

# **Minlaton District Early Learning Centre**

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## **Parent Information Handbook**

Director: Janet Stephenson

Teacher: Tracey Thom

Kindergarten Early Childhood Worker (ECW): Tracey  
Hull

Occasional Care Coordinator: Janette Jacka

Occasional Care ECW's: Megan Newby & Tracey Hull

Support ECW: Jodie Stanley

February 2015



**Government of South Australia**

Department for Education and  
Child Development

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# Welcome

Welcome to the Minlaton District Early Learning Centre.

Parents and families are the first and best teachers of children. We hope that the time you and your family spend with us will be mutually rewarding. If you have any skills or particular interest areas, such as music, cooking or craft abilities, we hope that you can share them with us to enrich our program. You are invited to become involved in activities at the centre such as story telling, dramatic play, puzzles, games, excursions etc. as well as helping with working bees and fundraisers.

If you have any information to share or wish to ask questions, don't hesitate to consult with staff as the welfare and development of your child is of the utmost importance to us. We hope that your interest in your child's Profile Book will help with our exchange of information.

The values which underlie the operation of this Kindergarten are reflected in the Vision Statement.

*Minlaton District Early Learning Centre staff work as a team with families, careproviders and community to provide a positive, safe, caring, learning environment, which caters for the needs and fosters the development of all children.*

Refer to our website for more information about our plans. [www.minlatonkgn.sa.edu.au](http://www.minlatonkgn.sa.edu.au)

## Site Philosophy and Values

The Minlaton District Early Learning Centre values the uniqueness of each child and in partnership with families and the community fosters children's love of learning.

Educators do this by:

- Building on children's present knowledge, interests and abilities and taking account of their learning styles.
- Involving families and the community in children's learning.
- Providing a secure, play based environment so that all children are confident to explore.
- Fostering children's social and emotional development.
- Using reflective practice to continually improve and challenge children in their learning.

**Values:** Friendship, Honesty, Respect, Confidence & Happiness

## Term Dates

### 2015

**Term 1:** Tuesday 27 January to Friday 10 April

**Term 2:** Tuesday 28 April to Friday 3 July

**Term 3:** Tuesday 21 July to Friday 25 September

**Term 4:** Tuesday 13 October to Friday 11 December

### 2016

**Term 1:** Tuesday 1 February to Friday 15 April

**Term 2:** Tuesday 2 May to Friday 8 July

**Term 3:** Tuesday 25 July to Friday 30 September

**Term 4:** Tuesday 17 October to Friday 16 December

(Please note that these dates may differ slightly from Schools because Kindergarten sessions are only available for three days each week.)

## Session Times

**State Government policy permits children to attend Kindergarten for one year (5 sessions a week, 200 sessions a year) before they start school.**

Under special circumstances children may come to Kindergarten for longer than a year. Some of these circumstances include: special needs and Aboriginal children. If you think your child may qualify for a longer attendance period, please discuss it with the Director.

***If your child turns four before May 1, they can start preschool on the first day of Term One in that year. If your child turns four on or after May 1, they can start preschool on the first day of Term One the following year.***

**Pre-entry** – is available to children for one session per week in term 4 before they start kindergarten the following year dependant on number of children.

Session time: Tuesday or Thursday: 8.45am – 11.30am

### **Kindergarten**

Session times: on a rotation basis: odd weeks; Tuesday and Thursday: 8.45am – 3.00pm (a morning session, lunch and an afternoon session), even weeks; Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday: 8.45am – 3.00pm

**Occasional Care** : children may attend 1 session per week.

- for children 2 – 5 years - 4 sessions

Session times: Friday: 8.45am – 11.30am (2 sessions) or 12.30pm – 3.00pm (2 sessions)

- for children under 2 years - 1 session. Session time: Friday 8:45 am – 11:30 am

### **Playgroup**

Monday 10.00am - 12.00pm

## Attendance

If your child is unable to attend could you please contact the centre or leave a message on the answering machine. It is important that once your child is enrolled into the kindergarten program that regular attendance is maintained to develop relationships with peers and adults fostering *improved learning outcomes and increased wellbeing for individuals*.

*“Early identification of, and intervention in, poor attendance is known to improve child and student learning outcomes. Children and students who have patterns of poor attendance are at risk, as they may not achieve their potential in educational and social development.”* DECD Attendance Policy April 2009

## Fees

Financial management of the Centre is the responsibility of the Governing Council and the Finance Officer. The Centre's main sources of income are from the Department of Education and Child Development (DECD), funds raised by families of children attending and term fees that are set at the Annual General Meeting of the Governing Council.

**KINDERGARTEN:** \$1.50 per session or \$3 per day.

**An account is sent at the beginning of each Term.** If paid within the due date a discount will apply. Fees may also be paid weekly or per session. If this places undue financial burden on Parents, they can discuss the matter with the Director, and some arrangement can be made.

**PRE-ENTRY:** \$1.50 per session. **An account is sent at the beginning of each Term.**

**OCCASIONAL CARE:** \$1.50 or \$5.00 per session depending on income, payable to the Co-ordinator on arrival.

**Payments:** Parents are asked to put all payments to the Centre (correct amount) in an envelope with details clearly marked: child's name, the amount, the reason for the payment.

Deposit in the grey Box by the Office, clearly marked so that the Treasurer can collect and record it. A receipt will be placed in your child's pocket.

## Routine

|         |                                                                                |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8.45am  | Children Arrive Free Play                                                      |
| 10.00am | Group Time – songs, small group- story                                         |
| 10.20am | Snack Time                                                                     |
| 10.30am | Free Play                                                                      |
| 11.20am | Pack up Inside/Tidy Outside.                                                   |
| 11.30am | Small Activity Groups. <u>Thursday &amp; Friday– Occasional Care Home Time</u> |
| 11.45am | Lunch Time - Rest Time (Story or video 10 – 15 min).                           |
| 12.30pm | Inside/Outside Play. <u>Thursday – Occasional Care session 2 arrival</u>       |
| 2.10pm  | Pack Up Time (Inside & Outside).                                               |
| 2.30pm  | Mat Time.                                                                      |
| 2.45pm  | Bus Children prepare for home. (Toilet & Bags ready).                          |
| 3.00pm  | Bus & Home Time                                                                |

## Governing Council

Each year at the A.G.M., which is held in February/March, a Governing Council/Committee is elected. This committee is responsible for the decision making of this Centre. It works closely with the Staff in determining the highest quality programs for our children, the maintenance and development of our Centre, its equipment, and also works within the guidelines of the Department of Education and Child Development.

Because this Committee has the responsibility of the financial burdens of the Centre it needs YOUR support in fundraising ventures. All parents are invited to attend Committee meetings to offer suggestions and opinions about any aspect of the running of our Kindergarten. Newsletters provide information about the time and dates of these meetings.

## Occasional Care

The Centre has an Occasional Care Service funded by the State and Federal Governments. The Service caters for children between 2 and 5 years.

We welcome families to use this service on a “now and again” basis. In emergency cases only the opportunity for more than one session per week is allowed after discussion with Staff.

Priority Access is given to:

- *Care needs of children who are not accessing other children's services - e.g family Day Care, pre-entry.*
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children*
- *Children from low income families*
- *Children of parents with a disability*
- *Occasional Care is available to support families to meet both work-related and non-work related commitments*

We ask parents to either make sessional bookings a week in advance or ring 88532301 the day prior to - or in the case of emergencies - on the morning of your care requirements. *Bookings are essential as our numbers for this service are restricted to 8 with 2 extra places for emergencies.*

Broad aims of our program:

- To provide a safe and secure environment for young children to be happy and confident to explore and learn.
- To ensure that the children in our care feel safe, happy and confident.
- To provide a variety of activities that promote the use of the 5 senses developing the child's physical, intellectual, emotional and social skills.

## What to bring to Kindergarten/Occasional Care

- a healthy snack in a named snack box
- a separate named lunch box for full day children, so they are not tempted to eat their lunch at snack time if it is all in one container. Lunch is placed in the fridge.
- A change of nappy/pants, a change of clothing in case of water/toilet mishaps and a named hat. Large bags are easier for children to pack all their belongings in than small bags.
- a named water bottle – this is a water only site (no juice or cordial)
- PLEASE NOTE: we ask that children do not bring their own toys to the Centre. There is always the risk that they may be lost or damaged which causes distress to your child and your family.

## Clothing

**Please dress your child in comfortable PLAY clothes.** We encourage a hands on approach to play which is at times messy and we don't want children to not participate for fear their clothes will get dirty. Make sure your **child is able to remove clothing when they go to the toilet** as some clothing can be difficult to manage in a hurry which can cause unnecessary distress for your child. During the summer months dress children in shirts with collars and short sleeves – **no singlet tops allowed.**

Shoes with support such as sneakers or sandals are great. Please do not send your child in thongs or 'slip-ons' as they can be inappropriate for activities such as climbing, balancing, running etc.

Please NAME all garments that may be removed during session times e.g. shoes, sandals, cardigans etc.

**Lost Property:** Any un-named clothing or other items left at the Centre will be placed into the Lost Property box near the entrance. Please check regularly for your child's property as anything unclaimed in the box at the end of term **will be given to charity.**

## Hats

There is a named hat for your child to use and keep at Kindy for a fee of \$7.00.

Children and staff will be expected to wear a broad-brimmed or legionnaire style hat during Terms 1 & 4.

During Terms 2 & 3 hats will be worn at the discretion of the staff. Children not wearing a hat will be expected to play in the shade.

## Delivering & Collecting Your Children

When travelling to and from Kindergarten by car please come into the Centre with your child to greet the staff and collect your child from staff at the end of the session. Try not to be late collecting him/her as this upsets children who think that they may have been forgotten. If someone other than yourself is to "pick up" your child from Kindergarten, please notify staff as children will not be permitted to leave with people unknown to us.

## Phone Calls

Non-urgent phone calls to the Director should be made before and after session time. Our time with the children is important and if we are called to the phone valuable teaching opportunities are lost. Please try not to call staff at home except in the case of an emergency. We have an answering machine, if you wish to leave a message out of hours.

## Bus Travel

Kindergarten children are only entitled to travel on School Buses after the following steps have been taken.

- **Permission is sought in writing, by parents, from the Principal of the relevant school using a bus approval form – available from the Centre.**

- Discussion must take place with the Bus Driver to determine if there is sufficient seating on the bus for your child and where he/she should be collected and delivered. The child must be met by a responsible care-giver.

If your child will not be travelling on the bus please let the staff know - a phone call or a note in your child's bus notice pocket, not a verbal message from your child.

## Transition to Schools

School and Centre staff will meet annually to discuss school / kindergarten starting and regulations – sessions allowed, age to start etc.

Children do not have to start school until they are 6.

### Transition to Minlaton District School

As well as informal shared activities and performances we have an organised 5 week transition programme at the end of the term before your child starts school. This initially involves a visit to the reception class by all kindergarten children, and a visit by the reception class to the Kindergarten.

Parents are invited by the Junior Primary teachers to attend a morning tea to find out about items required by children starting school. A meeting with the principal of the school is arranged to enrol the child.

The programme also consists of the child spending: 2 days till recess, 1 day till lunch time and 1 full day.

This happens on a non-kindergarten day. Parents are responsible for taking and collecting their child. A more detailed note will be sent home prior to the visits.

### Transition to Curramulka, Port Vincent and Maitland Lutheran Schools

Staff from the Kindergarten and these schools, arrange to visit, observe and exchange information about children, but parents are asked to arrange visits to those schools prior to child's starting date.

## Playgroup

The Staff and Committee welcome Parents and Care Providers of children under the age of 5 years to attend Playgroup which takes place on MONDAY from 10.00am until 12 noon.

- Parents and Care Providers are responsible at all times for the supervision and activities of their own child.
- Kindergarten equipment is available for use, but Care Providers are asked to care for it by keeping it in its specific area e.g. the dough in the dough area, sand toys in the sand pit and puzzles in the puzzle area. **We also ask that Parents/Care Providers clean up at the end of the session please.**

### **Session Fess are:**

- \$1.00 per child which is given to the kindy for covering materials and the cost of running the centre.
- Insurance is covered by Playgroup S.A for a fee of \$35.00 yearly or \$15.00 termly this also entitles you to discounts and a newsletter.
- Parents/Care Providers are welcome to help themselves to a cup of tea or coffee for 50 cents/cup.

## Banking

Children at Kindy can use Bank SA 'Aussie Club' which encourages children to save for their future. Each Tuesday morning Bank Staff collect books from Kindy and deposit the children's money

## Electrical Testing

Due to OHSW regulations, parents are notified that any electrical equipment is to be electrically tested before using at Kindy.

# Policies

## Excursion Policy

With guidelines as in the Children's Services handbook (GP13, PO 10, DETE Camps and Excursions Oct 2001) the following recommendations are to be consulted.

- Explain the type and purpose of general excursions e.g. nursing home, school, that are part of the curriculum to parents at the time of enrolment.
  - Have a separate consent form for general excursions to be filled out upon enrolment.
- All other excursions e.g. beach visits, **must** have signed consent forms by all participating children.
  - Consent forms to include information regarding where, when, times leaving and returning, form of travel (bus, private/staff car), adults accompanying (staff & parents), cost and special requirements (clothing, lunch etc).
  - Failure to receive a consent form – contact the family or emergency care provider and obtain written or verbal consent or make alternative arrangements e.g. collection of the child.
- Provide further information regarding excursion in the newsletter.
- Excursions should be assessed for appropriateness for individual children and the group.
  - A staff member will visit the site beforehand to perform a hazard assessment (e.g. access), communicate expectations, arrangements and group size.
  - Alternative strategies need to be anticipated for weather or other emergencies.
- A contact mobile phone number of one of the excursion party will be supplied with the excursion note and in the newsletter re excursion
- Leave a note on the centre door notifying visitors of whereabouts.
  - Turn centre lights and heating/cooling off and lock doors when no-one is in attendance.
- Ensure duty of care and health provisions are implemented.
  - Cater for children's toileting needs, drink and food arrangements and protective clothing needs.
  - Check children's allergies/medications list beforehand.
  - One staff member to be responsible for First Aid bag and Emergency Folder which includes children's names and family contact phone numbers.
  - Supply centre and child's nametags on each child as appropriate e.g. mixed group entertainment performances.
- Supervision to be determined according to nature of the excursion.
  - General excursions such as school transition visits adult:child **1:10**.
  - All other excursions must be at least **1:5**.
- Transport in buses:
  - No children should be standing for the duration of the transport.
  - 3 children are permitted per seat when there are no seat belts.
  - All luggage must be secured safely.

## Behaviour Management Policy

We focus on positive and acceptable behaviours in a respectful and supportive environment.

We model and encourage positive ways of talking and behaving.

We discuss and set kindergarten rules together.

### For Inappropriate Behaviour

1. Minimum of attention given to minor behaviour problems.
2. Redirecting inappropriate behaviour.
3. Children to take responsibility first and tell other child to "Stop, I don't like it"
4. Staff to provide information to the child about the behaviour eg; friends are not for hitting they are for playing with.
5. If behaviour still continues child will be supported by staff to review behaviour and together suggest strategies for return to play.
6. If a pattern of unacceptable behaviour emerges such as **Bullying**, the Director will inform the parents personally or by phone, and work with them to ensure behaviour management strategies are consistent between home and kindergarten.

The site behaviour management program is supported by the:

1. 'You Can Do It' Social and Emotional Learning Curriculum (Gabby Get Along, Pete Persistence, Connie Confidence, Oscar Organised and Ricky Resilience).
2. Keeping Safe; Child Protection Curriculum – Early Years Band (The right to be safe, relationships, recognising and reporting abuse and protective strategies).
  - **Bullying** is discussed in the relationships section of the curriculum. It is described as *ongoing, intentional harassment and is different from disagreements and one-off conflicts. Bullying is where a person picks on or hurts another person in a repetitive ongoing way.*



## **Parent Concerns and Complaints Procedure**

*At Minlaton District Early Learning Centre we believe parents are partners in the education of children. Regular two-way communication between parents/carers and the preschool is essential in helping children achieve their potential.*

*Our preschool is committed to ensuring that anyone with parental responsibilities for a young person can raise a concern or complaint, with confidence that it will be heard and responded to in an appropriate and timely fashion.*

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Safety of children is always the first priority. Our procedures are underpinned by the following principles:

1. All persons in the Minlaton District Early Learning Centre community including children, parents, staff and volunteers have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy in accordance with the preschool's values.
2. Parents have the right to raise concerns and make enquiries or complaints about any aspect of preschool life.
3. Information about how, where and to whom complaints can be made should be visible and accessible through preschool procedures.
4. Complaints will be acknowledged and addressed promptly within specified timelines.
5. Individual complaints will be assessed objectively and without bias using principles of natural justice.
6. The rights and responsibilities of all parties will be considered and balanced in attempting to find a mutually acceptable outcome to complaints.
7. The confidentiality of all parties will be maintained wherever possible.

### **Step 1: Talk to us**

If your concern or complaint relates to an issue concerning your child's education or experiences you should talk to the teacher/Early Childhood Worker (ECW) as soon as possible.

You may prefer to organise a mutually convenient time to meet the teacher/ECW rather than discuss the issue via a telephone conversation. You are welcome to bring a support person with you, if you wish. The role of the support person is to provide advice and support during the process and not to answer questions on behalf of any of the parties or interfere with the discussion.

Our staff will, following a direct complaint:

- Listen to the complaint
- Record what you say
- Identify actions to resolve the concern
- Let you know what will or has been done
- Get back to you to see how things are going
- If appropriate, refer the matter to the preschool director

If your concern has not been resolved following discussions with the staff member, you should contact the preschool director.

The preschool director will:

- acknowledge receipt of the complaint as soon as reasonably possible (within 5 school days)
- listen to the you
- provide support to you if necessary while the complaint is being considered
- investigate, consider and determine the most appropriate way to resolve the issue fairly and promptly
- consider relevant legislation, DECD policy and guidelines, preschool procedures
- inform you if there is a delay in the process
- ensure your complaint and the outcome is documented
- ensure that the outcome of the process is communicated to you verbally and, if appropriate, in writing including the right to refer the matter to the Kadina Regional office.

### ***Please note:***

*Interpreters and Aboriginal Education Coordinators are available to assist parents in communicating with us. Please contact the Kadina Regional office on 8821 2555 for assistance.*

### **Step 2: Contact our local DECD Regional Office**

If the complaint is about the director of the preschool or you are not satisfied with the outcome you may contact our local DECD Regional Office:

Kadina Regional Office, 45 Taylor Street, Kadina 5554 Phone 8821 2555

The Regional Office will:

- provide written acknowledgement of receipt of your complaint within five working days,
- clarify and record the nature of the complaint, including what expectations you have in relation to outcomes
- investigate, consider and determine the most appropriate way to resolve the issue fairly and promptly

- refer, where appropriate, any complaint that has not been raised at the preschool level back to the preschool
- inform you if there is a delay in the process
- ensure your complaint and the outcome is documented
- ensure that the outcome of the process is communicated to you verbally and, if appropriate, in writing.

### **Step 3: Contact the Parent Complaint Unit**

If your complaint remains unresolved after working together with our preschool, regional personnel and Regional Director, you should submit, in writing, your complaint to:

Manager, Parent Complaint Unit, Level 6 / 31 Flinders Street , ADELAIDE SA 5000  
Ph: 1800 677 435 or by email to [decd.parentcomplaint@sa.gov.au](mailto:decd.parentcomplaint@sa.gov.au)

You should include information about the complaint, including why it remains unresolved and an outline of what actions have been taken to resolve the complaint. You should also outline what you think a reasonable solution would be.

The Parent Complaint Unit, on behalf of the Chief Executive, will:

- acknowledge receipt of the complaint
- assess and make a recommendation to the Head of Schools or the Head of Child Development that:
  1. a review is not warranted and that you should be advised that no further action is considered necessary and that the complaint is now concluded; or
  2. a review is necessary; or
  3. the complaint should be referred to an external agency for investigation or review.

The Head of Schools or the Head of Child Development will review the advice and decide that the complaint (in full or in part):

- can be resolved (all parties agree on an appropriate response)
- should be dismissed (complaint is either unsubstantiated, vexatious, outside of reasonable expectations in relation to confidentiality, cooperation, courtesy and respect or is orientated towards conflict)
- remains unresolved and that an independent review by an external agency is required

#### ***Please Note:***

*Any written or verbal complaints that contain personal abuse, inflammatory statements, and comments of a threatening nature or intended to intimidate will not be addressed and the parent will be advised accordingly.*

*Parents can call the Parent Complaint Unit hotline at any stage on 1800 677 435 for information, advice and support.*

*In some circumstances it may be appropriate that a concern or complaint is escalated directly to Parent Complaint Unit. In these instances the parent will be advised of where the matter will be referred to and why.*

*Parents can also contact the Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board of South Australia (EECSB) Ph: 1800 882 413 or the State Ombudsman: [www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au) for information, advice, support and in circumstances where the complaint remains unresolved.*

### **Requesting your identity to remain confidential**

Parents may request that their identity remain confidential when making a complaint. In this situation, every effort will be made to keep the parent's identity confidential but this may limit options for negotiating a resolution. (For example, an apology is unlikely to be forthcoming if the identity of the complainant is not known.) These circumstances also raise issues in relation to procedural fairness for those who have a complaint made about them as they have a right to know the particulars of the complaint.

While every effort will be made to comply with a request to keep the parent's identity confidential, Freedom of Information requirements may result in a parent's identity becoming known.

### **Anonymous complaints**

Minlaton District Early Learning Centre will assess every complaint that is made. The extent to which an anonymous complaint can be investigated will be limited, as preschool staff cannot liaise with the parent about the complaint. Anonymous complaints also raise issues in relation to natural justice for those who have a complaint made about them as they have a right to know the particulars of the complaint.

The Director will determine upon receipt of an anonymous complaint to what extent the complaint will be investigated. Where the complaint is in relation to a Director, the Assistant Regional Director will make the determination and for Regional Directors, the Head of Schools or the Head of Child Development will make the final decision.

## Approaches that may be used to resolve a parent complaint

Our preschool may take one of the following approaches to resolve a parent's concern or complaint:

- an acknowledgement that the complaint is valid and is worthy of investigation (overall or in part)
- identification of areas of agreement between the parties involved
- opportunities for all the parties involved to express their concerns, explain their point of view and clarify any misunderstandings
- acknowledgement that the situation could have been better handled (this does not constitute an admission of negligence)
- an opportunity for an apology
- recognition that the situation presents an opportunity for changes or alternate arrangements to be made to resolve the complaint
- discussion with the parties about the steps that will be taken to ensure that the event complained about will not reoccur
- an undertaking to review school policy, procedures or practices.

## Additional Information

These procedures apply to parent concerns and complaints in relation to Minlaton District Early Learning Centre. These procedures do not apply to matters where there are legislated requirements or existing policies and processes of appeal, such as:

- Concerns and allegations of misconduct by staff, volunteers and service providers (criminal matters, child protection, corruption, etc)
- Employee disputes and grievances. (Employees should refer to HR17 Complaints resolution for employees 2000 for these types of complaints.)
- Complaints or appeals relating to student suspension and expulsion
- Duty of care or mandatory reporting responsibilities
- Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare related issues
- Health support planning.

These procedures will be reviewed every two years. **For more information** [www.decd.sa.gov.au/parentcomplaint](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/parentcomplaint)

## Healthy Food and Nutrition Policy

**Rationale:** This centre promotes safe, healthy eating habits for all children attending the site.

We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit the children in three ways:

1. Short term: maximises growth, development, activity levels and good health.
2. Long term: minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life.
3. Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in learning activities.

Therefore:

- staff at this centre model and encourage healthy eating behaviours
- food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive environment for all children
- parents and caregivers are encouraged to supply healthy foods
- parents will inform staff of any food allergies your child may have

This food policy has been established after consultation with staff and parents within the preschool community.

## Curriculum

Our site's food and nutrition curriculum:

- is consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*, and the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*
- includes activities that provide children with knowledge, attitudes and skills to make positive healthy food choices and learn about the variety of foods available for good health
- includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food
- integrates nutrition across the curriculum where possible
- relates to the Early Years Learning Framework and National Quality Standards

## The Learning environment

Children at our centre:

- have fresh, clean tap water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day
- are encouraged to bring their own named drink bottle

- will eat routinely at scheduled break times
- eat in a positive, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours
- use the preschool garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods

Our centre:

- understands and promotes the importance of breakfast and regular meals for children
- teaches the importance of healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum
- is a breastfeeding friendly site

### **Food supply**

Our centre:

- o displays **nutrition information** and promotional materials about healthy eating
- o has the following guidelines for families for **food brought from home** or provided by staff within preschool time

#### **Snack Time:**

Parents and carers are encouraged to supply fruit, vegetables or healthy foods such as cheese and biscuits or a sandwich at snack time to:

- o provide children with important minerals and vitamins
- o encourage a taste for healthy foods.
- o Encourage chewing which promotes oral muscle development
- o See 'Snack Box ideas' in back of Parent Information book

#### **Lunch Time**

- o A healthy lunch box could include a sandwich, fruit, yoghurt, vegie sticks etc. See 'Lunch box ideas' in back of Parent Information book.
- o Please do not include chocolate, roll ups etc.
- o Parents are encouraged to follow the above guidelines and ask staff if they have any issues

#### **Foods unsuitable for snack time:**

- o Packaged foods, cakes and sweets
- o Cordials and sweetened fruit juices are not allowed

#### **Food and drinks provided to children:**

- o The centre will provide opportunities for children to take part in cooking activities. These activities will promote healthy eating.

### **Food safety**

Our centre:

- o promotes and teaches food safety to children as part of the curriculum
- o encourages staff to access training as appropriate to the *Healthy Eating Guidelines*
- o provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- o promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff.

### **Food-related health support planning**

Our centre:

- o liaises with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans that are related to food issues.

### **Working with families, health services & industry**

Our centre:

- o invites parents and caregivers to be involved in the review of our Healthy Food & Nutrition policy
- o provides information to families and caregivers about the *Right Bite Strategy and Healthy Eating Guidelines* through a variety of ways including:
  - o newsletters
  - o policy development/review
  - o information on enrolment
  - o pamphlet/poster displays
  - o promotes the alignment of fundraising with the *Right Bite* strategy.

### **Hot Weather Policy**

This policy will recognise that children are at a greater risk of suffering from heat illness than adults.

A child's ability to respond to environmental heat and acclimatise to heat is due to physiological differences. The risk of heat stress is a factor of both air temperature and relative humidity levels.

“Children sweat less and get less evaporative cooling than adults. In warm and hot weather they have greater difficulty getting rid of heat; they look flushed, and feel hotter and more stressed than adults”

Source “Sports Medicine Australia”, refer to : [www.sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/beat-the-heat-2008-email-version.pdf](http://www.sma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/beat-the-heat-2008-email-version.pdf)

The following strategies will be adopted to reduce the risk of heat illness in young children:

**Staff:**

**Shade** Activities conducted in periods of hot weather will be undertaken in shaded areas.

**Drinks** Children will be frequently reminded to drink water. Children’s water bottles will be stored inside and refilled when required.

**Clothing** Staff will assist children to recognise when they are hot or cold and with the putting on or removal of clothing.

**Snacks/Lunch** Staff will store snacks inside and lunch boxes in the fridge.

**Cooling** Staff will maintain room temperatures at safe levels. The centre will remain open on forecast high temperature days. In the case of blackouts or the breakdown of the cooling system in extreme weather conditions, families will be notified to collect their children.

**Arrival/dismissal** Parents will be encouraged to enter the building to drop off and pick up their child to minimise the risk of heat related illness.

**Parents**

**Clothing** Parents are to be encouraged to dress children in clothing that minimises heat gain, in layers that can be easily removed during activity and of a type that is sunsafe – no singlet tops allowed.

Refer [www.arpansa.gov.au/radiationprotection/factsheets/is\\_UVProtection.cfm](http://www.arpansa.gov.au/radiationprotection/factsheets/is_UVProtection.cfm)

**Lunch** Parents are to be encouraged to pack food in insulated containers with a freezer brick or frozen water.

## **Skin Protection Policy**

**Rationale** Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with 1 out of every 2 people developing some form of skin cancer in their lifetime.

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Much of the damage occurs during childhood and adolescence. Research suggests that severe sunburn is a contributor to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as wrinkles, sunspots, blemishes and premature ageing. Most skin damage and skin cancer is therefore preventable.

All staff of the Minlaton District Early Learning Centre will use the following skin protection strategies:

1. outdoor activities between the hours of 10am and 2pm (normal time) and 11am and 3pm (daylight saving) will be held in shaded areas.
2. children and staff will be expected to wear a broad-brimmed or legionnaire style hat during Terms 1 & 4. During Terms 2 & 3 hats will be worn at the discretion of the staff. Children not wearing a hat will be expected to play in the shade.
3. staff will apply sunscreen (SPF 30+) before outdoor play. Sunscreen will be available at the centre for parents to apply to their children on arrival if they haven’t at home. If your child needs a particular brand please notify staff and send to the Centre.
4. staff will promote children’s awareness of skin cancer prevention at appropriate times.

All parents will:

1. apply sunscreen to their children before kindergarten/Occasional Care.
2. dress children in shirts with collars and short sleeves – no singlet tops allowed.
3. provide their child with a broad-brimmed or legionnaire style hat.

## **Health & Hygiene Policy**

### **PERSONAL TREATMENT**

Breaks in the skin surface, such as weeping or moist open sores, cuts, or abrasions should be covered to prevent transmission of blood borne pathogens, e.g. Hepatitis B, HIV.

### **TREATING PERSONS SAFELY**

1. Wash your hands before and after food handling, first aid treatment/toileting by using running water and soap.
2. Cover all cuts on your hands with waterproof dressings before treating/toileting.

3. Use new disposable latex gloves if skin contact with blood or body fluid is likely. While gloves are still on, use paper towels to clean up blood or body fluids.
4. Soiled surfaces must be cleaned with detergent and water first, then disinfected with blue cleaner. (Future)
5. Place contaminated material, including gloves and tissues in a plastic bag, seal and dispose of in general waste.
6. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm water.

## Other Services for your Children

### Special Needs Services

The Department of Education and Child Development provides Special Services for children over 4 years of age through the District Office at Kadina.

Services include Speech Therapy, Hearing Impaired Services, Behaviour Management, Special Education, access to a Psychologist and referral to other agencies.

If you wish to access any of these services for your child please consult the Director.

### Dental Services

A school dental service operates from Yorketown ph 8852 1344 and Maitland ph 8832 2254 clinics.

### Child and Youth Health

The staff at this Kindergarten work very closely with our local CYH Nurse. Her service takes place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4th Tuesday of each month from 9.00am to 5.00pm at the CYH Clinic held in the Community Health Centre, South Terrace, Minlaton. Bookings can be made by ringing 1300 733 606. If you require special sight or hearing tests please let your needs be known at the time of making an appointment. For information and advice on Child Health please ring 1300 364 100 – Parent help line. All Kindergarten children will receive a CYH Developmental screening at 4.5 years of age. The CYH nurse will make arrangements with the Centre regarding a suitable time and date.

### Family Day Care

The Family Day Care office in Maitland ph 8832 2825, will provide information of providers in the area.

### Yorkids Team

The Team works with children aged 0-6 years who need support to develop skills in such areas as play, self care, movement and coordination and speech and language. Phone **Healthlink** on 1800 003 307 or contact the Northern Yorke Peninsula Health Service on 8823 0270.

### Healthlink

By ringing the freecall number 1800 003 307 people can talk confidentially to a Healthlink worker who will provide assistance with any health matter, big or small and then link them to the appropriate health or home care service for their individual needs.

The range of health and home care services available for access includes youth health, child development and parenting assistance, nutrition and exercise, diabetes care, counselling and support for life issues.

### Learning Together At Home

Learning together at Home is primarily a home visiting program that supports families to develop skills to help their children's learning and development through play. Children are active learners from the moment they are born. This learning happens in their families. Parents and other family members play an important role in helping children learn. Learning Together @ Home Fieldworkers also help families connect with other early childhood services. Contact Anna Phasey, Yorketown Tel: 88323053 or email: [Anna.Phasey@sa.gov.au](mailto:Anna.Phasey@sa.gov.au)

### Baby Bounce and Rhyme

At the Minlaton Library 10am – 10:30am 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month during term time. For more info call 8853 2339

## Infectious Diseases

Try to send your child to kindergarten regularly for continuity and benefit; however special family events or infectious diseases will interrupt these plans. Here are some regular sicknesses your child may encounter, but remember good hand washing procedures, cleanliness and immunisations kept up to date will help maintain good health.

|                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Vomiting<br/>Diarrhoea</b>         | If your child has had vomiting and/or diarrhoea <b>in the last 48 hours please do not send them.</b> If in doubt please see your doctor, pharmacist or talk with us.                                                                                        |
| <b>Conjunctivitis</b>                 | Highly contagious – do not send child until 3 days after beginning treatment                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Chicken Pox</b>                    | Please keep children at home until all moist sores have recovered and they feel well.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Bad Colds</b>                      | If your child has a coloured nasal discharge or fever PLEASE DO NOT SEND THEM until they are feeling better.                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Hand, Foot &amp; Mouth Disease</b> | Exclude until blisters have dried up.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Head Lice</b>                      | Children must stay at home until treatment has been given.                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Measles</b>                        | Please keep children at home for 7 days from the appearance of the rash. All children should be immunised against Measles, preferably at 12 months of age, and certainly before their entry into Pre-school.                                                |
| <b>Mumps</b>                          | Please keep children at home until fully recovered – about 9 days or until swelling goes down. Immunisation against Mumps is recommended.                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Ringworms</b>                      | Children should be kept at home until treated.                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Rubella</b>                        | Please keep children at home until fully recovered.                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>School Sores (Impetigo)</b>        | Please keep children at home until sores have completely healed/dried, or they may return if appropriate treatment is being applied and the sores on exposed skin surfaces, such as scalp, face, hands and legs, are properly covered with gauze dressings. |
| <b>Whooping Cough</b>                 | Children should be excluded from Kindergarten for 4 weeks from the onset of the illness unless treatment with antibiotics takes place and a medical certificate is produced.                                                                                |

These are the most common and infectious illnesses. It is important to **notify the Centre if your child is sick** so that we can take the appropriate action to check spread and to notify Health Authorities as required.

For further Information consult staff and “Staying Healthy in Childcare”

## Medical Permission

We cannot administer any medication without an Authorisation to Administer Medication form that has been completed and signed by an Authorised Prescriber (usually a medical doctor) and child’s parent or legal guardian.

All medication must be in its prescribed container or original packaging.

A medical action plan is also required for those children who have chronic illnesses/conditions such as asthma, epilepsy, food allergies etc.

Please note that we cannot administer any non-prescription medication such as Panadol, cough elixirs etc.

# Children Learn Through Play

## Play is valued because it:

- Is fun.
- Comes from within. Children love to play. It is as if they HAVE to play. They are curious and like to explore things and delight in being surprised.
- Is an important part of healthy development in which children challenge themselves and practice skills.
- Is enjoyable and doesn't need careful planning or an end result.
- Means active involvement rather than just watching.
- Allows the child to set the rules and there is not a right or wrong way to play ie. it is non-threatening and builds self-esteem.

## Stages of play

- Solitary - children under 2 years. Children play alone during this stage. They are not interested in others and will concentrate on a single task or toy.
- Parallel - children aged between 2-3 years. Children play alongside one another. They are still self-centred and do not understand sharing. Often watch others closely.
- Associative - children from 3 years and onwards. At times they will play together and are stimulated by each other. However, they still do not work together towards a common goal.
- Co-operative - children aged between 3-5 years. They enjoy playing with others and are able to work together, sharing ideas and solving problems together.

## Developmental milestones

Children are **unique** and as a result will develop at different rates and have different interests and different social and cultural influences. **The stages are not rigid.**

### 0-1 year:

- language and cognitive: laughs, chuckles; plays at making sounds; imitates sounds; turns at mention of name; vocalizes by pointing and demanding; uses some words; responds to simple phrases.
- physical: turns head towards sound or object; grasps feet; transfers object hand to hand; holds object in each hand at same time; pokes fingers at objects; helps hold bottle; holds toys but does not release; builds 2 block towers; rolls over stomach to back; then back to stomach; pulls to sit if hands are held; lifts head when on tummy; sits - back and head unsupported; makes stepping movements if hands held; pulls to stand using furniture; walks one hand held; stands without help.
- social/emotional: watches face; turns head to voice; recognizes familiar people; looks for objects not in right place; points to if asked.

### 1-2 years:

- language: uses words to gain attention and to indicate wants; knows several words; enjoys simple stories.
- cognitive: remembers where some objects belong; knows names of playmates; identifies familiar things.
- physical: spontaneous scribbling; builds a 4 block tower; unwraps objects; walks well; scoots around on wheeled toys; pushes/pulls large objects; kicks large ball; jumps on spot; runs smoothly.
- social/emotional: waves goodbye; can take off own socks & shoes; indicates 'no' by some gesture; defends possessions; asks for help; tries to join in with play but does not actually play with others.

### 2-3 years

- language: uses 2-3 word sentences; talks about what they are doing; refers to self by name; may know as many as 50-100 words; names pictures and objects.
- cognitive: can identify body parts; matches some shapes; works on simple puzzles
- physical: holds spoon, cup etc, may spill some; can turn pages of a book; uses a paint brush/crayon in hand not fist; builds 6 block towers; runs forward well; walks up and down stairs; throws a ball; kicks ball forward.



- social/emotional: understands some property concepts such as 'mine'; may resist sharing; asserts independence; takes pride in own accomplishments.

#### 3-4 years:

- language: uses plurals; converses in short sentences; vocabulary increases to over 900 words; names pictures & labels objects; articulation is fairly clear
- cognitive: may count to 2 or 3 (1:1 correspondence - 1 finger to 1 object); may draw simple figures; knows if they are a boy or a girl; compare sizes
- physical: can walk, run with control; climbs well; throws ball with aim; jumps in place; balances on one foot for a few seconds; pedals tricycle; can put on some clothing and shoes; feeds self well; scribbles with more control; can draw/copy objects
- social/emotional: may show regard for people and possessions; plays and interacts with another child; willing to use toilet; can participate in short group activities

#### 4-5 years:

- language & cognitive: speech is easily understood by strangers; uses 'and' to join phrases; sings songs and rhymes; tells a well known story; gives reasons and explanations; describes not just names contents of a picture; names & recognizes colours; understands number concepts; names & recognizes at least 6 body parts
- physical: copies & draws shapes; pictures are recognizable; makes things out of odds and ends; buttons shirts correctly; prints first name; hops on one foot on spot or travels; dresses and undresses without help
- Social/emotional: engages in cooperative play; can take turns; develops clear friendships; participates in role play; understands gender differences

### Types of development

**Physical** - describes the body skills that children use. It is divided into two areas: fine motor and gross motor skills.

- Fine motor - this includes all actions used by the fingers and hands such as: grasping, holding, drawing, threading, pointing, clapping, waving etc. Fine motor skills also include the muscles of the face for looking and smiling. Activities to enhance fine motor skills:
 

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Drawing - with crayons, chalk, pencils, textas, pastels etc</li> <li>○ Cutting out shapes, cutting along lines</li> <li>○ Threading objects - necklaces, threading cards, sewing</li> <li>○ Actions for songs - 'twinkle, twinkle'</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Actions for games - 'peek a boo'</li> <li>○ Mirrors, puppets etc</li> <li>○ Construction, cars and train sets, puzzles and board games</li> <li>○ Collage, painting and other art experience</li> </ul> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
- Gross motor - this includes all actions used by the whole body such as: pulling self up, sitting, jumping, dancing, hopping, crawling, running, skipping, etc. Activities to enhance gross motor skills:
 

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Encourage crawling - chasing/hiding games</li> <li>○ Climbing equipment, obstacle courses</li> <li>○ Bats and balls</li> <li>○ Hoops, skipping, dancing, group games, parachute play</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dress ups</li> <li>○ Running games, bikes and trikes, objects to push and pull</li> <li>○ Sand pit play - digging</li> <li>○ Swings</li> </ul> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Cognitive** - through play children learn to think and solve problems, discover how things work and develop concepts such as: sorting, matching, reasoning, experimenting, predicting, developing ideas, literacy and numeracy skills and decision making etc. Activities to enhance cognitive development:

- |                                     |                                       |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ○ 'Peek a boo' games, hide and seek | ○ Puzzles, matching and sorting games |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|

- Feely boxes, books, reading stories
- Practicing reading and writing skills
- Experiments
- Colour recognition games
- Cooking
- Sensory games

**Language** - understanding of language (spoken or gestures/body language) and the spoken word. Also includes literacy and numeracy skills. Activities to enhance language skills:

- Songs, stories, finger-plays and rhymes
- Puppets, dramatic play
- Word games, labels

**Social and emotional** - this area covers their interaction with their peers and adults, feelings, attachments, dramatic play or role play and imagination. In play they learn social skills of sharing, turn taking and co-operating as well as building their confidence. Activities to enhance social/emotional skills:

- Mirrors
- Dress ups, dramatic/role play
- Group games, dancing
- Song/story time
- Construction play - large blocks, cars and car mat, train set
- Sand/water play
- Face painting

**Sensory** - describes how we learn/discover through our senses - sight, sound, taste, touch and smell. Activities to enhance sensory development:

- Water, sand, rice/grain play
- Finger painting, gloop, playdough, clay
- Bubbles
- Feely boxes and books
- Music
- Fruit time, cooking

### **The value of and skills developed during:**

#### Physical play: gross motor

- Develops co-ordination skills of hands, feet and eyes.
- Helps with fitness and health by exercising muscles, children learn what different body parts can do.
- Emotional; release - reduces built up tension and stress, uses up energy.
- Builds vocabulary - learn new words.
- Social development - sharing, taking turns, interaction with other adults and children.
- Understanding concepts eg. Speed, space, distance etc.
- Opportunities to develop agility, balance, flexibility, strength and speed.
- ❖ Develops the skills of balancing, bending, bouncing, carrying, catching, climbing, crawling, curling, galloping, hanging, hopping, jumping, kicking, leaping, lifting, pulling, punching, pushing, raking, rolling, running, shaking, skipping, sliding, stacking, stepping, stretching, swaying, sweeping, swinging, throwing, tumbling, turning, twisting, walking.

#### Sensory play:

- Children learn everything about their world through their 5 senses - touch, taste smell, sound and sight. A small child explores the world through as many senses as they can, usually by examining it carefully with their hands, feet and mouth.

#### Collage:

- By pasting together a variety of packets and junk materials, children have the opportunity to use their imagination and make a construction of their very own. There is no right or wrong way so the activity is very satisfying. They experience construction in two or three dimensions building on their ideas as they go.
- ❖ Develops the skills of cutting, tearing, estimating, measuring, planning, concentrating, problem solving, creating, experimentation, experiencing textures and shape, pasting, co-ordinating eye hand

movements, muscle dexterity, learning new words, social skills of conversation, sharing and taking turns. They also learn the properties of a variety of materials.

#### Puppets:

- Puppetry is a unique form of creative play. It can bring together all of the expressive arts (sound, speech, movement, colour, form etc) into one experience. Children and adults can join in the magic of puppet play either in a group or alone in a quiet corner.
- ❖ Imagination and self-expression especially when child makes own puppet. Encourages children to speak to others and 'try out' new behaviours and characteristics eg funny, aggressive, loud etc in an acceptable play situation.

#### Music:

- All children respond to music. Many cannot sit still when listening to it so for them music and movement are the same thing. Through music they learn about fast and slow, loud and soft and high and low.
- ❖ Listening, verbal skills - speech development and vocabulary, physical coordination (jumping, swaying, galloping etc.), body awareness and concepts such as days of week, number etc.

#### Imaginative play:

- Allows the child to experience what it might be like to be another person, to put themselves in their place either as a leader making decisions or as a follower - in a safe secure environment eg. to be mum or dad, a firemen, nurse, hairdresser etc.
- ❖ Social interaction with adults and children, language development, imagination, problem solving, negotiation.

#### Science & maths play:

- Children learn through their senses and are curious about their world (how, what, why, when, where and who?) experiencing the joys of discovering.
- ❖ Practicing and experimenting, learning about cause and effect, exploring, investigating, observing, guessing, trying things out, learning from mistakes, solving problems, understanding, experiencing rules, laws, consistency and change.

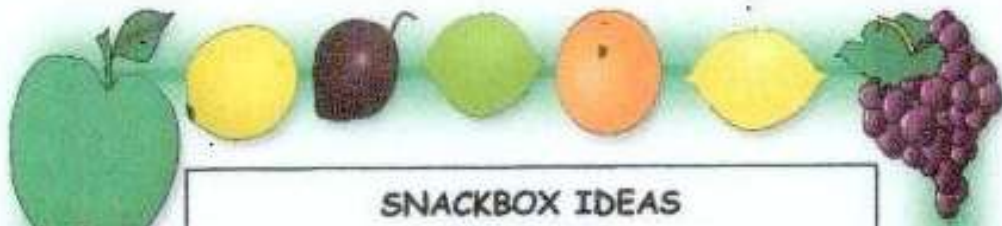
#### Painting:

- provides opportunities for creativity, self expression, challenges, new experiences and is relaxing.
- ❖ learn about colour and form, independence, self esteem, hand eye co-ordination, gross and fine motor skills.

#### Water play:

- It is very relaxing and enables children to use their senses - sound (dripping, pouring), sight (running down, propelling water wheel), touch (warm, cold, move it with hands).
- Concepts of sinking and floating, absorption, volume (full/empty, little/lot), evaporation, language skills.

**Source: Playgroup Association of South Australia**



### SNACKBOX IDEAS

- Fresh fruit
- Boiled eggs
- Scones
- Pikelets
- Cheese cubes/sticks
- Rice crackers
- Weetbix with vegemite
- Homemade muffins
- Crumpets with melted cheese
- Dried fruit & seeds

**Remember: Snackboxes DON'T go in the fridge.**

### LUNCHBOX IDEAS

Sandwiches containing:

- lean meats, egg-salad-cheese-canned fish
- Try different types of bread - Pita-rice cakes-dry biscuits-lavash-different shaped rolls
- Leftover meals such as mince rissoles-pasta-soup-vegetable patties-homemade pizza-rice dishes-baked beans on potato-tuna/salmon patties
- Vegetables cut into fingers with cream cheese for dipping
- Fresh fruit
- Natural yoghurt mixed with cut fruit
- Homemade custard

**REMEMBER lunch boxes DO go in the fridge**

