



OUR CURRICULUM

At Yarra Valley Grammar Early Learning Centre, we pride ourselves on being able to offer exceptional **play based programs** designed in accordance with the approved Early Years Learning Framework.

In our Early Learning Centre educators use The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) for Australia. This National Framework forms the foundation for quality teaching and learning with a focus on assisting all children to make progress in relation to a series of learning outcomes. These outcomes have a broad view of the kind of knowledge and skills all children need in order for them to become confident and happy throughout their life. There are a number of key components under each of these outcomes which educators consider for all children depending on their uniqueness, their personality, their disposition for learning, their background and their interests. Educators use their knowledge of each child, their strengths and interests to plan play experiences that are used as a learning tool to achieve the EYLF outcomes.

Educators plan an **individualised program** for each child with outcomes in mind, determined by the child's strengths, needs, abilities and interests.

Educators in the Early Learning Centre work in close partnership with families to address each child's needs, abilities and learning styles. They use their knowledge of individual children; their strengths and capabilities, to guide their professional judgement to ensure that all children are being catered for within the program.

Educators use a range of assessment measures to plan effectively for each child and to determine the extent to which children are progressing towards outcomes.

National Early Years Learning Framework Outcomes (EYLF)

OUTCOME 1: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY

- Children feel safe, secure, and supported
- Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency
- Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities
- Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect

OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD

- Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation
- Children respond to diversity with respect
- Children become aware of fairness
- Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

OUTCOME 3: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF WELLBEING

- Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing
- Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

OUTCOME 4: CHILDREN ARE CONFIDENT AND INVOLVED LEARNERS

- Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity
- Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, enquiry, experimentation, hypothesizing, researching and investigating
- Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another
- Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

OUTCOME 5: CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS

- Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
- Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts
- Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media
- Children begin to understand how symbols and pattern systems work
- Children use information and communication technologies to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking

WHAT IS PLAY BASED LEARNING?

Play is the way in which young children learn. Play enables children to develop all their skills – social and emotional, physical, language and intellectual thinking.

The educator's role is to guide, evoke and extend the play through the environment and the experiences offered. As educators we continually evaluate children's play to discover what it is children are learning and to help shape and extend the learning further.

PROGRAMMING PROCEDURES – OBSERVATIONS

Educators undertake observations of all children in their care and document these in a number of different formats. Observations cover all areas of development and are used to inform curriculum content, children's strengths, needs and interests.

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLANS (ILP)

Based on observations, educators devise goals or outcomes for each child that will assist in their overall development. Play experiences are then planned that will enable each child to achieve the stated goals. Individual learning experiences are woven into the fabric of the main group program.

CHILD PORTFOLIOS

Portfolios are used to record your child's learning journey throughout the year. Portfolios include work samples, photographs and records of various observations that inform you of how your child has gone about their learning. Portfolios are housed within each room and are available for you to view at any time. They are then given to you at the conclusion of your child's year.

COMMENCEMENT – TRANSITION PROGRAM

We operate a staggered intake for the first few sessions to provide the children with the opportunity to establish themselves within their new environment and become acquainted with their teachers and peers. There will be a transitional settling in period with reduced hours for the first few weeks of February. This will also give the children the opportunity to settle in, meet their peers and become familiar with the program routine without becoming too tired or anxious. Parents will be notified in advance of these dates and times.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Please endeavour to be prompt in arriving as well as collecting your child, as children will often become unsettled if they are left waiting.

Session times are 8.45am – 3.00pm.

It would be appreciated if parents could, wherever possible, adhere to these times. Traffic in the top car park can become congested and we ask parents with ELC children only, to collect their children and leave the school promptly to reduce this congestion.

The ELC playroom doors will be opened at the scheduled commencement time of 8.45am. The teachers require time to prepare for the day and for this reason, children are not permitted to enter the room prior to commencement time.

Parents/Caregivers are asked to bring their child into the building and on departure, collect their child from inside the building. Children are not by law, permitted to be dropped off or left outside the centre.

If you are waiting within the ELC foyer we ask that you supervise your child at all times and discourage any inappropriate behaviours; particularly running up and down the hallway.

If anyone other than parents or an authorised caregiver is to collect your child from the centre a **written, signed and dated authorisation** must be filled out and presented. These are located near “Sign In Books”. **No child will leave the centre with an unauthorised person.**

Children need to be **signed in and signed out** of the centre and the time recorded at the beginning and end of each session by parents or the authorised guardian.

Your child will be dismissed from the mat by name, into your care. Once the teacher has dismissed your child, the child legally becomes your responsibility. Such procedures are set out in accordance with the National Law and National Regulations 2011.

If you are unavoidably detained;

- Please make every effort to phone the School or ELC so that your child can be reassured that you are on the way. Phone 9262 7738 (Junior School) or 9262 7736 (ELC)
- If you have not arrived **by 3.15 pm your child will be placed in After School Care** as an emergency procedure and to ensure your child’s safety and wellbeing, with appropriate charges being levied. Further information about Before and After School Care is available from the Junior School Office.

PIGEON HOLES

Located outside each classroom are the group colour co-ordinated pigeon holes. Family notices and school correspondence are placed in them and should be checked daily. Please note that the pigeon holes are strictly for school correspondence only; please do not put party invitations in the pigeon holes.

SCHOOL PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

It is a school rule that ELC children are not permitted to play on Junior School Equipment. **Please do not take your children into these areas to play.** They are designed for the physical abilities of school aged children.

CHILDREN’S ABSENCES

Please advise the Teacher-In-Charge beforehand or by telephoning the centre on the day your child is absent. Phone 9262 7738 (Junior School Office).

If your child has an infectious disease he/she is required to stay at home for a specific amount of time, according to DEECD guidelines. Detailed information is available in the ELC foyer or through the Junior School Office. If unsure please refer to the Royal Children’s Hospital fact sheet, www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo or speak to your child’s teacher.

Please remember that children cannot enjoy the program or learn effectively if they are unwell. If your child is ill (**this includes coughs and colds**) please respect the health of others and keep them at home until they are fully recovered. If your child is attending the program they should be well enough to participate in all activities (including outdoor play)

CHILDREN'S LOCKER

All children are allocated a locker inside their playroom. Lockers are large enough to store your child's school bag, morning tea and lunch boxes, school hat and a change of clothes.

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

There is no formal uniform for ELC, however children are asked to wear neat casual clothing that is comfortable and manageable. The Yarra Valley School tracksuit (windcheater top and black pants) is available for purchase from the School Uniform Shop. Note that children will not be allocated to a "House" until they commence Prep. At this time they are allocated according to numbers of girls and boys. If parents purchase a "house" school polo top in ELC this does not have any bearing on House allocation (unless siblings are already allocated to a House). Casual clothes allow the children to become involved in play and not feel upset or worried about getting dirty. In an early childhood program there are plenty of messy activities and whilst we provide smocks, children will feel inhibited if dressed in clothes that they are not allowed to get dirty.

Long dresses, tops with exposed shoulders, thongs, "croc", open toed sandals and slippery soled shoes are not suitable or safe for play.

PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING, INCLUDING SHOES, WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.

From September until the end of April, a named school hat is required. Please note the centre provides sunscreen for the children. It is the responsibility of each family to inform the ELC of allergies and alternative arrangements will be made. Parents are asked to apply sunscreen before arrival at the centre and staff supervise further application of this during the day. School hats are to be worn throughout Terms 1 and Terms 4 and children's hats remain at the centre.

Children are asked to wear runners on Physical Education days. (Red and Yellow Groups)

Children wearing singlet tops and dresses where their shoulders are exposed will need to wear a t-shirt over the top in accordance with our sun smart policy.

BIRTHDAYS

We would love to celebrate your child's birthday at ELC and small cup cakes are the most suitable. **Please note that bags of lollies, party hats, whistles and balloons are not appropriate for an ELC celebration.** Please liaise with the teacher regarding any allergies i.e. nuts, eggs or dairy. This ensures the safety of all children.

STAFFING

The **Teacher-In-Charge** is solely responsible for designing and planning the play curriculum and children's Individualised Learning Programs.

The **teacher** is the person who should be approached on any matters pertaining to the educational programme or your child's development.

There is an **assistant** for each group. Their role is to help prepare and set out materials and equipment, as guided by the teacher. They also assist by teaching towards program goals and supporting individual learning and documentation.

EXCURSIONS AND INCURSIONS

During the year a number of special activities and visitors will be arranged to give the children first hand experience on things we are learning about at ELC. Parents will be notified in advance and we advise that costs are included on parent accounts.

ELC BAG

All children will need a large ELC bag, big enough to carry a lunch box, drink bottle, spare clothes and creative art work.

LIBRARY BAG

All children will need a named library bag for the purpose of carrying and protecting borrowed books.

MEAL TIMES AT ELC

There are two meal times during the day;

- Morning Tea – Each child will require a snack for morning tea. Healthy snacks are encouraged to maximise nourishment. Some examples might be; fresh fruit, dried fruit, cheese, raw vegetables, dry biscuits, etc. **Lollies, chips and other sweet sticky treats are discouraged.**
- Lunch – Children are also encouraged to bring a healthy lunch. They will need a named lunch box that is easy to open.

Lunch orders are also available, for **lunch only** on a daily basis. Orders must be written on an envelope with your child's name and ELC group clearly marked. Alternatively, recyclable YVG lunch bags can be purchased from the Uniform Shop. Please seal money well within the envelope and place in the lunch order box situated outside your child's ELC door by 8.50am

Your child will also need to bring a **named water bottle** to ELC on a daily basis.

LAUNDRY

All sheets, smocks and towels are laundered by the Early Learning Centre.

SPARE CLOTHES

All children will need to have a change of clothes and underwear kept in their ELC bag in case of emergencies. If a change of underwear is required and there is none in your child's bag, we are able to provide a new pair; however we then ask you to return to us a **new** replacement pair.

SPECIALIST PROGRAMS

Meaningful links are established with specialists in the Junior School. A variety of specialist experiences complement the ELC program. These specialist sessions will commence during Term 1, when all children are settled and are offered in the following format:

FOUR YEAR OLD PROGRAM – Four year olds have specialist sessions in Music, Library and Physical Education.

THREE YEAR OLD PROGRAM – Three year olds will have specialist sessions in Music and Library. **These are generally introduced in Term 2; sometimes earlier if the group is showing readiness.**

QUIET TIME FOR THREE YEAR OLDS

Quiet time is seen as an important part of our full day program. Children are provided with a covered mattress and blanket if required. A quiet, calm atmosphere is created for this period and children either rest or sleep according to their individual needs. Children are encouraged to bring a soft toy or “attachment blanket” to rest with. All bedding is supplied by the centre and laundered weekly. Quiet time is valued for encouraging relaxation, developing respect for the needs of others and for giving children a break or change in a busy and stimulating day.

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH ILLNESS / EMERGENCY CARE

If a child becomes ill or is involved in an accident, parents will be notified immediately and arrangements made for the child to be collected. If it is not possible to contact parents or legal guardians, then the emergency contact person nominated on the child’s enrolment records will be notified.

In the event of a situation arising when none of these persons can be contacted, suitably qualified staff will make the child as comfortable as possible until the child is collected. If a child is in a serious accident, or is deemed to be seriously ill, staff will contact our school nurse or an ambulance immediately.

There are times during the day when a child may be involved in a minor incident during play. First Aid will be administered and the incident recorded. Parents or caregivers will be informed of the incident at the end of the day and will be asked to read and sign an accident record sheet.

MEDICATION

Medication can only be administered to a child if written authorisation from a parent or caregiver has been provided. A Medication Book is available at the centre for this purpose. Please ask staff if you require it upon your arrival in the morning.

Medications must be in their original containers with the child’s name clearly written on the front. Please hand all medications to staff.

Under no circumstances should medications be left in the child’s bag.

ASTHMA, ALLERGIES AND MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Parents must inform staff of asthma, allergies or medical conditions relating to their child. In the case of **Asthma and Anaphylaxis**, a signed Action Plan from the child’s doctor must be kept at the centre and attendance is conditional on the child’s medication always being at the centre when the child attends.

Action plans, signed by the child’s doctor are also required for any allergies listed on the blue Confidential Enrolment Form. This includes band aids, insect bites, sunscreen and medications.

Families with children who have allergies, anaphylaxis, dietary restrictions or specific healthcare needs are required to meet with their child’s teacher prior to commencement at the ELC. During this time an Action and Communication Plan is developed.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Yarra Valley Grammar Early Learning Centre Policy and Procedures are developed by Yarra Valley Grammar, the Director of Early Learning, staff and parents. Parents are made aware of amendments or updates to policies and procedures and are consulted where necessary. We encourage all parents to be familiar with our service policies and procedures. The Policy and Procedures Manual is available for you to read at the service upon request.

PARENT INTEREST AND INVOLVEMENT

At Yarra Valley Grammar Early Learning Centre, we recognise that parents are the child's first and most influential teachers. We strive to create a welcoming environment where all children and families are included, respected and actively encouraged to participate in program experiences.

Parents who have a special interest that they would like to share are encouraged to do so or parents who wish to see "first hand" how the children learn through play are most welcome to join the group.

Displays and documentation in the foyer keeps parents up to date with service events. Information may also be placed in your family pigeon hole, or can be viewed on the blog.

PARTNERSHIPS

Maintaining the communication link between home and Early Learning Service is vital for your child's wellbeing.

We encourage you to;

- Talk regularly with your child's teacher. To achieve the best outcomes for your child, we must work in partnership. Please feel free to discuss any facet of your child's education and development with the Early Learning Teacher.
- Get to know other parents in the group. Try to meet your ELC Representative and attend social functions so that you may become active members of the Early Learning Centre and School Community.
- Read the Valley Voice newsletter which is emailed home every second Thursday of the School term. This contains important information about School events and happenings.
- Read the blog. This outlines whole centre information and specific details pertinent to your child's group.

In genuine partnerships, families and early childhood teachers value each other's knowledge, trust and communicate respectfully, share insights and perspectives about children and engage in shared decision making.

We look forward to sharing this wonderful journey with you.

Nicky Callow
Director, Early Learning Centre

Mr Chris Lawson
Deputy Principal - Head of Junior School