to store their belongings.
Healthy snack/s (lunch) to eat, as per our recommendations in the site Healthy Food Policy
Drink bottle with water
Hat
A spare set of clothes (appropriate to the current weather conditions)

Snack Time

We have a Healthy Food Policy at Highbury Preschool.
Children may bring fruit, vegetables, cheese, sultanas, savoury sandwiches or yoghurt for a snack, if they wish. It is the child’s choice if, or when, he/she eats the snack. We would greatly appreciate it if you could avoid sending: cakes, chips, nuts, fruit bars, muesli bars, biscuits, chocolate, sweets, drinks etc.
Please note – It has become necessary to ask families to prevent their child/children from bringing products containing peanuts, nuts and eggs to the Centre. This includes the obvious, peanut butter sandwiches, Nutella sandwiches, peanut dips with crackers, Nutella dip, peanut cookies, egg sandwiches, boiled eggs, quiche etc. We have several children accessing programs offered by the Centre, who are severely allergic to these products.

Children have access to drinking water at anytime throughout the session, however, families are encouraged to provide a drink bottle containing water, in your child’s bag, to encourage their ability to independently manage their own needs. Please avoid sending fruit juice, cordial, milk etc.

What should the children wear?

We recommend the clothing worn to Preschool be easy to care for, appropriate to the current weather conditions and conducive to active play. Long frilly dresses, "best" clothes, awkward belts, buckles, braces, long sashes, scarves and thongs can inhibit children's play or cause accidents.

It is advisable to pack a spare set of clothes for your child. Accidents do occur and we do not have a large supply of clothes. Often it distresses children more to wear clothes that do not belong to them.

Children are required to wear hats when accessing the outdoor play area, all year round. The outdoor environment forms a vital part of the learning environment and all children are encouraged to play outside during their time at the Centre on a daily basis, where appropriate. The Centre has a SunSmart Policy that clearly stipulates NO HAT - NO OUTSIDE PLAY. Children will have restricted access to specific experiences, if all staff are required to be in the outdoor environment.

Please ensure that all items sent to Preschool are clearly named and labelled.

Curriculum News

During each session, the children have time to interact and play in an unstructured, free play environment, where they make choices related to the activities they wish to participate in, either within the indoor environment, or outside. All activities are focused upon developing and refining children's skills in all areas of development and encompass a wide variety of knowledge, skills and abilities including literacy, numeracy, communication, critical thinking, technology, environmental understanding, health and physical awareness, cultural understandings, creativity, and wellbeing, whilst incorporating imaginative play and social awareness. All of this assists with promoting a positive sense of identity in all children.

Our program is currently based upon the curriculum document referred to as Belonging Being and Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. (EYLF) This is Australia's first National Early Years Learning Framework, for early childhood educators. The aim of this document is to extend and enrich children’s learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school.

This Framework has been developed to assist educators in providing young children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning. In this way, the Early Years Learning Framework will contribute to realising the Council of Australian Governments’ vision that:
“All children have the best start in life to create a better future for themselves and for the nation.”

The Framework forms the foundation for ensuring that children in all early childhood education and care settings experience quality teaching and learning. It has a specific emphasis on play-based learning and recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development. The Framework has been designed for use by early childhood educators working in partnership with families, children’s first and most influential educators.

During each session, structured learning times cater for both small and large group work, with the content shared on our weekly curriculum plan display. Our aims are for children to grow and develop life skills and competencies which will enable them to integrate into an ever-changing society.

Staff record children’s development and collate this information through the use of anecdotal notes, observations, photographs, examples of children’s work and information provided by the family, often through the use of questionnaires. This information is then reflected in what we believe to be a living programme, where directions continue to change when and where appropriate, based upon professional information.

For families of children who are entering their third term of full term Preschool, a six monthly interview is offered. This provides parents/caregivers an opportunity to meet with a member of the teaching staff to discuss their child’s progress at Preschool. During this time the children’s strengths and interests are highlighted as well as current and future learning goals. At this time families who choose to participate in this process are presented with a six monthly report.

A report referred to as a Summative Report is compiled at the end of each child’s time at Kindy, prior to commencing school and addresses areas such as strengths, interests and learning goals. Families are provided with two copies of this report when their child/ren leaves the Preschool, with the intention that one copy will be given to your child’s classroom teacher when they begin the next phase of their learning journey.

This information is extremely important in providing the classroom teacher with a picture of who your child is, the distance they have travelled so far in their learning journey, what we have been focusing upon, their individual strengths, etc. The purpose of this transfer of information is to strengthen the links between the school and preschool, to support children on their journey into the next stage of their lives. It values the effort and achievements they have made.

Policies

Our policies are currently under review, as a part of the National Quality Framework. These will be uploaded as they are ratified by our Governing Council. Information is currently under review on the DECD website, under Early Childhood Reform.
What is the Governing Council and what is its role?

The Governing Council is a parent/community body, generally consisting of parents/caregivers and other interested community members. The Council is responsible for many aspects of Kindy life including supporting decision making about the financial management of the Centre, maintenance and upgrade of the facilities, including the building and grounds, policy development and organising fund-raising and social events. The Governing Council forms a consultative body, in collaboration with staff.

Highbury Preschool’s Annual General Meeting is held in November of each year. It is at this meeting, that positions are declared vacant and open for nominations and then election.

The Governing Council meets twice each Term, currently on Friday mornings at 9.00am. Members are welcome to bring their children to the Centre where they can be supervised by staff, while parents attend the meeting. Meetings usually take about one to one and a half hours. These meetings provide families with the opportunity to share information, hear what has been happening in the Preschool, plan future events, be involved in decision making related to the above mentioned issues and provide support and suggestions, related to raising funds to supplement the funding received from DECD, in an informal and casual manner.

Fees paid by parents are not adequate to cover the Centre’s needs e.g.: cleaning and cleaning materials, telephone, power and water, general maintenance, consumables (paint, paper, paste, toiletries etc.) and equipment used by the children. Therefore fund-raising is an essential component of Preschool life.

What else do you need to know?

Lost Property

Please name all removable clothing, especially footwear and personal belongings, including Kindy bags, to avoid confusion. If your child misplaces any of their clothing, or belongings, please check the ‘Lost Property’ box located in the red box under the veranda. If items are found at the end of a session, including those with names, they are placed in this box also, as we do not have the space to store them elsewhere. The Lost Property Box is emptied at the end of Week 5 of each Term and again at the end of the Term. Please make sure you check this on a regular basis.

We ask that you prevent children from bringing toys and other trinkets to Kindy as they often become lost or broken and promote competition between children. To avoid this from happening we ask you to support us in this request.
Our Regional improvement focus remains upon comprehension. We actively support this through engaging with families in a variety of ways, including...

**Children’s Library**

Children may borrow a library book each week. Children will be issued with a named library bag during their first week of Kindy and we request that they use these to carry their books in, at all times. This assists in protecting our books, as they are valuable to us. This also teaches children the need to value other people’s property.

**School Library**

When children have been attending Kindy for one Term, they will be invited to borrow from Highbury Primary School’s library. The day we are able to do this may change, subject to availability, but is currently on Thursdays.

When returning books, parents are requested to leave them inside the Library Bag, and place them in the purple tub located behind the green bench, when arriving at Kindy.

If your child attends on a day, other than those specified, they still able to access the borrowing library. This will be the responsibility of the parent/caregiver. If this applies to your child please see a staff member and we will guide you through the borrowing process.

**Literacy Kits**

The Preschool has a comprehensive range of literacy kits available for borrowing. These are a wonderful resource to promote literacy and numeracy development, as well as a positive disposition for learning. They provide a means of spending quality time with your child/children.

Literacy kits can be located in the purple on the bench, just outside of the group time room. Each kit is numbered. If you would like to borrow a kit please find the corresponding numbered page in the borrowing folder and record your child’s name and the date. When returning the kit locate the required page and record the kit as returned.

It is imperative that you record which kit you are taking as these kits can be expensive to create and unfortunately, if equipment is lost or damaged, families may be asked to cover the cost of repairs etc. Please note that these kits are developed for four year olds, therefore we ask that you do not permit younger siblings to play with them. To be most successfully utilised it is recommended that parents and children use the kits together.
Health and Well-being

If your child is unwell, please do not send them to Kindy. We understand children may want to attend, however, this is not in anyone’s best interest, least of all the child’s.

Children are often not able to express how they are feeling and can be very unwell. We will phone you, or the emergency contact person, as nominated on your child’s enrolment card, if your child is unwell whilst at the Centre. Please check your emergency contacts are able to collect your child should this happen and that information remains current. Once again this relates to the Centre’s philosophy about a safe and caring environment.

We do recognise it can be difficult to make alternative arrangements for care for your children, however infectious conditions spread very quickly to other children, staff and parents and we are committed to supporting the wellbeing of all concerned.

If your child contracts something contagious, please let us know, so we can inform other families.

Health Care Plans and Medication Management

If your child has specific health care needs such as asthma, allergies or medical conditions, that require medical attention, please see a member of staff, so a Health Care Plan can be documented.

Please note – Medication cannot be administered by staff without a Health Care Plan, completed by a Medical Practitioner. All medications must be in the original bottle and box/packaging, with a label, with all relevant details on it. Please do not leave medication in children’s bags. All medication must be bought into the Centre and placed on the shelf located above the green bench. Parents are responsible for ensuring this medicine is in date and informing staff of any changes. This is for specific health needs only.

Child and Family Health Checks

Staff will provide information on when your child may be screened by Child Youth Health. These are currently completed at Highbury Primary School, due to space requirements at the Preschool and usually occur once per Term. You will be invited to make an appointment and bring your child at a convenient time, on the designated day, to have his/her check completed. These checks begin when a child is 4 years and three months of age.